

# BLACK INTROVERT WEEK

24-28 OCTOBER 2022



**a handy guide**

Artwork by Raphael O'selle



# welcome

Black Introvert Week (BIW), one of the closing events during UK Black History Month, gives added voice to one of the country's most misunderstood communities.

From improving your personal brand to boosting leadership presence - this guide has practical tips on how you can nurture the talents of those whose personalities are misunderstood and whose skills are all too often overlooked.



# Perception versus reality

A perceivably low-key, often quieter and thoughtful individual, who navigates the world with the intersectionality of race, Black introverts live with a unique feeling of social exhaustion. Here's an insight into why.



**"Why don't you talk?"**

**"You're so quiet!"**

My demeanour is more laid back and quiet, and I'm a more private, reserved person. People are perplexed by me because I don't fit into their perception of how a Black woman should behave.

**"He never comes out with us."**

**"Why doesn't he speak up?"**

I'm a listener and observer. I'm reading the room, taking it all in as I process and really put thought into what I want to say. I'll keep thinking about this

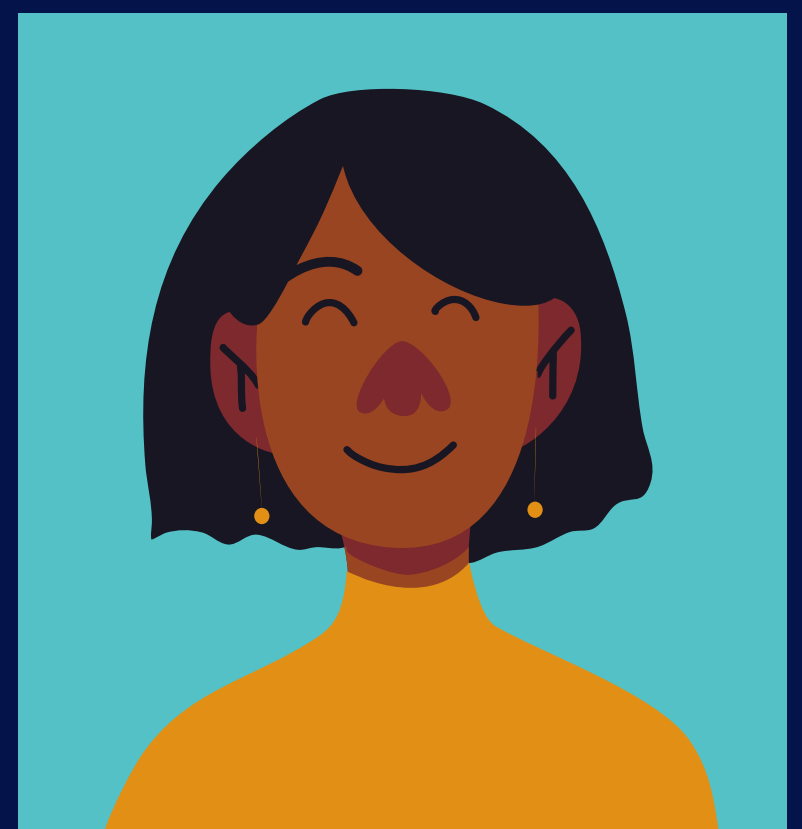
tonight, and follow-up with an email or stop by the CEO's office in the morning to share my views.



"If we aren't wearing our hearts on our sleeves and aren't living our lives out loud, colleagues are unable to read us, so they wonder if we're engaged, if we're a team player, if we like them, if we can be trusted." – Jeri Bingham, founder, Black Introvert Week US.

Introvert  
tip

How to ace  
your interview





# Top interview tips

The job interview process is a daunting one for many, not just introverts, so here are some helpful tips to ensure you keep your cool in the hot seat.

## **Know thy interviewer**

Use LinkedIn or the company website to learn more about your interviewers as it may give you a sense of the questions you could expect. For example, someone with extensive comms experience will likely assess how well you know your audience.

## **Use transition phrases**

Introverts are no stranger to “uhs” and “ums.” To reduce, a slow, “as a matter of fact, I was thinking...” or, “there are a few different approaches to this situation...” will show that you’re engaged while you’re piecing things together.

## **Show, don’t tell**

Create an online portfolio that showcases the projects you’re most proud of. Having a portfolio to show off takes some of the attention off you, and may help the conversation flow more easily, because you’ll have something else to focus on and talk about.

## **Use your quiet temperament to your advantage**

Concise statements generally translate as professional. Don’t push yourself to talk excessively. Saying the right thing in as few words as possible is a great idea.

Employer  
tip

How to create  
an introvert-  
inclusive  
workplace



# Creating an introvert-inclusive workplace

Rather than assuming your Black introverts are not engaged, aloof, or not team players, consider how both introverts and extroverts work and make sure that both groups have equal opportunities to shine and contribute. The following tips will help your organisation to harness the skills of both equally well.

## **Provide opportunities for private working**

If your organisation is currently working from home, this could be the time to start a conversation about how to provide quiet, private workspaces for those who need them when you return.

