SLIDE 1: Welcome to today’s discussion. Barbara Reinhold and I will be presenting and answering your questions together again today. We’ll be talking about maximizing the extraordinary power of introverts—in a world that seems obsessed with hearing ourselves speak and trying to accomplish much more than is possible in any given day.

We believe that, if we can appreciate and access the power of the quieter, deeper thinkers in our organizations, we can vastly increase our productivity, help the introverts in our organizations have a greater sense of belonging and well-being, and, coincidentally, decrease our reliance on tums and a variety of other anxiety medications.

BR-SLIDE 2: Thanks, Cori, it’s nice to be here today with everyone. Let’s have a look at the Agenda we’ll cover.

• We’ll look at the qualities of introverts (as differentiated from their louder, more extroverted colleagues, mates, siblings, and bosses) and understand in more detail why they are NOT “holding us up” (as speedier extroverts tend to think sometimes), but rather keeping us on course and balancing our excesses much of the time.
• We’ll look in finely-grained detail about how to use the different strengths they bring to get better results and quality of life—at work, of course, and often at home as well.
• We’ll have several polls to take the introversion/extroversion pulse of people here with us today, and of course we’ll discuss resources and take your questions at the end of the hour—so jot down your questions and send them to us as the program moves along. Especially if you yourself
are an introvert, don’t wait till the end of the hour—take some time to
craft questions as the program moves along, and then send them to us.

SLIDE 3- How do you know if you are an introvert or extrovert, or somewhere in
the middle? Perhaps you’d like to know about some famous introverts. Here are
just a few:

• Heathcliff from *Wuthering Heights*
• Sherlock Holmes
• Eleanor Roosevelt
• Abraham Lincoln
• Julia Roberts
• Meryl Streep
• The Ugly Duckling
• Diane Sawyer
• Christina Aguilera
• Mahatma Gandhi

Before we actually check out where you stand on the introversion/extroversion
spectrum with a small poll, let’s have a look at the qualities that generally seem
to describe the more introverted among us. See if you recognize any traces of
yourself, a family member or a colleague, boss or direct report on this list. At
the end of the list, you’ll be asked to take an educated guess about where you
place yourself, so you might want to jot down a note as we go through the 10
qualities of introverts we’ve elected to discuss, noting whether this seems more
or less like you. Then you’ll be more prepared (and don’t introverts like to be
prepared?) for the poll.

SLIDE 4- So let’s start our list of 10 qualities. First, Introverts generally prefer
small gatherings to large ones, talking with just a few people rather than
moving around in a crowd. They usually have several very good friends rather
than lots of friends and acquaintances. But they are definitely not anti-social as
extroverts sometimes like to paint them. In fact, their loyalty and integrity usually make them extraordinarily good friends.

SLIDE 5-They also benefit from thinking/planning prior to meetings or interactions with others, whether at work or in social situations—they like to be prepared, rather than just “winging it,” as those pesky extroverts seem to want to do.

SLIDE 6- Introverts prefer listening to speaking—and often wish that others did too, as the noise swirls around them in meetings or social events. They listen and learn, and don’t suffer from the same love affair with their own voices that sometimes plagues extroverts.

SLIDE 7-They are interested in thoughts, ideas, and research, in depth, not just superficially. They pay attention to details and often question annoyed extroverts for more complex or specific explanations, just as the extroverts are ready to fly off to the next great idea, often without having really mastered the prior one yet.

SLIDE 8- Fortunately, the introvert’s attention to detail and follow-through on ideas also ensures that she will not allow projects to disappear into the ethers, as multi-tasking extroverts have been known to do.

SLIDE 9- Clearly, introverts offer concentration and focus, qualities that often elude their faster-moving team mates. Smart bosses will be sure to use them in places where these strengths can be the most helpful.

SLIDE 10- But most introverts will need time alone to recharge their batteries, in order to be ready for the next immersion in group-think. If we’re smart, we’ll give them the time they need—so that they can save us from our extroverted addiction to speediness and incessant activity. According to introversion expert Susan Cain, introverts tend to be better at delayed gratification, a crucial life skill associated with everything from higher SAT scores and income to lower body mass index.
SLIDE 11- But here’s something to remember—they don’t share private information or thoughts or feelings readily. The daily reality of living or working with an introvert can often have an extrovert whining to herself or himself, “What did I do wrong—why doesn’t she or he want to talk to me now?” Members of the Extroversion team need to know not to take it personally—it’s just how introverts are wired, and there’s nothing wrong with you, or THEM for that matter. It’s just different. So get used to it and stop letting it undermine your confidence or leave you feeling ignored!

SLIDE 12- Introverts also usually prefer writing to speaking. Introverted authors love researching and writing books, but are less than thrilled with talking about them, especially extemporaneously. I can tell you firsthand, however, that extroverted authors have a terrible time sitting still long enough to get a book written—they really write to get a platform to justify their standing up and talking about their ideas. And the introverts in their lives just shake their heads at this behavior that seems so foreign to them.

SLIDE 13- Finally, introverts have a “think-do-think” approach to living and working, as opposed to the “do-think-do” approach of extroverts. I know, for instance, that, as an extrovert I usually find out what I’m thinking and feeling by listening to the words that tumble, unannounced, from my lips. So many times I have gasped silently, “where did that come from?” after some statement has just leapt out into a conversation, much to the chagrin of my more introverted, sometimes horrified, life partner.

Now it might seem that we’re criticizing extroverts a lot here today, but not really—you are listening to two of them after all. We do hope to “even the score” a little, however, because in our culture extroverts exist in greater numbers and often seem to view their wiring as “the norm.” We believe it’s up to extroverts to spearhead a cultural movement to stop under-valuing the contributions of introverts, in order to have a more balanced approach to work and life—with some help from introverts, of course.

SLIDE 14- Now that you’ve heard about how introverts are different from extroverts, we’d like you to take an educated guess about where you stand
along the spectrum of Mostly Introvert to Balanced Introvert/Extrovert to Mostly Extrovert. On the poll we’ve loaded, tell us where you think you stand:

1= Mostly Introvert
2= Mostly Extrovert and
3= About equal balance of Introvert & Extrovert

SCORING—what % of the group falls in each of those bands?

SLIDE 15-SO, WHY DO WE NEED INTROVERTS?

1. Well, we certainly need them for careful thinking & problem solving, without rushing to premature conclusions. This of course drives the extroverts crazy, but one can’t help wondering what problems we might have avoided, individually and as a nation, by taking some actions more cautiously in recent years. Problem-solvers by nature, introverts are necessary for discovering & thinking through the nuances of a challenging situation, carefully finding and turning over in their minds the repercussions of what’s being considered.

2. Writing & editing go much better when there is an introvert involved somehow—either as the writer, the critic or one of the editors. They take the time to think through the material, do research where needed, and then to polish the words and thoughts to a shine.

3. In organizations, we also need introverts to be sure all points of view are represented. Introverted people have almost always experienced being left out themselves, in their families, groups or meetings where the extroverts pushed things along at a dizzying and often superficial pace. And so they just see things that speedier people miss, and care deeply that others not be left out.
4. They counsel us to have patience, and to let things play out, without rushing to judgment before we have all the data.

SLIDE 16- So, Cori, let’s think a little about WHEN we particularly need introverts in our lives?

1. We need them in tense situations, to allow cooler heads to prevail and reasonable alternatives to present themselves.
2. We need them as part of the team when the decisions being made are serious ones, and there is no room for mistakes.
3. The counsel of introverts is important when our communications need to be measured.
4. And they are essential when we are putting anything in print for others to see.
5. Whenever focus & concentration are required, plan to have some introverted energy on the team.
6. Finally, when we want to launder a given situation of excessive ego (gee whiz, can we imagine any of that on an extrovert-dominated team?), then the calm eyes and measured tone of an introverted observer can work wonders. For extroverts, excessive enthusiasm and ego just go hand in hand with getting things going; it’s up to leaders to ensure that there is enough introverted caution around them to balance it all out.

SLIDE 17- Here is a situation where I was helped a great deal by an introverted member of a team with a huge preponderance of extroverts. She helped me to see things I had never even considered. Now you might have observed that extroverts seem to love a good debate (hmm...sounds like an argument to introverts, but extroverts like to think of it as just a spirited discussion.)

Introverts, on the other hand, experience it as playing in traffic.

Linda was a thoughtful, very smart, word-smithing introvert on this highly-enthusiastic team. Fortunately, as part of her introverted experience in the boisterous NYC schools, she had figured out that if you didn’t ask for what you needed, no one would ever notice, and you’d be left there to wither in the melee. So one day she made an appointment to see me just after a staff
meeting, to talk about how she saw our productivity being compromised. Obviously, the topic caught my attention, and so I was eager to hear what she had to say. She came with a list for each of us to look at as she spoke. And here are the major observations and suggestions she presented to me:

- There has been a great deal of heat and not always a lot of light happening in our meetings, especially the ones devoted to brainstorming new ideas.
- Extroverts on the team interrupt and seem to devalue the quieter members—thereby robbing the team of their ideas and concerns. Then she pointed out some colossal mistakes that had been made because calmer voices with good suggestions had just been ignored. Ouch.
- In order to marshal the talents of the entire team, preventing mistakes and fine-tuning ideas in the future, Linda opined, I needed to start working to change the culture of meetings from a high-spirited shouting match to a quieter, more thoughtful exchange of ideas—one where the questions about ideas were valued just as much as the ideas themselves, and where no one felt dismissed or irrelevant.
- Then she suggested the following tweaking to our meeting structure: (1) send out the agendas a day in advance so introverts could come to the meeting with their ideas prepared (2) if an entirely new idea was to be discussed, send a draft proposal to team members no later than the day before the meeting (3) Convene the group at a definite time, and begin each meeting with 3 minutes of silence in which people collected their thoughts and (4) Start each meeting with a brief check-in from each person, limited to 30-seconds per person. She also said it would be important to let people know that I was asking for these changes in order to be more respectful of the processes of the introverts on our team.
- When Linda presented me with these suggestions, my first extroverted thought (in addition to slightly hurt feelings, of course) was that there wouldn’t be time for material to be discussed if we spent 15 minutes getting ready to be ready. But guess what? In combination with her other ideas about getting information ready to be discussed and distributed
before the meeting ever happened, team members thought about things more critically and arrived at the meetings in much more of a state of readiness. The results of our discussions were vastly improved, and the three introverts swimming in that sea of extroversion felt very differently about their place on our team. I was amazed at the positive results, and many people with whom I’ve shared that story have gotten similarly positive outcomes when they implemented similar changes.

• And now here is some information about what’s hard for introverts, and some suggestions for their “easing into” some challenging situations.

SLIDE 18- What’s probably hard for introverts? Here are 7 things that can make introverts anxious, and some helpful antidotes for you introverts and/or their managers to consider.

SLIDE 19- (1) Entering a new group can be hard, and can feel a little like entering a dinner party late and trying to find your seat with everyone staring at you. So here are some things we suggest: (a) formalized introduction processes, set in motion hopefully by the leader, but if not, we recommend that you have some short statements about yourself ready to share with people—don’t leave your first contacts to chance, be ready to do it yourself (b) It’s also good to keep your social networking platforms updates—so that people can find out about you virtually as you enter new situations.

SLIDE 20- (2) A second problematic situation is being interrupted or cut off by a pushy or ebullient extrovert, which happens frequently to many introverts: (a) You can politely say something like this, “I’ll be finished in just a minute, Tom, but I think this idea is worth our thinking about as a group” (b)OR, later, sometime during the meeting, find an opportunity to gently re-insert your idea into the conversation with a comment such as “the suggestion I was trying to make before seems especially relevant here…” It’s important to be insistent but polite in expressing your need to be heard—for the good of the group as well as yourself. The one thing not to do, however, is just withdraw in retreat when
someone seems to have disrespected your ideas, because that will make you feel bad and rob the group of your wisdom.

