



Marketing for Introverts

**Understand Your Most
Comfortable Options**

by Marcia Yudkin

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Introduction

Do you enjoy being alone? Prefer keeping your personal life to yourself? Hate small talk? Wish the people you do business with would stop yakking and get to the point?

If so, you may have been sold a bunch of malarkey when it comes to bringing in customers. Contrary to the stereotype in our culture, introverts can excel at marketing.

I'm perfect proof. Put me at a cocktail party - or even a family gathering - and I'll be busy thinking up a creative excuse for slipping out the door.

Yet I've successfully spoken to numerous national conventions, delivered commentaries on National Public Radio and composed a popular YouTube video about my lifestyle. I have tens of thousands of people following me, buying my products, recommending me to friends and becoming clients.

Read on to discover many of the marketing tactics that best fit the introverted temperament. And be sure to download my free Marketing for Introverts audio manifesto, which is free, at <http://www.yudkin.com/introverts.htm> .

To your success!

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Public Speaking for Introverts

Are you surprised to learn that there is next to no correlation between being introverted and being able to hold an audience in the palm of your hand?

The long list of famous introverts who hold (or held) their own on a stage quite well includes U.S. President Abraham Lincoln, Former First Lady Laura Bush, Comedian Steve Martin, Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper, Civil Rights Activist Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and many others.

You could be on that list, too. Really!

Above all, the keys to introvert success as a speaker are an understanding of your most comfortable communication style, a controlled speaking situation, careful preparation, some way to connect with the audience, and practice, practice, practice.

Here are some tips to help you win applause from audiences and win them over to your way of thinking when you speak to many people at once, from the platform, on the radio, or over a conference-call line.

1. Know your native speaking style.

As an introvert, you're unlikely to do best with a rah-rah, get-them-shouting style of speaking. Instead, you are more comfortable relying on facts, logic, multiple teaching points, stories, imagination and elegant rhythm or phraseology.

Find models of great communicators whose speaking strengths you can identify with and learn from. Several sessions with a speaking coach would help you smooth away the rough edges of your presentation style.

2. Seek out controlled speaking situations.

By a controlled speaking situation, I mean a speaking gig where you know in advance how long you have to speak and to whom, where you can plan your talk ahead of time and where you don't have to improvise much or react properly in the moment.

You would probably do better being interviewed in a slow, sincere fashion than in the jokey, superficial style of AM radio. Don't put yourself on a TV interview show where the host (like Stephen Colbert) takes pride in keeping guests off balance.

3. Prepare what you'll say.

Either create a very detailed outline to speak from or write out your whole speech. In the latter instance, you won't normally want to read your prepared remarks word for word, but the writing process helps set the content clearly in your mind.

If you keep the structure of what you plan to say extremely simple, such as "Three Steps to Mastering Your Fears," then you'll remember how to proceed even if you don't use your notes. Audiences appreciate such simplicity, also.

4. Connect with the audience.

Think of speaking to a group not as a performance but as an opportunity to click with them. Try opening with questions that create some interaction or with a story that pulls them in. If you're all in the room together, create eye contact with selected individuals in different parts of the room.

Remember that the audience wants you to succeed in communicating with them.

5. Practice, practice, practice.

Don't merely envision yourself talking through your talk, actually say it out loud - numerous times. Deliver your speech to your dog or cat, to the mirror, while pacing your hotel room or even while walking around outdoors. (Hold a cell phone to your ear while doing this, and no one will give you a second look!)

When you don't have enough time to practice an entire talk from beginning to end, practice both the beginning and the end until you not only remember what to say but you can truly put yourself into it.

If you have shied away from speaking because you simply assumed it would not suit you, try it out in a low-stakes situation first, such as a small adult education class. If you enjoy it, then tackle more formal speaking challenges, in front of larger groups.

Leading seminars and presenting at conferences might even become a favorite way for you to build your reputation!

Networking for Introverts

Networking seems antithetical to the reserved nature of introverts. If you love being by yourself, hate small talk, don't normally talk to strangers and dislike noisy crowds, you might be tempted to skip business and meetings mixers altogether.

However, it is possible to make profitable business connections by attending networking groups - without signing up for a personality transplant. Here's how.

1. Choose the right groups.

Test a group by attending once or twice before you commit to it. Some groups are friendly to newcomers, others are not. Some groups ensure that everyone has an opportunity to introduce himself or herself, both to the whole group and to everyone sitting at a particular table.

