

ENFPs are enthusiastic, insightful, innovative, versatile, and tireless in pursuit of new possibilities. They enjoy working on teams to bring about change related to making things better for people.

Contributions to the Organization

- See the need for and initiate change
- Focus on possibilities, especially for people
- Energize and persuade others through their contagious enthusiasm
- Add creativity and imagination to projects and actions
- Appreciate and acknowledge others

Leadership Style

- Lead with energy and enthusiasm
- Prefer to take charge of the start-up phase
- Communicate and often become spokespersons for worthy causes
- Work to include and support people while allowing for their own and others' autonomy
- Pay attention to what motivates others and encourage them to act

Preferred Learning Style

- Active, experiential, and imaginative
- Interesting content, whether or not it has practical applications

Potential Pitfalls

- May move on to new ideas or projects without completing those already started
- May overlook relevant details and facts
- May overextend and try to do too much
- May procrastinate while searching for the best possible answer

Order of Preferences*

1. Intuition
2. Feeling
3. Thinking
4. Sensing

* See pages 26–29 for further explanation.

Problem-Solving Approach

- Want to explore creative possibilities for growth (N) that fit with their values (F)
- May need to apply logic dispassionately (T) and consider the relevant facts and details (S) for optimal results

Preferred Work Environments

- Contain imaginative people focused on human possibilities
- Allow for sociability and flair
- Relish participative atmospheres with different people and perspectives
- Offer variety and challenge
- Encourage ideas
- Are flexible, casual, and unconstrained
- Mix in fun and enjoyment

Suggestions for Development

- May need to set priorities based on what is most important and then follow through
- May need to pay attention to and focus on key details
- May need to learn to screen tasks and say “no” rather than trying to do what is initially appealing
- May need to apply project and time management skills to meet goals

around me more objectively. But that doesn't mean I'm less compassionate. I believe if anything, I am more so. I'm able to work alone easier than I used to, and I have clearer focus about what's important to me in my life. And I have a better understanding of the meaning of pain. Life is a combination of both joy and pain. If you don't ever experience pain, you can't really be *in* your life. So it doesn't make me as uncomfortable anymore.

"The best advice I could give someone who is also an ENFP is to trust your dreams to guide you, your own vision of what's right for you. I know it's been said before, but ENFPs more than maybe other types need to follow their passion. I know I followed mine, after some detours along the way! And I believe if I *really* keep listening to it, I'll always find work that is fun and fulfilling."

Why This Career Works for Daniel

Many NFs share Daniel's quest in life — the pursuit of self-understanding. He seeks meaning in everything he does and quite naturally uses his talents and gifts to help others do the same. As a trainer, the topics he chooses to teach reveals much about what he values: creative problem solving, understanding value differences, listening skills, and personal growth. Daniel has an infectious enthusiasm and an irreverence which people find refreshing. He uses his creativity and sense of humor to make his points and help people see new and more positive ways of working and living.

Daniel's extraverted Intuition (dominant) expresses itself in his creativity in designing training experiences that are enlightening, fun, and challenging. He is particularly good at creative problem solving and enjoys responding to others in a crisis. His Intuition

helps him get new business as well. His attitude: "Anyone I haven't met is a potential client" keeps him ever alert to new possibilities.

Making connections with people is very important to Daniel. He shares personal examples from his own life and loves knowing he's really touched and helped somebody. Daniel's spiritual life is central to him. He has a deep faith in God and is always looking for an opportunity to share his gifts with others. He is most gratified to see the positive life changes that a person has made as a result of his influence.

As he has gained better access to his Thinking (third function), Daniel has become less concerned about what others think of him. He has even turned down business when it would have meant compromising his principles. He now sees himself and others more objectively — not idealizing people the way he used to. Daniel has a clearer focus on what's important to *him* — he is better able to make decisions out of choice, rather than obligation, another sign that he has developed better use of his Thinking.

Common Threads

Although Joyce, Beth, and Daniel have different backgrounds, experiences, and careers, there are certain common threads that weave through their stories. Their specific interests and abilities may differ, but owing to their similar temperament values, the *same hierarchy* of their psychological functions, and the "world" they naturally use them in (inner or outer), there are certain observations we can make about the needs of many ENFPs.

What follows is a list of the most important elements — the formula, if you will, for ENFP satisfaction. Given the uniqueness of all individuals — even those who share the

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same type — this list will not describe each ENFP equally well. The important thing is: these ten elements, with varying degrees of intensity and in different orders of importance, identify what ENFPs need to be satisfied.

