

# Profile of the INTJ (Mastermind / Scientist)

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This document contains detailed information about the *INTJ* Jung personality profile. The content references concepts already mentioned in the document called *Understanding your Personality Assessment Results*, which can be found on the [Digital Citizen](#) website. If you are reading this and do not understand some of the content, please refer to the referenced document.

This personality profile comes with the following analysis:

- Portraits (summaries)
- Traits, strengths and weaknesses
- Possible career paths
- Relationships (strengths, weaknesses, lovers, Parents, friends)
- Personal growth (success, happiness, problems, solutions, rules to live by)

The analyses here combine work done by Carl Jung, Katharine Cook Briggs and her daughter, Isabel Briggs Myers, and David Keirsey. Myers & Briggs built their work on Jung's, and Keirsey expanded and revised some of their work. At times, the outcomes conflict in small ways, and they are noted. However, all their works are presented for you to embrace whichever appeals to you.

A read of the Keirsey Temperament documents, found on the [Digital Citizen](#) website, is highly recommended if you want to know more about a profile's tendencies beyond what is here. The document you want is the one with Preference letters found in the profile you want.

## Words of Caution in Interpreting This Material

The biggest mistake I often see with the presentation of personality assessment results is that they are spoken of in absolute terms, when they should be discussed as majority tendencies.

You got a percentage score with each of your Jung type preferences (letter) if you took the test I supplied. That score is an indication of how strong you have those tendencies. A 75% score on Thinking, for example, means you rely on Thinking about 75% of the time to make decisions rather than Feelings. But it also means you use or value Feelings 25% of the time, rather than that you are a Thinking decision-maker all of the time. You have to keep these percentages in mind when interpreting this content as it may apply to you or someone else.

Do **NOT** compare your percentage scores with someone else's as if they were absolute. That is, if you had a 75% Thinking score, that does not mean you are more logical than someone with a 65% Thinking score. The best way I can think to illustrate this is with an analogy. Your percentage is like how you break up *your* "pie", where the whole is both Preferences (Thinking and Feeling here). Someone could have a 55% Thinking score & be more logical in their decision-making than you. That's because *their* "pie" might be bigger than yours. They may put more of, both, Thinking and Feeling, into their decision-making, or may be capable of more complex logical decision-making than you. They just don't rely on Thinking 75% of the time like you. That's all those percentages mean, so keep your % scores only for your own comparison.

While it may more convenient, less convoluted and more convincing to discuss your results in absolute terms, it is not true. People are complex and there's no way of "dumbing them down" to understand them. All that does is either create misunderstandings or skepticism in the results.

## Use the Results as a Starting Point, Not an End Point

Jung's personality type results are generalized, so they can be used as prejudice if you use them as an end point to judge others. This is true if you use the results to judge individuals and condemn them to certain behaviours *all* of the time, when you know it is only true more times than not. It is also unfair to expect all people of a certain personality type to all behave the same way given a certain situation, as each has freedom to behave any way in any certain situations.

Humans are not preprogrammed machines. We do not behave with absolute consistency. We just have tendencies. We are creatures of habit, not logic. As a result, use the Jung personality type results as a starting point to understand each other, not an end point to condemn each other.

## Portrait I – The Mastermind

In the Keirsey Temperament version of the Jung personality type system, the *INTJ* profile is known as the *Mastermind*. Here is Keirsey's description.

All Rationals are good at planning operations, but Masterminds are head & shoulders above all the rest in contingency planning. Complex operations involve many steps or stages, one following another in a necessary progression, and Masterminds are naturally able to grasp how each one leads to the next, and to prepare alternatives for difficulties that are likely to arise any step of the way. Trying to anticipate every contingency, Masterminds never set off on their current project without a Plan A firmly in mind, but they are always prepared to switch to Plan B or C or D if need be.

Masterminds are rare, comprising no more than one to two percent of the population, and they are rarely encountered outside their office, factory, school, or laboratory. Although they are highly capable leaders, Masterminds are not at all eager to take command, preferring to stay in the background until others demonstrate their inability to lead. Once they take charge, however, they are thoroughgoing pragmatists. Masterminds are certain that efficiency is indispensable in a well-run organization, and if they encounter inefficiency – any waste of human and material resources – they are quick to realign operations and reassign personnel. Masterminds do not feel bound by established rules and procedures, and traditional authority does not impress them, nor do slogans or catchwords. Only ideas that make sense to them are adopted; those that don't, aren't, no matter who thought of them. Remember, their aim is always maximum efficiency.

In their careers, Masterminds usually rise to positions of responsibility, for they work long and hard and are dedicated in their pursuit of goals, sparing neither their own time and effort nor that of their colleagues & employees. Problem-solving is highly stimulating to Masterminds, who love responding to tangled systems that require careful sorting out. Ordinarily, they verbalize the positive and avoid comments of a negative nature; they are more interested in moving an organization forward than dwelling on mistakes of the past.

Masterminds tend to be much more definite and self-confident than other Rationals, having usually developed a very strong will. Decisions come easily to them; in fact, they can hardly rest until they have things settled and decided. But before they decide anything, they must do the research. Masterminds are highly theoretical, but they insist on looking at all available data before they embrace an idea, and they are suspicious of any statement that is based on shoddy research, or that is not checked against reality.

## Portrait II – The Scientist

The *INTJ* profile is also often called the *Scientist*. This is how the INTJ profile is also often summarized.

As an INTJ, your primary mode of living is focused internally, where you take things in primarily via your iNtuition. Your secondary mode is external, where you deal with things rationally and logically.

INTJs live in the world of ideas and strategic planning. They value intelligence, knowledge, and competence, and typically have high standards in these regards, which they continuously strive to fulfill. To a somewhat lesser extent, they have similar expectations of others.

