



Oprah Winfrey and J. K. Rowling: One Extravert, One Introvert – Both Successful

Case

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Case

In 2007, *Forbes* declared Oprah Winfrey and J. K. Rowling the two richest women in entertainment, just ahead of Martha Stewart and Madonna. Together, they are a good example of how you can be successful no matter what your personality type. The key is to pick the occupation or industry that matches your personality and skills. Oprah is an Extravert. Her extraverted personality comes into play in her role as a talk show host. She also manages her own magazine and other businesses, as well as her TV show – all of which require her to supervise and interact with numerous people every day. In contrast, J. K. is an Introvert. She achieves success by writing alone. Her successful Harry Potter books and movies have become a billion dollar industry, although as a writer she does not have to supervise the many people who have worked on her movies and related businesses (there are, of course, introverted managers and leaders: the correlation between Extraversion and leadership is only moderate).

Both Oprah and J. K. have used their celebrity to inspire others to overcome the obstacles in their lives. Rowling, for example, has been very forthcoming in describing the bouts of depression she used to feel and has publicly attributed the creation of the Dementors in her novels to her own dark feelings.

Discussion Questions

1. Do you think Introverts can be just as successful as Extraverts when it comes to leadership?
2. Do you know any Introverts who occupy leadership positions?
3. If so, how effective are they?
4. Does the type of occupation make a difference in whether Introverts or Extraverts make good leaders (or can they be successful on their own)?

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