After you have reviewed this list, we recommend that you go back and prioritize the elements in order of *their importance to you*. When doing this, think of past work experiences as well as your present job, and what you found particularly satisfying or unsatisfying. Try to look for *themes* that run through several experiences, not just the events which might be true for one work situation but not for another.

As an ENFP, career satisfaction means doing work that:

1. Lets me work with a diverse group of people on a variety of projects, motivated by creative inspiration
2. Lets me create new ideas, products, services, or solutions to problems that will help other people, and then see my projects become reality
3. Is fun, challenging, and always varied
4. Rarely requires me to handle the follow-through, routine details, or maintenance of a system or project
5. Lets me work at my own pace and schedule, with a minimum of rules or structure and the freedom to act spontaneously
6. Lets me meet new people, learn new skills, and continually satisfy my curiosity
7. Is consistent with my personal beliefs and values and lets me create opportunities that benefit others
8. Is done in a friendly and relaxed environment with humor, goodwill, and a minimum of interpersonal conflict

9. Allows me the freedom to follow my inspirations and participate in exciting and intriguing adventures
10. Is done in an environment that appreciates and rewards enthusiasm, ingenuity, and imagination

Work-related strengths and weaknesses of ENFPs include:

STRENGTHS

- Innovative thinkers, good problem solvers
- Can combine their talents with interests and abilities of others
- Can find success in whatever interests them
- Good at putting the right people into the right positions/tasks
- Motivate others with infectious enthusiasm and energy

WEAKNESSES

- May not be well organized or good at setting priorities
- Have trouble following through on details of a project
- May become bored and easily sidetracked
- Don't usually enjoy anything repetitive or routine
- Usually less effective working alone

Popular Occupations for ENFPs

Because of their combination of preferences, ENFPs are naturally drawn to a wide variety of occupations.

In listing occupations that are popular among ENFPs, it is important to note that there are successful people of all types in all occupations. However, the following are careers ENFPs may find particularly satisfying and some of the reasons why. This is by no means a comprehensive listing. It is included to suggest possibilities you may not have previously considered.

CREATIVE

- Journalist
- Screenwriter/playwright
- Columnist
- Character actor
- Musician/composer
- Newscaster
- Interior decorator
- Cartoonist
- Artist
- Reporter/editor

The obvious appeal of these creative careers is the opportunity to continually develop new and original approaches. ENFPs enjoy the creative process, especially if it offers opportunity for collaboration and to be inspired by working with others. The more unconstrained and flexible the working environment, the better ENFPs like it. They work well independently but need frequent, spontaneous interaction with others to keep their creative juices flowing and to keep their work fun.

MARKETING/PLANNING

- Public relations specialist
- Marketing consultant
- Copy writer/publicity writer
- Advertising account executive
- Advertising creative director
- Strategic planner
- Publicist
- Research assistant

ENFPs usually are excellent long-range thinkers and can easily see the possible effects of an idea, program, or service on others. They take the needs and concerns of other people into consideration in their planning and often devise innovative and humane solutions to problems. They enjoy creative problem solving, especially as part of a lively and energetic team. Often clever and funny, many ENFPs find satisfaction in

writing advertising copy for print or broadcast media. The fast pace and constantly changing face of advertising is also appealing. And they can be great spokespeople for organizations in the role of a public relations manager.

SOCIAL SERVICE/EDUCATION

- Social worker
- Social scientist
- Residential housing director
- Psychologist
- Career counselor
- Rehabilitation worker
- Clergy
- Pastoral counselor
- Speech pathologist
- Ombudsperson
- Preschool teacher
- Special education teacher
- Teacher: art/drama/music/English

Many ENFPs find work that has a positive impact on others to be intrinsically satisfying. They can be compassionate and supportive psychologists and creative and enthusiastic career counselors, helping their clients find new and original solutions to problems. Their focus is on possibilities, especially for others, and they have an infectious and energizing style that motivates their clients to try to make positive changes in their lives. They enjoy helping others develop their own spirituality and often are attracted to careers in some form of ministry. As ombudspersons, they are effective and innovative catalysts for change within organizations, helping individuals by serving as a guide to available resources. They often enjoy the personal relationships they build with their students and can be creative and inspirational teachers.