SLIDE 21- (3) Networking can also be hard. But here are some strategies to try:
(a) reach out via social networking such as LinkedIn to learn something about people you will/ might meet (b) schedule networking events carefully—never too many in a short space of time, as they’re very draining for introverts (c) Plan and prepare for events—do your research so you can go with a list of things you’d want to find out from others, for instance, as well as several things you know about and would like to share (d) Send follow-up emails or notes to people you meet and like, to keep the connection(s) “warm” for you.

SLIDE 22- (4) And cold calls without a real introduction can be a nightmare: You won’t find many Introverts choosing occupations like outside sales where you have to show up on strangers’ doorsteps, but nonetheless almost every job has some element of “cold-calling” to it. How can Introverts make those times easier for themselves? (a) Research, research, research, of course—learn all you can about a person and his/her organization, as well as about the challenges your service or product can help ameliorate, and the call won’t stay “cold” for very long, because you’ll be able to introduce yourself as someone with a solution to offer. Think of networking as a time to discuss how you can be helpful to another person, rather than as one of those “hail fellow well met” experiences that terrify introverts (b) Rehearsing and role-playing your opening statements with co-workers or friends is also very helpful, so that they get to seem almost “automatic” and lose the sting of anxiety.

SLIDE 23- (5) Not to mention the terrifying task of giving speeches (a) All of these things will help: Research & preparation (b) Espionage about your audience—especially learn to do a features and benefits analysis, where you focus on what you know this audience wants to hear about to do whatever tasks they have in front of them (c) Warm-up, of course—talking to yourself about your topic before you walk into the place where you’ll be speaking (d) Finally, your power pack can help you start the speech from a place of confidence. It’s simple—just close your eyes and remember a time when you did
something very well. Hold that image in your mind for 10 seconds or more, remembering where you were and what felt so great. Then, when you start to speak, your mind and voice will be powered by self-confidence, rather than self-doubt—and you’ll get a much different response from your audience.

SLIDE 24- (6) Job search season is often a time for introverts to hate—both the presentation materials stage (where you have to be able to brag about yourself) and the interview stage (where you have to do it in person, no less, and sometimes for a group of 10 or more people. What can make it easier is remembering that introverts are generally fantastic preparers, able to plan out what points you want to make, and tie your comments to the research you’ve done. And when they ask you questions about what you can offer them, don’t forget to brag about all the ways in which introverts are necessary to a highly-effective team.

SLIDE 25- (7) Finally, in that interview stage, remember a few other simple tips such as (a) warm-ups before interview begins (I actually have clients begin talking to themselves, preferably out loud for a few minutes before an interview begins to get the croakiness out of their voices) (b) role-playing the interview with others until you’re almost bored with it (c) and do something unusual to get attention in your own way. Here’s an example of a strategy that worked well when my office was making a new hire.

Bobbie, an applicant for a program assistant position, who was very clever technically, did a “show-and-tell” book from the web about all the staff who worked in our office by finding information about them from different places on the web. When she came for an interview, she took around the pamphlet she had designed and introduced herself to those people one at a time. Those staff members were taken by surprise and loved that gesture—and in turn made it very clear to the hiring committee who they wanted for the position. The committee got it, and Bobbie (an introvert, by the way) was hired.
SLIDE 26- Here are some “organizational adjustments” to SEEK (if you are an introvert) or to OFFER (if you are managing or working with one or more) to less extroverted people.

Let’s talk first about what to SEEK (as an Introvert wanting to maximize your strengths and avoid feeling “left behind” in sometimes chaotic group situations):

(1) Push for agendas and supporting documentation in advance of meetings. This can make all the difference in your feeling that you have a seat at the table, because you’ll be prepared to jump right in as the discussion unfolds.

(2) Do whatever you can (perhaps in private with leaders) to advocate for deadlines with realistic times for research and reflection. Make this criterion part of your “sort” for choosing good employers for yourself. Some employers get the importance of this, while most don’t. But it can be very important in affecting how happy & productive you’re able to be.