With Introverted iNtuition dominating their personality, INTJs focus their energy on observing the world, and generating ideas and possibilities. Their mind constantly gathers information and makes associations about it. They are tremendously insightful and usually are very quick to understand new ideas. However, their primary interest is not understanding a concept, but rather applying that concept in a useful way. Unlike the INTP, they do not follow an idea as far as they possibly can, seeking only to understand it fully. INTJs are driven to come to conclusions about ideas. Their need for closure and organization usually requires that they take some action.

INTJ's tremendous value and need for systems and organization, combined with their natural insightfulness, makes them excellent scientists. An INTJ scientist gives a gift to society by putting their ideas into a useful form for others to follow. It is not easy for the INTJ to express their internal images, insights, and abstractions. The internal form of the INTJ's thoughts and concepts is highly individualized, and is not readily translatable into a form that others will understand. However, the INTJ is driven to translate their ideas into a plan or system that is usually readily explainable, rather than to do a direct translation of their thoughts. They usually don't see the value of a direct transaction, and will also have difficulty expressing their ideas, which are non-linear. However, their extreme respect of knowledge & intelligence will motivate them to explain themselves to another person who they feel is deserving of the effort.

INTJs are natural leaders, although they usually choose to remain in the background until they see a real need to take over the lead. When they are in leadership roles, they are quite effective, because they are able to objectively see the reality of a situation, and are adaptable enough to change things which aren't working well. They are the supreme strategists – always scanning available ideas and concepts and weighing them against their current strategy, to plan for every conceivable contingency.

INTJs spend a lot of time inside their own minds, and may have little interest in the other people's thoughts or feelings. Unless their Feeling side is developed, they may have problems giving other people the level of intimacy that is needed. Unless their Sensing side is developed, they may have a tendency to ignore details which are necessary for implementing their ideas.

The INTJ's interest in dealing with the world is to make decisions, express judgments, and put everything that they encounter into an understandable and rational system. Consequently, they are quick to express judgments. Often they have very evolved iNtuitions, and are convinced that they are right about things. Unless they complement their iNtuitive understanding with a well-developed ability to express their insights, they may find themselves frequently misunderstood. In these cases, INTJs tend to blame misunderstandings on the limitations of the other party, rather than on their own difficulty in expressing themselves. This tendency may cause INTJs to dismiss others input too quickly, and to become generally arrogant and elitist.

INTJs are ambitious, self-confident, deliberate, long-range thinkers. Many INTJs end up in engineering or scientific pursuits, although some find enough challenge within the business world in areas which involve organizing and strategic planning. They dislike messiness and inefficiency, and anything that is muddled or unclear. They value clarity and efficiency, and will put enormous amounts of energy & time into consolidating their insights into structured patterns.

Other people may have a difficult time understanding an INTJ. They may see them as aloof and reserved. Indeed, the INTJ is not overly demonstrative of their affections, and is likely to not give as much praise or positive support as others may need or desire. That doesn't mean that he or she doesn't truly have affection or regard for others, they simply do not typically feel the need to express it. Others may falsely perceive the INTJ as being rigid and set in their ways. Nothing could be further from the truth, because the INTJ is committed to always finding the objective best strategy to implement their ideas. The INTJ is usually quite open to hearing an alternative way of doing something.

When under a great deal of stress, the INTJ may become obsessed with mindless repetitive, Sensate activities, such as over-drinking. They may also tend to become absorbed with minutia and details that they would not normally consider important to their overall goal.

INTJs need to remember to express themselves sufficiently, so as to avoid difficulties with people misunderstandings. In the absence of properly developing their communication abilities, they may become abrupt and short with people, and isolationists.

INTJs have a tremendous amount of ability to accomplish great things. They have insight into the Big Picture, and are driven to synthesize their concepts into solid plans of action. Their reasoning skills gives them the means to accomplish that. INTJs are most always highly competent people, and will not have a problem meeting their career or education goals. They have the capability to make great strides in these arenas. On a personal level, the INTJ who practices tolerances and puts effort into effectively communicating their insights to others has everything in his or her power to lead a rich and rewarding life.

## Jungian Preference Ordering

- **Dominant:** Introverted iNtuition
- **Auxiliary:** Extraverted Thinking
- **Tertiary:** Introverted Feeling
- **Inferior:** Extraverted Sensing

## Famous Masterminds

- Isaac Newton
- Stephen Hawking
- Ben Bernanke
- Lise Meitner
- Dwight D. Eisenhower
- Ulysses S. Grant
- Ayn Rand
- Allan Greenspan
- Niels Bohr

## INTJ Traits, Strengths and Weaknesses

Whether you're a young adult trying to find your place in the world, or a not-so-young adult trying to find out if you're moving along the right path, it's important to understand yourself and the personality traits which will impact your likeliness to succeed or fail at various careers. It's equally important to understand what is really important to you. When armed with an understanding of your strengths and weaknesses, and an awareness of what you truly value, you are in an excellent position to pick a career which you will find rewarding.

INTJs generally have the following traits:

- Able to absorb extremely complex theoretical and complex material
- Driven to create order and structure from theoretical abstractions
- Supreme strategists
- Future-oriented
- See the global, "big picture"
- Strong insights and iNtuitions, which they trust implicitly
- Value their own opinions over others
- Love difficult theoretical challenges
- Bored when dealing with mundane routine
- Value knowledge and efficiency
- Have no patience with inefficiency and confusion
- Have very high standards for performance, which they apply to themselves most strongly
- Reserved and detached from others
- Calm, collected and analytical
- Extremely logical and rational

- Original and independent
- Natural leaders, but will follow those they can fully support
- Creative, ingenious, innovative, and resourceful
- Work best alone, and prefer to work alone

More so than any other personality type, INTJs are brilliant when it comes to grasping complex theories and applying them to problems to come up with long-term strategies. Since this type of “strategizing” is the central focus and drive of the INTJ, there is a happy match between desire and ability in this type. Accordingly, the INTJ is happiest and most effective in careers which allow this type of processing, and which promote an environment in which the INTJ is given a lot of autonomy over their daily lives.

