

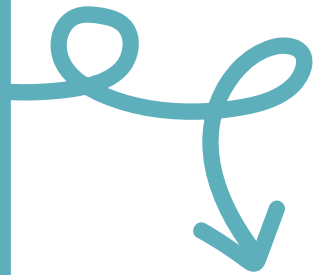
# Chapter 2



*Who's in the  
room?*



*Jean*



**People aren't perfect, but we want to be in our meetings. To do so, we need to be able to identify and manage the varying personalities and communication styles in the room. Think of Frederick, who ALWAYS talks too much. Of Sandra, who shoots down ALL ideas. If your name is Frederick or Sandra, just pretend it says something else... We love you!**

**This is a game of chess. We need to strategize our victory [success]. This chapter is your guide to recognizing "who is in the room", understanding their personality, and providing tactics for getting the most out of the group.**

## *How does it work?*

Taking a page from the world of product design and marketing, we will employ Personas. What is a Persona? While each human is different, we follow certain patterns. A Persona is a fictional character we create based on research/knowledge that represents those common behaviors, needs, or desires of similar individuals. Using Personas will help us supercharge our efforts towards understanding and solving complex problems.

**Note** - these are meant to be exaggerated, so take no offense if you find yourself to be one of these Personas.

**Don't take it persona-ly!**



## *Shy Sam*



### **Characteristics:**

Tends to sit near people they know, often at the corner seat farthest from the Presentation Screen. Speaks only when directly spoken to and sometimes avoids eye contact. Their worst nightmare is having to stand up in front of the group.

# How to conquer it:

1. Speak with “Shy Sam” prior to the meeting [or ask them something via email]. During the meeting, bring up your conversation with “Shy Sam” to the group. This will introduce them into the meeting without putting anyone on the spot.
2. Ask “Shy Sam” a question that is simple to answer and unrelated to the topic. This will give them confidence from the start.
3. Start a conversation, asking for their opinion on the topic at hand. As they respond, increase your physical distance while continuing to listen to their response. As you get farther away, they will speak a bit louder and louder until they end up speaking loud enough for the entire group to hear.
4. Give positive confirmation when they share something. Make sure to comment something like ~ “I really appreciate you sharing that. Wonderful job.” Cheesy, yes, but it genuinely makes a difference!



# Seasoned Susan



## Characteristics:

Has been an employee “since the beginning” or close to it. Tends to say, “We’ve tried that before”. Doesn’t like to try new things without poking holes in the plan, which might be disguised as their desire to be perfect. Difficult to distinguish between their hard work ethic and their intrusive nature.

# How to conquer it:

1. Explain the importance of timing new ideas. In the late 1990s, a startup was raking in MILLIONS for their novel idea: Deliver groceries direct to your home via internet orders. By 2001, Webvan had filed bankruptcy. As of 2021, a direct home delivery grocery app, Instacart, is worth \$30 Billion. Right idea, wrong time.
2. Hit the “I believe button!” - Ask them to trust in the process. A process where some in the room will feel lost at first. Let “Seasoned Susan” know, like a 90’s rom-com, in the end... it’ll all come together.
3. Keep “Seasoned Susan” engaged by asking for insights into how it went wrong in the past or how we can prevent this new initiative from failing as it once did before. “Seasoned Susan’s” perspective is EXTREMELY valuable.
4. A “Seasoned Susan” loves to poke holes in a concept, so give them that power. Assign them the role of devil's advocate and use their super strength for good!



# *Bossy Boss*



## **Characteristics:**

Runs the show; likes every decision to be their own. Out of passion, they will influence the thoughts of the group at any opportunity. One gaze from the Boss and the group's sharing can dry up instantly. They often have solid ideas, which could be greatly enhanced by hearing insights from others.

# How to conquer it:

- 1.** Divide and conquer. If a boss is controlling the room too much, break the group into pairs. This will limit the influence of the boss to only 1 person.
- 2.** Before the meeting, establish an understanding of the Boss's role during the meeting by scheduling a conversation with them.
- 3.** Call them out early! Again, this is best if discussed and planned beforehand. Plan with the boss to call them out for speaking too much, or not following the meeting rules. This will set the standard that we're all valuable during the ideation stage.
- 4.** Ask them to skip out on the meeting until a predetermined time.





# Engineer Brain



## Characteristics:

Logic rules everything. Feeling out of sorts or unfamiliar with a process drives them crazy; often so frustrated they end up silent-yelling like Milton from Office Space. They need order, a designated series of steps, and a reason behind everything before they commit to opening up their mind to opportunity.