(3) Whenever you can, demonstrate the efficacy of some 1/1 or small group meetings as occasional alternatives to the large, fast-moving ones. When you have a really productive small session, get the word out in person or via email about what you were able to get done. In due time, people will get the message that a variety of ways to work together makes for a better mix of strengths.

(4) Seek out quiet, manageable working spaces for yourself with few interruptions. You don’t have to ask necessarily, just scout out what you need, and it will probably be fine. Remember the old line about it being easier to get forgiveness if necessary than permission to do something a little new. Remind yourself of this if the atmosphere doesn’t seem very flexible about these things: If a sense of desperation goads you into taking a job with no private work space, you know you’ll be looking for another job, getting sick or taking drugs within the year.

(5) Ask for opportunities to meet team members in 1-1 settings before your first big meeting, inviting them to let you know who they really are and, in return, sharing information that will let them know what you bring to the team that
could be helpful to them. Asking people to talk about themselves is the first strategy of a gifted conversationalist.

(6) Explore opportunities to work at home or off-site to get a good conceptual handle on an upcoming project. That helps you play from your strength of research and preparation, and will make it much more likely that you’ll feel prepared and confident as you begin.

So, how can managers help design an introversion-friendly work environment for their quieter talent?

SLIDE 27- Here’s how others can help—particularly the supervisors among us. You can OFFER (as a leader or colleague trying to maximize the comfort level of Introverts on your team) as many of the following as possible. And if you don’t know how many introverts you have on your team, take some of the ideas from this webinar to private meetings with the quieter members of your team, and see if any the descriptions or ideas resonate for them. The items below would probably be welcomed by most of them.

(1) A meeting schedule that involves a mix of small-group and full-team sharing and problem-solving is almost always welcome news for introverts—and thus has the effect of greatly improving the quality of planning and project implementation for your team.

(2) Valuing (and providing for) a thoughtful warm-up to get focused before an important discussion will make a big difference also. Let your team know you see this time to focus is just as important as an extroverted “hitting the ground running” approach (even if you are one of those speedy extroverts.) The irony is that you might be compromising the potential contributions of really creative team members without even knowing it if you allow the style of your extroverts to remain dominant.
(3) Another introversion-friendly approach is to invite people to ponder a challenging situation on their own, and send or bring ideas to a full group discussion at a later time.

(4) If you are a manager, take the time to establish individual relationships with those of your direct reports who you think are more shy or introverted. Make it a point to schedule regular conversations in their offices or other more neutral places (remembering that your office can feel like a trip to the Principal’s Office.) And then really talk WITH them, not TO them about things. Invite their opinions, and let them know you value their perspective. This can make a big difference in motivating them to do their best work from a place of confidence.

(5) Finally, don’t be afraid to use these terms—even use a tool such as the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator to jump-start a discussion with work groups to help them see the importance of having different types of people on a team. This instrument has been used for many decades (and they even administer it in some middle schools). It seldom ceases to provide tasty nuggets for a team to digest in understanding how they can best work together. It’s up to you as a leader to espouse the “Vive la difference” approach to management and team building in this way too.

SLIDE 28- You might be wondering how this introversion/extroversion spectrum affects the process of “managing up” and “managing down.” Well, all the principles we’ve discussed apply, but you just have to spend some time figuring out whether your target person (be it your supervisor or a direct report) is more I, more E, or a blend, and there are some handy tools for doing that. The most reliable is to have a conversation and pose some “friendly” questions about the qualities we’ve discussed. For instance, “Hey, Susan, I want to be sure you know about some new information we’re considering—would you like me to forward a document to you or sit and talk about it for a few minutes?”

If you could find a way to have the MBTI administered in your work unit, that could help. Or you could just wander up to HR and ask if you could borrow the Introduction to Type booklet that goes with the assessment, and do some figuring for yourself.
“Managing up” can be hard because you’re very likely dealing with an authority figure who might push some of your shyness buttons (if you’re an introvert) or who might find you too pushy (if you’re an extrovert.) It’s all doable, but just requires some careful planning.