## Career Suggestions for the INTJ

Research has shown that many of the different Personality Types tend to have distinct preferences in their choice of careers. We have incorporated observations of each type’s character traits which affect career choice along with some suggestions for possible directions. We have also included lists of actual careers which the various types have chosen in their lives.

This material is provided for your reference, and is intended to be an informational guide. It does not comprise a complete analysis of ideal careers for individuals & does not guarantee success or failure at any occupation. As we know, individuals vary greatly. However, we highly encourage personal self-knowledge & research in your quest to live up to your fullest, and for this reason we provide you with this information. For a complete & personal evaluation of career possibilities, you should speak with a career guidance counselor.

- Scientists
- Engineers
- Professors and Teachers
- Medical Doctors / Dentists
- Corporate Strategists and Organization Builders
- Business Administrators / Managers
- Military Leaders
- Lawyers / Attorneys
- Judges
- Computer Programmers, Systems Analysts and Computer Specialists

## Personality and Relationships

*“And above all, have fervent love for one another: for love shall cover the multitude of sins.”*

– Peter 4:8

Most of us are probably allured by the attractive notion that effortless relationships exist. Whether it be happily-ever-after marriages, or friendships which last forever, or parent/child bonds which supersede the need to understand each other, we'd all like to believe that our most intimate relationships are unconditional, and strong enough to withstand whatever may come. However, at some point in our lives most of us need to face the fact that relationships require effort to keep them strong and positive, and that even wonderful, strong relationships can be destroyed by neglect.

Whether you're looking to improve a love relationship, familial relationships, friendships, or employer/employee relationships, understanding your own personality type and the personality type of the other person involved in the relationship will bring a new dynamic to the situation, which will allow better understanding and communication. Although the different types of relationships have very different characteristics and specific needs, there are two basic areas which seem to be critical in all relationships: *Expectations and Communication*. What do we expect from ourselves and the other person involved in the relationship? How do we communicate these expectations, and our feelings and opinions to the person in the relationship? How does our personality type affect our expectations and methods of communication? Does our personality type affect who we are romantically attracted to? How does it affect who our friends are, and who we work with best? These are the questions which we address following.

**\*\*Disclaimer\*\***

Please note that we are not prescribing an absolute solution to your relationship problems, nor are we stating that there's any guarantee of improved odds with particular type pairings. Statistics show that individuals who are most happy within their marriages are those who have the highest levels of inner peace and those who have the most optimistic outlook on life in general. We do not address people's emotional standing here when discussing relationship issues, which is another important aspect of relationship dynamics.

## ***Opposites Attract***

That old concept and expression "opposites attract" has been batted around for centuries. And in fact, it's very true when it comes to love relationships. Through our research, we have noted that people are usually attracted to their opposite on the Extraversion/Introversion and Judging/Perceiving scales. We are naturally attracted to individuals who are different from ourselves – and therefore somewhat exciting. But it's not just the exciting differences which attract us to our opposites, it is also a natural quest for completion. We naturally are drawn towards individuals who have strengths which we are missing. When two opposites function as a couple, they become a more well-rounded, functioning unit. There is also the theory that our natural attraction to our opposites is a subconscious way of forcing us to deal with the weaker aspects of our own nature. While we are highly attracted to our opposites, two opposites involved in an intimate relationship have significant issues and communication barriers to overcome. So in a sense, our attraction to the opposite personality can be seen as our subconscious minds driving us towards becoming a more complete individual, by causing us to face the areas in life which are most difficult to us.

The same cannot be said for other kinds of relationships. When it comes to work colleagues, or friends, we are not especially interested in dealing with people who are very unlike ourselves.



We are most comfortable with those who have similar interests and perspectives, and we do not show a lot of motivation or patience for dealing with our opposites.

## ***Birds of a Feather Flock Together***

Although we are attracted to people who are very different from us in the way we deal with the world, we are most attracted to others who have a similar focus in their lives. Couples who have the same dominant function in their personalities seems to have the longest and happiest relationships. So, for example, an individual whose dominant function is Introverted Sensing (ISTJ or ISFJ) seems to be naturally drawn towards partners with a dominant function of Extraverted Sensing (ESTP or ESFP).

We have also noticed that Sensors seem to communicate best with other Sensors, and that iNtuitives seem to communicate best with other iNtuitives. There seems to be a more equal partnership formed with people who communicate on the same level, although there are many successful relationships between Sensors and iNtuitives. Two individuals of any type who are well-developed & balanced can communicate effectively and make a relationship work, but most will communicate best with people who share their same information gathering preference.

With that in mind, it shouldn't come as any surprise to learn that research regarding Personality Type and Relationships shows a definite pattern which indicates that successful mates often share the same dominant function, and the same letter preference ("S" or "N") for their information gathering function. Of course, that does not mean that people with different preferences cannot have a happy, successful marriage, it simply indicates that people frequently settle down with individuals who are on their same "wave-length".

## **INTJs in Relationships**

INTJs believe in constant growth in relationships, and strive for independence for themselves and their mates. They are constantly embarking on "fix-up" projects to improve the overall quality of their lives and relationships. They take their commitments seriously, but are open to redefining their vows, if they see something which may prove to be an improvement over the existing understanding. INTJs are not likely to be "touchy-feely" and overly affirming with their mates or children, and may at times be somewhat insensitive to their emotional needs. However, INTJs are in general extremely capable and intelligent individuals who strive to always be their best, and be moving in a positive direction. If they apply these basic goals to their personal relationships, they likely to enjoy happy and healthy interaction with their families and friends.