## **Provide opportunities for both solo and group work**

Extroverts may come up with their best ideas in a group brainstorming session.

Introverts will often find the same sessions unproductive. Extroverts naturally seek collaboration. Introverts need space to work alone.

## **Allow time for preparation and thought**

Introverts like to think before they speak. Avoid calling last-minute meetings if you can and don't surprise people at their desks with unexpected questions.

## **Keep meetings balanced**

Make sure introvert voices aren't drowned out by allowing plenty of time and space for everyone to contribute. Be open to email contributions after a meeting from those who weren't quite ready to speak during it. Also, consider chair rotation.

Introvert  
tip

Your personal  
brand is your  
shop window,  
so keep it  
clean





# Showcasing your personal brand

Your personal brand is essentially what people say about you when you're not in the room. How people discover your personal brand is often as simple as a web search, and **that** is your brand's shop window. Here are some quick tips on how to look your best and attract new opportunities.

## **View you as the world does**

Before typing your name into a search engine, activate incognito/private mode on your web browser. This ensures your results are not impacted by your search history, giving you results that others will likely see.

## **Give first**

Effective personal branding is not about you. It's about the value you deliver to others. Sharing your knowledge, point of view, and expressing gratitude are great ways to build your brand from the angle of generosity.

## **Maintain consistency**

Use the same profile pictures across professional sites and tailor your bio to the audience you're attracting. The bio formula is: your expertise and experience + key achievements + your future goals.

## **Get an extrovert ally**

This kind of support is invaluable because you'll become aware of increased opportunities and learn to expand (not get out of) your comfort zone.

# If you enjoyed this little book of big ideas...



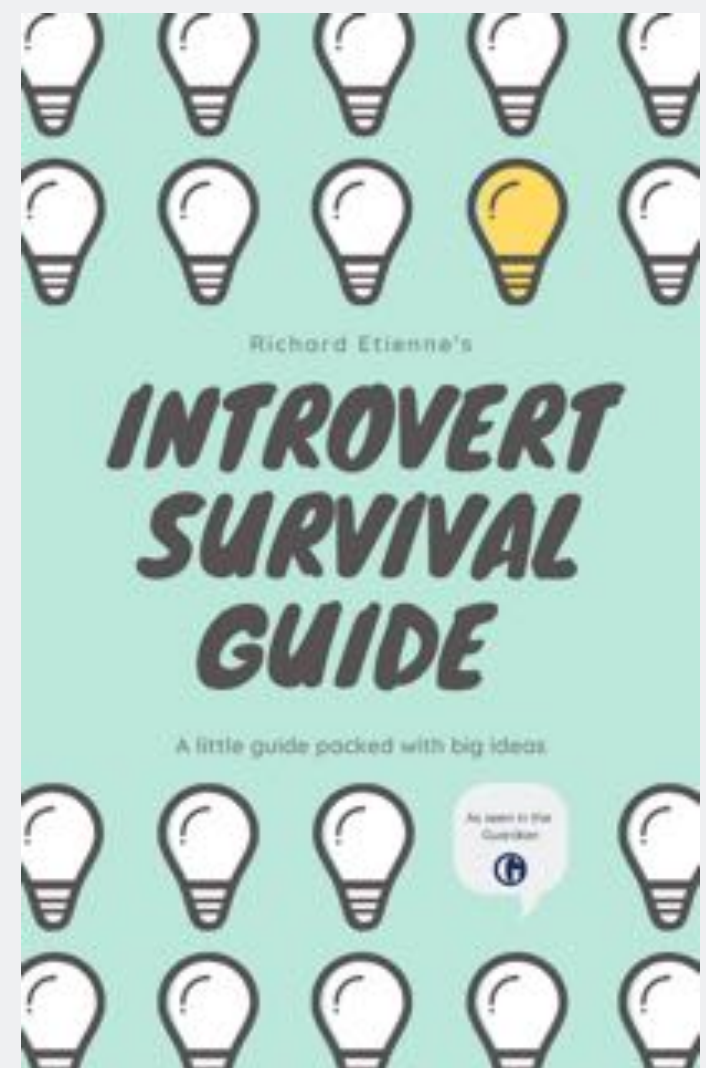
BIW UK Founder,  
Richard Etienne

## 1

You will thoroughly enjoy my Introvert Survival Guide ebook.

From improving your well-being at work (whether in person or remotely) to boosting your leadership presence – this guide has everything you need to truly grow your potential.

**Download your free copy** from [www.richardetienne.co.uk](http://www.richardetienne.co.uk)



## 2

I host a series of masterclasses and one-on-one sessions on introversion in the workplace to help you if:

- you consider yourself introverted
- you want to become bolder in your professional life
- you are about to change careers or enter the professional workplace for the first time
- you manage a team and wish to identify with and develop introverts

**Contact me** to book a session for you and your teams today.  
[me@richardetienne.co.uk](mailto:me@richardetienne.co.uk) | [linkedin.com/in/richardetienne](https://www.linkedin.com/in/richardetienne)

Organisations I have helped include:

