



Case Study

Janet Thompson

Carl Jung once said: "The shoe that fits one person pinches another; there is no recipe for living that suits all cases." We can say the same about our working styles, our behaviour and characteristics.

No one style or characteristic is right or wrong, more effective or powerful – often they are just different.

It is in identifying and accepting differences that we can turn them into strengths, learn to deal with a given situation or ultimately, as managers, support team members.

Janet Thompson of Museums Sheffield did just that. Through the Jigsaw Discovery Tool and a facilitated learning programme delivered by Jigsaw@work®, Janet discovered her own key learning and management characteristics and behavioural style, and was able to acknowledge and accept them in order to turn them into strengths.

Janet Thompson comments:

"I've been on many personal development programmes which draw out your characteristics, but the way in which the Jigsaw Discovery Tool programme was delivered and the different activities involved created some real 'light bulb' moments. For me a key discovery was related to the use of introvert and extrovert descriptors."

The programme facilitated by Jigsaw@work® covered a range of areas including:

- ✚ Perception
- ✚ Thinking vs Feeling
- ✚ Sensing vs Intuition
- ✚ Colourful Communication
- ✚ Jigsaw Discovery Tool
- ✚ Introverts and Extroverts

Before the programme I had identified my work self as an introvert; whilst I accepted this I didn't really think about it, act upon it or truly understand what this meant. When I took part in one of the practical activities it really helped to bring this to life and helped me to immediately identify with work related situations, comparing different approaches.

Green to GO

One of the group exercises involved a discussion about the environment. We were each given a card and very simple instructions - turn your card over when you are ready to speak and join in the discussion.

I was almost the last to turn my card over and join in – a classic introvert characteristic. I immediately made comparisons between real-life situations and realised that this is often the case in meetings when I wait to find the right opportunity to join in. This always troubled me in the past as no-one else seemed to be struggling in the same way.

The Jigsaw@work® programme helped me to realise that there wasn't actually anything wrong with this approach. This was just one of the ways in which my introvert characteristic showed itself. I also accepted that each of us has our own preferred ways of dealing with situations, a way we are comfortable with, good at and which has an equal value.

In understanding introverts and extroverts I was able to really identify the situations that I found difficult. As a result I have developed my own strategy for dealing with these situations. Here are a few tips that have worked for me:

1. If you are in a meeting with a chairperson, make sure that you sit where they can see you so it's easier for them to see when you are ready to contribute.
2. Prepare in advance – try to anticipate the discussion.
3. Speak early to remove some anxiety.
4. If you are not ready to contribute, ask a question – this shows that you are engaged and interested in the discussion and gives you more time to think things through, but don't take too long as you may lose the opportunity.
5. Don't beat yourself up if it doesn't work – there's always next time!!

Equally as managers or even as a chairperson of a meeting if you are aware that other people are having issues getting involved in a debate you can:

1. Encourage them.
2. Cue them in.
3. Don't make them fight for your attention, especially when extrovert characters are involved.

Whilst Jigsaw@work® took me on a very personal journey of self-awareness the training also helped my team and created a shorthand for people's styles that doesn't become personal, judgemental or offensive.

Through Jigsaw@work® I genuinely discovered what being an introvert really meant and was able to see that, like many people, my approach may be different but that it can be equally effective. More importantly, as a manager, it has helped me to clearly identify individual characteristics so that I am in a much stronger position to understand, support and develop my team.

For more details about extraverts and introverts why not check out www.jigsawatwork.com