### ***Relationship Strengths***

- Not threatened by conflict or criticism
- Usually self-confident
- Take their relationships and commitments seriously

- Generally extremely intelligent and capable
- Able to leave a relationship which should be ended, although they may dwell on it in their minds for awhile afterwards
- Interested in “optimizing” their relationships
- Good listeners

### *Relationship Weaknesses*

- Not naturally in tune with others feelings; may be insensitive at times
- May tend to respond to conflict with logic & reason rather than the desired emotional support
- Not naturally good at expressing feelings and affections
- Tendency to believe that they’re always right
- Tendency to be unwilling or unable to accept blame
- Their constant quest to improve everything may be taxing on relationships
- Tend to hold back part of themselves

## **INTJ Natural Partners (in love and in life)**

Before you read this section, I would like to put in a word of caution *not* to take this section too seriously. Take it for what it’s worth, a statistical likelihood.

All that means is that given some large sampling of pairs of various personality types, the natural partners are the ones which get along best most frequently. However, for any given pair, too many factors in life influence how a relationship develops for naturally matching personalities to be the determining factor. It’s a possible edge, enough to use as the core for love partner matching on love matching sites like *chemistry.com* or *e-harmony*, but not enough to be used along as those sites also take into account other life factors like personal interests, jobs and such.

Natural partners listed here are for life, in general, although some of the text is written for love partners rather than just two people’s ability to get along together well.

Although two well-developed individuals of any type can enjoy a healthy relationship, the *INTJ*’s natural partner is the *ENFP*, or the *ENTP*. See their profiles on the [Digital Citizen](#) website. The *INTJ*’s dominant function of Introverted iNtuition is best matched with a partner whose personality is dominated by Extraverted iNtuition.

You may be interested in understanding how we came to the conclusion that certain types are ideal for each other. Our type pairing is a result of combining observation, research, and understanding of Jungian psychological type. Observation and research of married couples shows that there is a definite trend in types that are attracted to each other, and in type combinations that have the longest lasting relationships. Our understanding of psychological type helps to see that these types typically have the same dominant function, but with a different attitude.

In Jungian terms, “functions” refer to the four core traits: iNtuition (N), Sensing (S), Feeling (F), and Thinking (T). The term “attitude” refers to the direction of the function, *i.e.* Introverted (I) or Extraverted (E).

So, for example, a person with a personality type of ISFP has a dominant function of Introverted Feeling. More specifically, Feeling in the dominant function, and its attitude (or direction) is Introverted. A person with this personality type is likely to be most attracted to, and fit best with, a person that has Extraverted Feeling dominating their personality. Extraverted Feeling dominates the personality types ESFJ and ENFJ. We therefore determine that the ISFP's natural partner is the ESFJ or the ENFJ.

Our natural attraction to people who share our dominant function, but who use it in a different direction works very well for us. We not only flip-flop the Introverted or Extraverted trait, but we also flip-flop the Judging or Perceiving trait. In this way, the partner that we choose for ourselves will have a very different approach to dealing with the world. If we are laid-back and indecisive, our partner will be structured and decisive. If we are reserved, our partner will be outgoing. For all of our apparent differences, we will share a common vision of what's truly important in life.

For people whose personality types are dominated by Decision Making functions, (*i.e.* Thinking or Feeling), their ideal partners will include both Sensing and iNtuitive types. Many people have problems communicating effectively with people who do not share their same preference for Information Gathering. So, if you have a very strong preference for Sensing or iNtuition, you will need to give the personality type with the same preference a higher value as a likely natural partner. For example, an ISFP who strongly prefers Sensing will work best with an ESFJ, rather than an ENFJ.

Although we believe firmly that this model works very well to help in finding and maintaining healthy relationships, it is important to remember that it's just a tool. We offer guidelines to help you understand the kinds of things that you value in a relationship, rather than guidelines that you need to follow strictly. Two well-developed individuals of any type can make a relationship work, and work is a key concept here! There is no such thing as an effortless relationship. Don't use this model as an excuse to dump your relationship.

## INTJs as Lovers

*"To love means to open ourselves to the negative as well as the positive – to grief, sorrow, and disappointment as well as to joy, fulfillment, and an intensity of consciousness we did not know was possible before."*

– Rollo May

INTJs live much of their lives inside their own heads. They constantly scan their environment for new ideas and theories which they can turn into plans and structures. Sometimes, what they see and understand iNtuitively within themselves is more pure and "perfect" than the reality of a close personal relationship. INTJs may have a problem reconciling their reality with their fantasy.

INTJs are not naturally in tune with their own feelings, or with what other people are feeling. They also have a tendency to believe that they are always right. While their self-confidence and esteem is attractive, their lack of sensitivity to others can be a problem if it causes them to

inadvertently hurt their partner's feelings. If this is a problem for an INTJ, they should remember to sometimes let their mate be the one who is right, and to try to be aware of the emotional effect that your words have upon them. In conflict situations, INTJs need to remember to be supportive to their mate's emotional needs, rather than treating the conflict as an interesting idea to analyze.

INTJs are able to leave relationships when they're over, and get on with their lives. They believe that this is the right thing to do. They may have more difficulty accomplishing the task than they like to exhibit to other people.

INTJs are highly intense, intelligent people who bring a lot of depth and insight into most major areas of their life. In terms of relationships, their greatest potential pitfall is the tendency to think about things rather than doing them, and their difficulty reconciling reality with their inner visions. INTJs are likely to be in positive, healthy relationships, because they're likely to leave relationships which aren't working for them (unless other circumstances prohibit that).