Structured situations work much better for introverts than just milling around. Similarly, smaller meetings help you feel at home faster than enormous ones.

2. Get involved in an organization.

You will feel more comfortable and meet people more easily when you have an official role. Volunteer to be a "greeter" and you have the job of talking to everyone briefly as they walk in. Or sign up for the publicity committee and you will be thanked publicly whenever the group gets media coverage.

3. Find someone who is standing alone.

It's far easier to begin talking to someone who may feel as lost as you than to break into a group who are already chatting away in earnest. Likewise, when deciding where to sit for a dinner meeting, sit next to someone who isn't talking to anyone yet rather than next to a small clutch of friends.

4. Attend meetings with a buddy.

An extroverted friend can help you break the ice most easily, of course. But even pairing up with another introvert lets you show up with a game plan while not feeling like a total outsider.

5. Polish and practice your 30-second introduction.

Give it a creative or humorous twist if possible. Your reward: People come up to you afterwards and initiate a conversation. That is always easier for you than talking first.

6. Plan innocuous questions ahead of time.

Use these to talk to someone who also seems not to know too many people there. For instance: "Are you a member?" "Where did you park?" "This is my first time here, what about you?"

7. Use the Internet to prep for the meeting.

If the organization has a member list posted online, do a little research and select a few business people you'd like to meet, then ask for them when you check in at the door.

8. Forget about quantity.

Networking yields best results from quality conversations rather than mingling with as many people as possible or collecting the most business cards. Just one person you hit it off with might turn into a great connection for you.

Always keep in mind that networking is not a party. Your goal is making connections with people who might become clients or know people who can help your business move forward. Using these techniques helps you relax and let the magic happen.

Getting Published for Introverts

As an introvert, you may find that writing comes easily to you. Probably you would rather scribble in your journal than pass the time of day with acquaintances at a bar. So you may assume that writing for publication is a cakewalk, given your preferences.

Because I have worked with hundreds of people over the years who were hoping to get published, I can point out five aspects of the process that can trip you up. You will need to pay attention closely to avoid these challenges.

Challenges to Overcome

1. Understanding the “Reader Comes First” principle

If you started writing because of an irresistible inner drive, sooner or later you come face to face with the problem that what you believe you said isn't what others understand while reading your work.

To get published, you must mature beyond sheer self-expression and make your peace with the fact that published writing communicates. If the reader doesn't understand it as you meant it, you must revise and edit. Seek out and value expert feedback as you master the craft of writing.

2. Getting feedback in public

While learning to improve your writing, you might be tempted to sign up for a writing class, workshop or conference. As an introvert, however, you may be vulnerable to feeling devastated when your work is torn apart in front of a group. So choose a learning environment where the atmosphere is supportive rather than cruel and destructive. Even better, arrange for one-on-one feedback with a mentor or coach.

After you are published, you may have an inordinately hard time brushing off negative reviews. Dreaming up brilliantly cutting replies to critical comments saps your energy and doesn't help your reputation. Simply let go of the nastiness, knowing you cannot please everyone.

3. Reaching out to editors or agents

Somehow the longest distance in the process of getting published is the space between a submission that is ready to go and the mailbox or the "send" button. Ask a friend to take care of that step for you if you keep procrastinating on it.

And because you undoubtedly feel more comfortable writing a letter or email than making a call, rely on written communication when you can.

4. Pitching to agents

Some writing conferences create a mixer-type setting containing opportunities to introduce yourself to leading literary agents. Since you are less aggressive than extroverts in elbowing your way to the front of a crowd or breaking into an ongoing conversation, this puts you at a huge disadvantage.

Instead, seek out conferences that pre-arrange short one-on-one pitch meetings between aspiring writers and agents. Then practice, practice, practice a 30-second introduction to your book!

5. Stepping into the spotlight

Introverts enjoy holding back and sharing their lives mainly with those who matter most to them. To promote your writing, however, you need to get comfortable with media coverage, interviews, approaching well-known people for blurbs and various kinds of performances.

Take promotion one step at a time and discover which activities you most enjoy (or dislike the least). Remember that the goal is attention for your work. Resolve not to be an Emily Dickinson, cherished now but reclusive and obscure during her lifetime. Become respected and read while you're around to take pleasure in the acclaim!