ENTREPRENEURIAL/BUSINESS

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- Inventor

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- Sales: intangibles/ideas
- Human resources manager
- Human resources development trainer
- Conference planner
- Employee assistance counselor
- Employment development specialist
- Restaurateur

ENFPs are born entrepreneurs! They enjoy working for themselves because it gives them the freedom and flexibility, and the opportunity to choose the projects they wish to work on and the people they want to work with. They usually have an abundance of ideas they want to see turned into reality, particularly those that will affect other people. Many ENFPs enjoy consulting in the areas of team building, conflict resolution, or increasing effectiveness in the workplace. They also enjoy being independent salespeople, especially selling intangibles — ideas, rather than products.

The conventional business world is usually not appealing to ENFPs because they dislike excessive rules, regulations, or standard operating procedures. However, within traditional organizations, ENFPs flock to the human resources departments in the role of trainers and counselors. They find that a career as an employment development adviser uses their abilities to plan ahead and devise creative ways for people to do their work while keeping the organization's goals in mind.

Remember, these are only some areas that provide satisfying expression for the unique natural talents of the ENFP.

Implications for the Job Search

Knowing the particular strengths and blind spots of your type can afford you a tremendous advantage in your job search campaign. In all aspects of the process, from conducting research into available positions,

identifying and contacting prospective employers, developing personal marketing tools such as résumés, arranging and conducting job interviews, negotiating salaries to finally accepting a position, people will act true to their type. Being able to capitalize on your assets and compensate for your liabilities can make the difference between a successful and an unsuccessful job search.

The differences between types are sometimes subtle and other times dramatic. It is the subtle variations in advice we offer that make the real difference between success or failure in a job search. The concept of networking, or meeting with and talking to people to gather information about potential jobs, serves as a good example. Extraverts will naturally enjoy networking and are advised to do so on a large scale, while Introverts find more limited and targeted networking, especially with people they already know, easier. Sensors tend to network with people in a defined scope, while Intuitives will go far and wide to find people, often seemingly unrelated to their field of interest. Further, Feelers take networking, like everything else, very personally and enjoy establishing warm rapport, while Thinkers will be more objective and detached in their style. Finally, Judgers tend to ask fewer and more structured questions during their networking, while Perceivers could ask questions of all sorts all day long! One valuable search technique, many ways to implement it.

Pathways to Success

As an ENFP, your strength and talent for the job search lies in your unlimited ability to see alternatives and creative approaches, and your endless energy for gathering information by talking with people. But while you will love the data collection phase, beware

of your tendency to become overwhelmed by details and paralyzed by your lack of organization.

As an ENFP, your most effective strategies will lie in your abilities to:

Create your own job opportunities.

- Use your ability to see opportunities that don't presently exist, and tailor your current job to meet your changing needs, or the changing needs of your employer.
- Invent an entirely new job for yourself that will fill a need you see or predict in the market.

Elizabeth began to feel restricted by the amount of red tape and rules being implemented in the rapidly growing advertising agency where she worked as a copy writer. She decided she needed a more relaxed environment in which to be creative. So she got together with a group of copy writer friends of hers and developed an idea for a small agency of copy writers. They realized that while the idea sounded great, they would need to hire at least a part-time person to help them schedule jobs, bill clients, and pay their own bills so each of the writers would be free to meet new clients and write.

They found someone who had some of the business strengths they lacked and started their own firm.

Develop and use your active network of contacts.

- Conduct lots of helpful informational interviews. Constantly enlarge your circle of contacts each time you meet with someone by asking him or her to refer you on to someone else.

- Tell everyone you meet and all of your friends that you are looking for a new career or job. You'll spread the word quickly and learn helpful information along the way.

Gil was shopping in the supermarket with his family when he literally bumped into an old friend from graduate school. Joe told Gil that he was considering leaving the hospital where he worked for a position out of state. Gil replied that he was interested in Joe's marketing-and-planning-director job himself. Gil arranged to call Joe at the end of the week and was able to interview for the position the day after Joe offered his resignation.

Impress your interviewer with your natural enthusiasm and confidence.

- Establish instant rapport and demonstrate your ability to meet people and make them feel comfortable with you.
- Use your sense of humor to change the interview from a formal and basically stilted experience to one where you and the interviewer enjoy yourselves. It will be a welcome breath of fresh air for the interviewer.

Maggie credited her offbeat sense of humor with getting the job she loves as a trainer in the human resources department of a major insurance company. She went through the typical interview process and arrived at the final interview. It was a very stormy day and Maggie went directly into the ladies' room to try to dry off and do something with her hair. A woman entered, also soaked to the skin, hair dripping, makeup running down her cheeks. Maggie immediately struck up a humorous conversation with the woman about their comical situation. They got to laughing and talking as they pulled themselves together. A few min-

utes later, they started laughing all over again when Maggie discovered that the woman was the vice president of human resources and Maggie was her nine o'clock interview!