## ***Sexual Tendencies***

Sexually, the INTJ enjoys thinking about intimacy and ways to perfect it. In positive relationships, their creativity and intensity shine through in this arena. In more negative relationships, they might enjoy thinking about sex more than actually doing it. They're likely to approach intimacy from a theoretical, creative perspective, rather than as an opportunity to express love & affection. Although, the INTJ who has learned the importance of these kinds of expressions to the health of their relationship is likely to be more verbally affectionate.

## **INTJs as Parents**

*"You are the bows from which your children as living arrows are sent forth...  
Let your bending in the archer's hand be for gladness;  
For even as He loves the arrow that flies,  
so He loves also the bow that is stable."*

– Kahlil Gibran

As a parent, the INTJ's main goal is to raise their children to be intelligent, autonomous and independent. They want their kids to think for themselves and make their own decisions, and so are likely to give them room to grow, and to challenge their decisions and thoughts at key points in their lives.

The INTJ is not naturally likely to be an overly supportive or loving parental figure. Since their own need for expressions of love and affirmation is relatively low, they may have difficulty seeing that need in their children who have Feeling preferences. If they do see this sensitivity, they may not recognize or value the importance of feeding it. In such situations, there will be a distance between the INTJ and the child. This is a problem area for the INTJ, who should consciously remember to be aware of others' emotional needs.

## INTJs as Friends

INTJs are usually difficult to get to know well, and difficult to get close to. Those who are close to the INTJ will highly value them for their ideas and knowledge. Although INTJs are generally very serious-minded people, they also have been known to enjoy letting loose and having fun, if others pull them into it. They also can be really good at telling jokes, and exhibiting a sarcastic wit with a poker face.

The INTJ is not likely to choose to spend time with people who they feel don't have anything to offer the INTJ. They especially like to spend time with other iNtuitive Thinkers, and also usually enjoy the company of iNtuitive Feelers. These personality types love to theorize and speculate about ideas, and so can usually relate well to the INTJ, who loves to analyze ideas.

Many INTJs believe that they are always right. In some INTJs, this belief is quite obvious, while in others it is more subtle. Some people may have a difficult time accepting what they see as a "superior attitude" or "snobbery". Not to imply that INTJs are snobbish, just that some people with strong Feeling preferences may perceive them that way. And some individuals simply have no interest in the theoretical pursuits which the INTJ enjoys.

## Personal Growth

Perhaps the most important realization that an individual can make in their quest for personal growth is that there is no single formula that defines the path to personal success. We all have different goals and priorities, which means that different activities and attitudes will make us feel good about ourselves. We also have different natural strengths and weaknesses that are a part of our inherent personality type. How then, as individuals, can we feel successful in our lives?

### *Understand What's Important to You*

Each personality type has a different idea of what it means to be successful. Self-knowledge is one common goal that will help everyone achieve personal success. So many people are hung up on somebody else's idea of what it means to be successful, and they are unaware of what is truly important to them. This is completely normal. We all have important role-models and influencers in our lives who may have basic values quite different from our own. If so, it's important to recognize that the discrepancy between what we have been taught is truly important and what we personally believe to be truly important is due to a difference in perspective. If we spend our time and effort trying to meet somebody else's idea of success, and ignore or belittle any conflicting messages from our own psyche, then we will find ourselves exhausted and unhappy. Realizing what is truly important to us is a major step towards achieving personal success.

### *Recognize Your Weaknesses Without Hiding Behind Them*

While improving our self-knowledge and realizing our true goals can be very liberating, we should not discard the rules of the society in which we live. We must recognize that other

people's value systems are no less important than our own. And we must recognize and accept that we live in a society in which certain personality types and behaviors are more suited towards particular tasks. This is the second key that will open the door towards personal growth.

For example, there are situations in which it is more appropriate & effective to show compassion and caring (Feeling), rather than impersonal logic (Thinking). Likewise, there are situations that call for using impersonal logic to make a decision, in which the more subjective viewpoint of the Feeling function is inappropriate and ineffective. Persons with a preference for Feeling will have a natural advantage over Thinkers in situations that require compassion and awareness of other's emotions. Conversely, persons with a preference for Thinking will have a natural advantage over Feelers in situations that require the ability to make a decision based on impersonal data.

As we learn about our personality type and the types of others, we are empowered with an understanding of why people react differently in different situations. When put into the context of Psychological Type, we can better accept and understand people's behaviors that are different from ours. These insights are extremely useful and powerful to us as individuals. However, if we are concerned with growing as individuals, we must take care not to use personality type as an excuse for our inappropriate behavior. While it's powerful and useful to notice that another person's inappropriate behavior may be due to their personality type, we cannot use the same reasoning on ourselves. We should recognize that our personality type has weaknesses, but we must use that knowledge to conquer those weaknesses rather than to excuse poor behavior. We cannot be responsible for other people's behavior, but we can control our own.

Accordingly, if we notice that someone seems to be unable to make an impersonal decision that is isolated from human perspective, we should say to ourselves, "Ah ha, here is a Feeler. This person does not use Thinking well, and that is why they're behaving this way." Yet when we as Feelers are presented with a situation that requires an impersonal approach, we should NOT say to ourselves "I am a Feeler, and can't be expected to make decisions based purely on impersonal facts & logic." This kind of rationalization for behavior is certainly an easy way out of a situation, but it enforces the weakness, making it weaker and weaker still.

### *Strive for Balance*

Most of the weaknesses associated with any given personality type are a result of that type's dominant function overtaking the personality to the extent that the other functions become slaves to the dominant function. Although it is natural for every personality to be ruled by its dominant function, it becomes a problem when the supporting functions are not allowed to develop fully on their own because they are too busy "serving the master". In such cases, a personality can become quite imbalanced.