Getting Publicity for Introverts

Some people assume that introverts, who recharge their energy best when alone, naturally shy away from being in the public eye.

That is not true.

As an introvert, you enjoy getting recognition for a job well done, and you probably understand the benefits of getting your business better known. However, certain aspects of publicity can feel tricky and paradoxical for you.

Your biggest conflict is summed up in the word "exposure." On the one hand, it means that people have heard of you and your business. On the other hand, it implies that all your flaws are revealed to the world, and you stand open to the judgment of everyone. Horrors!

My fondest fantasy is to be able to go through the rest of life being invisible. That's safe and comforting. Yet I've mastered the art of earning publicity and help others step happily (and profitably) into the spotlight. Here are tips for seeking publicity if you consider yourself reserved, essentially a private person or shy.

1. Pursue print more than broadcast publicity.

Interviews with newspaper and magazine reporters are much more forgiving than those for radio and TV. For print, you can take a bit more time to get your thoughts together when asked a question, and you need not worry about how you look or how your voice sounds while answering.

2. Draw boundary lines to protect your privacy.

Unless you are a Hollywood celebrity or involved in a sensational crime, you normally get to create some limits to publicity. For example, you can be photographed at the office or in a public place rather than at home with your family. You can stick to publicity opportunities that highlight you in your professional capacity.

3. Team up and put your partner in the spotlight.

When the second press release I ever wrote sparked interest from the Wall Street Journal, we agreed that my more talkative co-owner was the one who

would talk to the reporter. Likewise, when it was my co-author, rather than I, who appeared on the Oprah Winfrey Show, I was happy to applaud her from home.

4. Get famous as an expert.

Instead of wanting to be famous for no reason, you prefer to get known for your abilities and accomplishments. Writing articles and books, distributing press releases and sharing your perspectives in interviews are strategies that better fit your personality than angling for a mention in the category of "who is who around town."

5. Get famous as a listener.

Introverts generally listen better than extroverts, and you can take advantage of this strength to become known as a gifted interviewer or a probing conversationalist. Teleclasses, podcasts and Internet radio offer accessible new venues for this type of personality strength.

Contradictory as this sounds, you can engineer publicity that makes you a public figure and a "name" while keeping you relatively cocooned within your personal sphere.

So get prepared to enjoy your 15 minutes – or 15 years – of shining in the spotlight!

About the Author

From the launch of her writing career in the *New York Times* in 1981 to today's recognition as one of the world's top creative marketing experts, Marcia Yudkin has excelled at turning words and ideas into money.

Her 11 books include *6 Steps to Free Publicity*, *Persuading on Paper*, *Web Site Marketing Makeover*, *Internet Marketing for Less than \$500/Year* and *Freelance Writing for Magazines & Newspapers*, a Book of the Month Club selection. Her articles have appeared in hundreds of magazines, including the *New York Times Magazine*, *TWA Ambassador*, *USAir Magazine* and *Business 2.0*. She has been featured in *Success Magazine*, *Entrepreneur*, *Business96*, *Business99*, *Home Office Computing*, *Working Woman*, *Women in Business*, dozens of newspapers throughout the world and four times in the Sunday *Boston Globe*.

Her Marketing Minute segment aired for more than a year on WABU TV, and she has delivered commentaries on WBUR in Boston and National Public Radio. For eight years running, she has served as an official site reviewer for the Webby Awards and has helped judge the *Inc.* Magazine Small Business Web Awards.

After 17 years of serving clients amidst the big-city bustle of Boston, Marcia moved in 2002 to the woods of Western Massachusetts, where she works with business owners and marketers around the world via phone and Internet. In her spare time, she serves her community as director of Goshen, Massachusetts' one-room library, helping to make it a welcoming center for intellectual stimulation and discussion.

She holds three Ivy League degrees, including a Ph.D. in the humanities, and has taught writing at Boston University, Babson College, Holyoke Community College and the New England School of Law.

Marketing Resources for Introverts

FREE Marketing for Introverts Audio Manifesto:

<http://www.yudkin.com/introverts.htm>

Become a More Productive Writer Course:

<http://www.yudkin.com/firstaid.htm>

Deep Publicity Course:

<http://www.yudkin.com/deeppublicity.htm>

Teleteach for Profit Course:

<http://www.yudkin.com/teleteach.htm>

Marketing Mentoring in a Supportive Small Group Setting:

<http://www.marketingformore.com>