Consider and keep several options open.

- Adapt to changing situations and improve when you find yourself against an unexpected obstacle.
- Use your natural curiosity to gather a great deal of information about potential careers, jobs, and organizations.

Pat was about at the end of his career search. But he went ahead and conducted yet one more informational interview at a university even though he thought he might accept a job offered to him at an in-house conference planning department for a major company. He learned during the interview that the university was creating a position for a new faculty ombudsman — a job he had always wanted but had not figured possible because the position is so rare. He realized if he had not kept his options open, he would already have accepted one of the other positions before this dream job came along.

Be resourceful in getting job interviews.

- Use creative approaches to get yourself noticed and remembered, especially if you are one of many candidates for a job you are sure you want.
- Use the same energy and ability to see options to help you get around barriers or resistance you encounter during your search.

Jenna had decided that she wanted the highly sought after job of director of creative arts for a program for gifted and talented children. After several calls to inquire into

getting an interview with the supervisor of special education, she was told the position was only being posted within the school system, and outside applicants would not be considered unless the position could not be filled internally. She did not let that obstacle deter her; in fact, she felt energized by the challenge. She created a series of mailings to be received by the supervisor of special education each day for a week. Each used a different medium (photography, painting, music — she enclosed a cassette tape — writing, and sculpture), and each detailed her experience, past work experience, and her interest in the position. She didn't have to call to follow up because she received a call for an interview after the final piece was received.

Possible Pitfalls

Although all people are unique, there are certain *potential* blind spots that many ENFPs share. We specify "potential" because some of the following may clearly be true of you, while others may not apply. While considering them, you may notice that these tendencies do not relate just to the job search, but rather describe pitfalls which you may have experienced in other aspects of your life as well. It is therefore helpful to consider each one in terms of your past experiences by asking yourself, "Is this true for me?" And if so, "How did this tendency prevent me from getting something that I wanted?" You will probably notice that the key to overcoming your blind spots is the conscious and thoughtful development of your third and fourth functions (Thinking and Sensing). We recognize that many of the suggestions will be difficult to implement, but the more you use these functions, the fewer problems they will cause you in the future.

Pay attention to the realistic facts of a career or job.

- Focus your energy and attention on seeing what is really in front of you rather than just what might be. Use resources like the library, trade publications, and other people to learn what a job is really like.
- Be realistic in planning your job search in terms of how long it will take, what will be required, how much it will cost, and how you will afford to live (and eat) while you are involved in it. Make contingency plans so you are ready if it takes longer than you hope.

Curb your tendency to leap before you look!

- Develop a job search plan in advance so you don't squander your inspiration and energy in areas that aren't right for you.
- Generate a list of criteria for the right job, including what you can't live without as well as what would be nice but not imperative. Continue to use that list as a guide, comparing potential opportunities to it before pursuing them fully.

Work on developing self-discipline.

- Use proven time management skills and systems to help you get and stay organized. Ask an organized friend to help you (and to make it more fun).
- Prioritize the most important tasks, issues, and activities so you can't become distracted as easily. Try not to let impromptu socializing take you away from the less exciting but nevertheless important parts of the search.

Don't put off making a decision.

- Procrastinating may mean that you lose out on potentially satisfying opportunities because you took too long to decide.
- Decide when you have enough information rather than go on indefinitely gathering more.

Follow through on all phases of the job search.

- Remember that some people use and respect established organizational procedures and expect others to, also. Consider it an opportunity to demonstrate your ability to adapt rather than viewing it as a repressive limitation.
- Develop and then *use* a system of your choosing to help you check your progress so that nothing slips through the cracks. Stick with whatever you decide, rather than dropping it to try a more intriguing system before giving the first one a chance to help you.

The Final Piece

Now that you have a solid understanding of your type under your belt, you can see how your strengths and preferences suit you better for some kinds of jobs and for some approaches to a job search. But as an ENFP, you've already noticed that you are not equally drawn to *every* career or field listed in the Popular Occupations section. The next and final step in the process is to look at how your type meshes with your personal interests. So turn to Chapter 24 to put your new knowledge to work by finding out how your interests, skills, and values can combine with your type to let you find the work you were meant to do.