A situation in which the dominant function of a personality completely overshadows the other personality functions is analogous to a kingdom ruled by an overbearing king who requires absolute servitude. Imagine such a king sitting down to dinner in his castle. He keeps all of his servants running about to bring him dinner, and requires that they serve him fully (disregarding their own needs) until he is completely sated. His Foreign Minister, expected at an important affair at a neighboring kingdom, finds himself pouring ale. His Minister of Domestic Affairs,

rather than addressing the issue of a failing economy, slices roast turkey. His staff grabs food for themselves here and there, but never get what they really need or want, and are consequently unsatisfied, malnourished, and underdeveloped. The issues that the staff should be taking care of are left undone, because they never finish their primary task of serving the king. The king's immediate needs are being met, and so he is tolerably happy, but he is an ineffective king. As far as he knows, everything and everybody exists simply to serve him. He has no concept of Success beyond his daily needs. Since he cannot see beyond his own needs, the entire kingdom suffers.

Likewise, a personality that has developed with a goal of serving the dominant function above all other considerations often results in a person who is imbalanced. In severe cases, weaknesses associated with the given type are often quite apparent to others and overshadow the individual's natural strengths. Such a drastic imbalance is not common, and may be the result of continuous & extreme stress. Most people will experience times in their lives during which they are stressed to the point of serious imbalance. People who experience this constantly have issues that need to be dealt with, and should seek help.

Much more commonly, we see individuals who exhibit both the strengths and weaknesses of their type. It is natural and healthy that each personality type is ruled by a dominant function, and that the other functions support the ruling function. We don't seek to change anyone's natural self, or to achieve a perfect balance amongst a personality's functions. By definition, a kingdom needs a king in order to exist, and a personality needs a dominant function. However, a kingdom with a well-developed and effective king (the dominant function), who has well-trained and educated advisors (the supporting functions), will thrive more than the kingdom ruled by a neglectful king who is supported by inexperienced advisors.

As we can see, Balance and Success are relative terms. They have different meaning for each personality type, but one statement is true for all types: Balance is the key to Success.

## *Opening the Door*

So how do we go about realizing what's truly important to us? How do we recognize our weaknesses, and learn not to hide behind them? How do we become balanced? How do we open that magical door that will show us the way to personal growth and success?

There is no quickie scheme that will make you a successful person. Psychological Type is a powerful aid in our quest for excellence, but it is not the actual solution. It is a model that will help you to expand your understanding of human nature. An improved understanding of yourself and others will help you to find, follow or expand your path. An awareness and acceptance of the fact that one personality function may be more effective than another function in a given situation will help you to understand the relevance of personal growth to your life.

Carl Jung identified a process of personal growth that he called individuation, which is essentially the conscious realization of your true self, beyond the Ego that is presented by your conscious self. Our efforts to help people develop themselves is essentially the effort to help them to realize that their personal perspectives and conscious ideas are only a small part of who they are, and that the more they try to develop and defend this superficial "self", the further they get away

from their true Self. This realization helps a psyche in many concrete ways, and is also a positive step towards promoting a psyche that is open to the process of individuation. For the purposes of making this realization accessible to the general public, our writings are mostly void of complex theoretical discussion.

## **INTJ Personal Growth**

### *What does Success Mean to You?*

People with the INTJ personality type are serious, analytical and perfectionist. They look at a problem or idea from multiple perspectives and systematically analyze it with objective logic, discarding things that turn out to be problematic, and evolving their own understanding of something when new information turns out to be useful. There is no other personality type who does this as naturally as the INTJ. They are natural scientists and mathematicians. Once given an idea, they are driven to understand it as thoroughly as possible. They usually have very high standards for their own understanding and accomplishments, and generally will only value and consider other individuals who have shown that they meet or surpass the INTJ's own understanding on a given issue. INTJs value clarity and conciseness, and have little esteem for behaviors and attitudes that are purely social. Social "niceties" often seem unnecessary and perhaps even fake to the INTJ, who is always seeking to improve their substantive understanding. INTJ's highly value social interaction that is centered around the meaningful exchange of ideas, but they usually dismiss the importance of being friendly or likeable in other social contexts, and they are likely to be uncomfortable with interactions that are primarily emotional, rather than logical. INTJs value structure, order, knowledge, competence, and logic. Above all, they value their own ideas and intuitions about the world. An INTJ's feeling of success depends primarily upon their own level of understanding and accomplishment, but also depends upon the level of structure in their life, and their ability to respect the intelligence and competence of those who share their life.

### *Allowing Your Strengths to Flourish*

As an INTJ, you have gifts that are specific to your personality type that aren't natural strengths for other types. By recognizing your special gifts and encouraging their growth and development, you will more readily see your place in the world, and be more content with your role.

Nearly all INTJs will recognize the following characteristics in themselves. They should embrace and nourish these strengths:

- The INTJ's mind is naturally geared towards systematically analyzing information from many contextual perspectives, and rejecting or retaining information as they become aware of its usefulness or validity. They probably do very well in school, and in any pursuit that requires serious analytical thinking.
- They're extremely insightful, and see things that are not obvious to others. This ability to see patterns and meanings in the world can help the INTJ in many different ways.



- When given a goal or context, an INTJ is able to generate all kinds of possibilities. They're able to see the problem from many different angles, and come up with a solution that fits the needs of the current situation.
- They don't take criticism personally, and are open to changing their opinions when they're shown a better idea or better way of doing something.
- An INTJ has a "stick to it" attitude. They're not afraid of hard work, and will put forth a great deal of effort towards something that they are interested in. This persistence will help the INTJ to achieve any identified goal.
- Usually intelligent and able to concentrate and focus, the INTJ can usually grasp difficult ideas and concepts.