“Managing down,” on the other hand, can be tricky because you want to be taken seriously enough (if you’re a soft-spoken introvert) and don’t want to overwhelm anyone if you’re more extroverted.

If the folks up or down are similar to you on that I/E spectrum, you’ll know almost instinctively how to approach, from either direction.

SLIDE 29: That all works fine if you’re on your home turf, but what about handling yourself at conferences, where you may not have prior knowledge of the folks you’ll be encountering?

Well, some espionage will be in order as always if you’re an introvert. Read the conference descriptions on the way to the event and, once you get there, hopefully with some time to spare, dig deep into the conference proceedings materials, with the intention of getting the lay of the land—so you’ll feel prepared. Jot down some comments and a question or two about the materials that will be covered, so you won’t be at a loss for words should a conversation break out.

And remember to keep your batteries charged. The best way to do that is NOT to be obedient (as you might feel inclined to do) and attend a session in every time slot. Rather, be choosy, and with your time, and be sure to allow enough time to relax, do some reading, maybe even play a little, to be sure you have enough energy for the things that really matter.

The theme of introverts feeling empowered to choreograph their own lives whenever possible is important. Cori, how about a poll to check on how well our participants might have been doing that.
SLIDE 30: Next, here’s a poll to see what kinds of adjustments have worked for some of our participants. POLL: NAME THE ADJUSTMENT THAT WOULD MEAN THE MOST TO YOU/ OR HAS WORKED BEST WITH INTROVERTS YOU KNOW.

1. Meeting with one or two individuals periodically instead of with a big group
2. Introductions from colleagues and mentors to people I/they should know
3. Inviting introverts to share their ideas in writing with others
4. Pairing an introvert and an extrovert to work together, and instructing each one to observe and utilize the strengths of the other
5. Asking introverts what they’re observing that might have escaped their more talkative colleagues or bosses

SLIDE 31. Let me share the “Introvert-Appreciation” mantra we wrote for people on the quieter side of the table. This can be helpful at work, of course, but also in social situations and, most importantly perhaps at home, in helping an introverted child make her way effectively in groups where her style is not the norm:

I LOVE BEING AN INTROVERT BECAUSE I GET PLEASURE FROM BEING DEEPER, MORE THOUGHTFUL, MORE FOCUSED AND MORE CREATIVE. I WILL HELP THE EXTROVERTS AROUND ME UNDERSTAND AND VALUE ME MORE—BECAUSE THEY REALLY DO NEED ME!

Use this mantra as often as you can—and definitely before you head into one of those noisy places full of speedy people interrupting each other. It’s also a good thing to say silently to yourself as you settle into a quiet, comfortable work station to get started on an exciting new project.

SLIDE 32- Here are some print resources we have found helpful:
• Susan Cain, *Quiet/. The Power of Introverts in a World That Can’t Stop Talking*
  
  Cain’s book is the one most referred to in the arena of helping introverts to understand and value themselves. It cites the literature carefully and has some special Resource sections, for educators, parents, and introverted public speakers.

• Jennifer Kahnweiler, Ph.D., *Quiet Influence. The Introvert’s Guide to Making a Difference*
  
  Kahnweiler’s book is shorter and more specific to modern workplaces. She expresses some interesting ideas about the interface of introversion and social media. She also offers specific guidance on how to be what she calls a “Quiet Influencer,” which is a goal for many Mawtyr alums.

• Joanna Penn, *Public Speaking for Authors, Creatives, & Other Introverts.*
  
  This book does what the title says it will—has lots of tips for preparing for and delivering effective presentations when “shooting from the hip” is not your preferred style. Penn pays special attention to how effective introverts can be—because they are so good at research and preparation.

SLIDE 33. Questions. Hopefully you’ve had a chance to send us some questions—so let’s see what you’d like us to talk about spontaneously for a few moments.

SLIDE 34: Here are our upcoming programs for spring.