INTJs who have a well-developed Extraverted Thinking function to complement their dominant Introverted iNtuition will enjoy these very special gifts:

- They can discriminate well amongst their iNtutions and build ingenious systems to meet identified goals, or determine a successful plan of action to meet an identified need. In such a way, they may be brilliant scientists, doctors, mathematicians, or corporate strategists.
- Their deep understanding, logical abilities, and persistence may enable them to make discoveries or uncover new ways of looking at something. In such a way, they may perform a great service to society. For example, an INTJ is the likely personality type to discover the cure for cancer.
- The INTJ with well-developed judgment will be able to grasp and process concepts that are beyond what their natural intelligence appears to be able to handle.
- If they have achieved a good amount of life wisdom, an INTJ can become a powerful political force.

### *Potential Problem Areas*

With any gift of strength, there is an associated weakness. Without "bad", there would be no "good". Without "difficult", there would be no "easy". We value our strengths, but we often curse and ignore our weaknesses. To grow as a person and get what we want out of life, we must not only capitalize upon our strengths, but also face our weaknesses and deal with them. That means taking a hard look at our personality type's potential problem areas.

INTJs are rare and intelligent people with many special gifts. This should be kept in mind as you read some of the more negative material about INTJ weaknesses. Remember that these weaknesses are natural. We offer this information to enact positive change, rather than as blatant criticism. We want you to grow into your full potential, and be the happiest and most successful person that you can become.

Most of the weaker characteristics that are found in INTJs are due to their dominant function (Introverted iNtuition) overtaking their personality to the point that the other forces in their personality exist merely to serve the purposes of Introverted iNtuition. In such cases, an INTJ may show some or all of the following weaknesses in varying degrees:

- May be unaware (and sometimes uncaring) of how they come across to others
- May quickly dismiss input from others without really considering it
- May apply their judgment more often towards others, rather than towards themselves
- With their ability to see an issue from many sides, they may always find others at fault for problems in their own lives
- May look at external ideas and people with the primary purpose of finding fault
- May take pride in their ability to be critical and find fault in people and things
- May have unrealistic and/or unreasonable expectations of others
- May be intolerant of weaknesses in others
- May believe that they're always right
- May be cuttingly derisive and sarcastic towards others
- May have an intense and quick temper
- May hold grudges, and have difficulty forgiving people
- May be wishy-washy & unsure how to act in situations that require quick decision making
- May have difficulty communicating their thoughts and feelings to others
- May see so many tangents everywhere that they can't stay focused on the bottom line or the big picture

### *Explanation of Problems*

Most of the problems described above are a result of Introverted iNtuition overtaking the INTJ's personality to the point that all of the other functions become slaves to Introverted iNtuition. A healthy personality needs to have a good balance between its dominant and auxiliary functions. For an INTJ, the dominant Introverted iNtuition needs to be well-supported by the auxiliary Extraverted Thinking function. If Extraverted Thinking exists only to support the desires of Introverted iNtuition, then neither function is being used to its potential.

Introverted iNtuition is a personality function that constantly gathers information, and sees everything from many different perspectives. As the dominant player in a personality, it has the effect of constantly bombarding the psyche with new information to consider. Introverted iNtuition is sort of like a framework for understanding that exists in the mind. As something is perceived, it is melded into the existing iNtuitive framework. If an entirely new piece of information is perceived by the Introverted iNtuitive, that person must redefine their entire framework of reference. So, Introverted iNtuitives are constantly taking in information about the world that needs to be processed in a relatively lengthy manner in order to be understood. That presents quite a challenge to the INTJ. It's not unusual for an INTJ to feel overwhelmed with all of the things that he or she needs to consider in order to fully understand an idea or situation.

When Introverted iNtuition dominates the INTJ such that the other functions cannot serve their own purposes, we find the INTJ cutting off information that it needs to consider. If the psyche

is presented with information that looks anything like something that Introverted iNtuition has processed in the past, it uses Extraverted Thinking to quickly reject that information. The psyche uses Extraverted Thinking to reject the ideas, rather than analyzing the information within its iNtuitive framework, and therefore reduces the likelihood that the framework will have to be reshaped and redefined.

Using Extraverted Thinking in this manner serves the INTJ's psyche in two ways: 1) it saves it the energy that would have to be expended to truly consider new information, and 2) it protects the INTJ's sacred inner world. In either case, it is not ideal. It causes the INTJ to not consider information that may be useful or critical in developing a real understanding of an issue. It also probably causes the INTJ to come off as too strongly opinionated or snobbish to others.

The better use of Extraverted Thinking for an INTJ would be to use it to assess the INTJ's rich insights and weigh them against the external world. When the INTJ personality uses Extraverted Thinking to cut off incoming information, rather than to judge internal iNtutions, it is effectively cheating itself. It's like getting the answers to a test without having to really understand the questions. It's easier to get the answer right away, rather than to have to figure everything out. For the INTJ, who has a tremendous amount of information & "studying" that needs to be done, it's very tempting to take shortcuts. Most INTJs will do this to some extent. The real problems occur when an INTJ personality has become so imbalanced that its owner is extremely self-important and rarely consider anyone else's opinions or ideas.

## *Solutions*

To grow as an individual, the INTJ needs to focus on applying their judgment to things only after they have gone through their iNtuition. In other words, the INTJ needs to consciously try not to use their judgment to dismiss ideas prematurely. Rather, they should use their judgment against their own ideas. One cannot effectively judge something that they don't understand. The INTJ needs to take things entirely into their iNtuition in order to understand them. It may be necessary to give your iNtuition enough time to work through the new information so that it can rebuild its global framework of understanding. INTJs need to focus on using their judgment not to dismiss ideas, but rather to support their iNtuitive framework.

An INTJ who is concerned with personal growth will pay close attention to the subject of their judgments, and their motivation for making judgments. Are they judging something external to themselves, or are they judging something that they have sifted through their iNtuition? Is the motivation for judging something to be able to understand its usefulness in the world, or to dismiss it? Too often, an INTJ will judge something without properly understanding it, and with the intention of dismissing it. Seek first to understand, then to judge.

## *Living Happily*

Some INTJs have difficulty fitting into our society. Their problems are generally associated with not knowing (or caring) how they come across to others, with having unreasonable expectations for others' behaviors, and with not putting forth effort to meet others' emotional needs. These issues stem primarily from the common INTJ habit of using Extraverted Thinking to find fault

externally, rather than internally, and therefore diminish the importance of the external world, and increase the importance of the INTJ's own internal world. INTJs who recognize that their knowledge and understanding (and therefore general happiness and feeling of success) can be enriched by the synergy of other people's knowledge and understanding will find that they can be committed to their rich internal worlds and still have satisfying relationships with others. In order to accomplish this, the INTJ needs to recognize the importance of extraversion, and develop their highest extraverted function, Extraverted Thinking.

An INTJ who uses Extraverted Thinking to find fault externally rather than internally may become so strongly opinionated that they form rigid and unreasonable expectations for others. Their hyper-vigilant judgments about the rationality and competence of others may be a very effective way of keeping themselves at an emotional distance from others. This will preserve the sanctity of the INTJ's inner world of ideas, but will reduce a lot of valuable input, arrest the development of their social character, and stagnate the development of the INTJ's rich structural framework of understanding. In extreme cases, the INTJ may find himself or herself quite alone and lonely.

More commonly, an INTJ's interpersonal problems will occur when they express their displeasure to those close to them in very biting and hurtful terms. Everyone needs emotional distance at one time or another, and the INTJ wants more than most types. Perhaps this is why INTJs are famous for their biting sarcasm. An INTJ's internal world is extremely important to them. They may be protecting their internal world by using sarcasm to keep others at an emotional distance, or they may be sarcastic with others because they believe that they have the more evolved and logical understanding of the issue at hand, and seek to cut off the spurious input that they're receiving. This is an important distinction to recognize. An INTJ who is seeking an emotional respite can find ways to be alone that don't require injuring feelings and damaging relationships. When distance is required, the INTJ should just "leave". If an explanation is necessary, an INTJ should use their Extraverted Thinking to explain their need rationally and objectively, rather than using Extraverted Thinking to insult the other person, and therefore prod them into leaving.

#### **Specific suggestions:**

- Take care to listen to someone's idea entirely before you pass judgment on it. Ask questions if necessary. Do whatever it takes to make sure that you understand the idea. Try not to begin judging anything about the idea until you have understood it entirely.
- Before you begin talking to another person, pause for a moment & look at that person. Take in that person's attitude & feelings at that moment. Be aware of the person you're speaking with.
- If you become upset, walk away immediately. DO NOT express anger. When you get angry, you lose. After you have calmed down, apologize for leaving and continue with what you were doing.
- Try to identify the personality type of everyone that you encounter frequently in your life. Remember that people with the Sensing preference need to be communicated with in a direct, concise manner. Speak plainly and simply with Sensors, giving "yes" or "no" answers.
- Try to be on good terms with all people, even those that you consider beneath you. Try to understand that everybody has something to offer.

- When you make judgments or decisions, try to be aware of your motivation for making the judgment. Are you more interested in finding fault externally, or in improving your own understanding? Seek first to understand, and then to judge.

## Ten Rules to Live By to Achieve Success

1. **Feed Your Strengths!** Do things that allow your brilliant iNtuition and logical abilities to flourish. Explore the fascinating worlds of science, mathematics, law and medicine. Give your mind an outlet for its exceptional analytical abilities, and watch them grow.
2. **Face Your Weaknesses!** See your weaknesses for what they are, and seek to overcome them. Especially, strive to use your judgment against your internal ideas and iNtuitions, rather than as a means of disregarding other people's ideas.
3. **Talk Through Your Thoughts.** You need to step through your iNtuitions in order to put them into perspective. Give yourself time to do this, and take advantage of discussing ideas with others. You'll find externalizing your internal iNtuitions to be a valuable exercise. If you don't have someone to discuss your ideas with, try expressing your ideas clearly in writing.
4. **Take in Everything.** Don't dismiss ideas prematurely because you don't respect the person generating the ideas, or because you think you already know it all. After all, everybody has something to offer, and nobody knows everything. Steven Covey says it so well when he says: "Seek first to understand, and then to be understood."
5. **When You Get Angry, You Lose.** Your passion and intensity are strong assets, but can be very harmful if you allow yourself to fall into the "Anger Trap". Remember that Anger is destructive to your personal relationships. Work through your anger before you impress it upon others, or you will likely find yourself alone. Disagreements and disappointments can only be handled effectively in a non-personal and dispassionate manner.
6. **Respect your Need for Intellectual Compatibility.** Don't expect yourself to be a "touchy-feely" or "warm-fuzzy" person. Realize that your most ardent bonds with others will start with the head, rather than the heart. Be aware of other's emotional needs, and express your genuine love and respect for them in terms that are real to YOU. Be yourself.
7. **Be Accountable for Yourself.** Don't blame the problems in your life on other people. Look inwardly for solutions. No one has more control over your life than you have.
8. **Be Humble.** Judge yourself at least as harshly as you judge others.
9. **Assume the Best.** Don't distress yourself and others by dwelling on the dark side of everything. Just as there is a positive charge for every negative charge, there is a light side to every dark side. Remember that positive situations are created by positive attitudes. Expect the best, and the best will come forward.
10. **Don't Get Isolated!** Recognize the value that the external world represents to you, and interact with it in the style that's natural to you. Join clubs and internet e-mail lists that house in-depth discussions of topics that you're interested in. Seek and foster friendships with others of like competence and capacity for understanding. Extravert in your own style.

## References

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