

INTJs are independent, individualistic, single-minded, and determined individuals who trust their vision of possibilities regardless of universal skepticism. They enjoy working by themselves on projects that are complex.

### **Contributions to the Organization**

- Provide theoretical insights and design skills
- Organize ideas into action plans
- Work to remove obstacles to goal attainment
- Have strong ideas of what the organization can be
- Push everyone to understand the system as a whole with its complex interaction among parts

### **Leadership Style**

- Drive themselves and others to attain the organization's goals
- Act strongly and forcefully in the field of ideas
- Can be tough-minded with self and others
- Conceptualize, create, and build new models
- Are willing to relentlessly reorganize whole systems when necessary

### **Preferred Learning Style**

- Individualized, reflective, and in-depth in areas of interest to them
- Intellectual, theoretical, and with the big picture first

### **Potential Pitfalls**

- May appear so unyielding that others are afraid to approach or challenge them
- May keep their ideas to themselves for too long, believing others see things the same way
- May have difficulty letting go of impractical ideas
- May be so task-focused that they pay scant attention to others' contributions

### **Order of Preferences\***

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

\* See pages 26–29 for further explanation.

### **Problem-Solving Approach**

- Want to use their internal vision for strategies, systems, and structures (N), which they have objectively determined (T)
- May need to include the input of others (F) and the details needed to make their visions a reality (S) for optimal results

### **Preferred Work Environments**

- Contain decisive, intellectually challenging people focused on implementing long-range visions
- Allow independence and privacy for reflection
- Are efficient
- Include competent and productive people
- Encourage and support autonomy
- Provide opportunities for creativity
- Are task-focused and deliberate

### **Suggestions for Development**

- May need to solicit feedback and suggestions on both their personal style and their ideas
- May need to communicate with and involve others in their ideas and strategies early on
- May need to face reality when the data do not support their ideas
- May need to be sure others' contributions are encouraged and acknowledged

ble and necessary conflicts between opposing counsel as “just business, nothing personal,” and as a result, is able to maintain good working relationships with other lawyers. His Thinking also keeps him from getting so emotionally involved with the plight of his clients that he loses sight of the bigger picture — a verdict or settlement that is in their best interest.

Jim's development of his Feeling side (third function) shows up in his recreational life. He has become much more interested in socializing than he was in the past. He enjoys teaching and mentoring law students, gets along better with many different types of people, and has become more self-aware in recent years — all activities that engage his Feeling. He is also conscious of using his Sensing to live more in the present moment, to pay greater attention to, and be more meticulous about, details.

### *Common Threads*

Although Kathleen, Monica, and Jim all have different backgrounds, experiences, and careers, there are certain common threads woven through their stories. Their specific interests, abilities, and values may differ, but owing to their similar temperament values, the *same hierarchy* of their psychological functions, and the “world” they use them in (inner or outer), there are certain observations we can make about the needs of many INTJs.

What follows is a list of the most important elements — the formula, if you will, for INTJ satisfaction. Given the uniqueness of all individuals — even those who share the same type — this list will not describe each INTJ equally well. The important thing is that these ten elements, with varying degrees of intensity and in different orders of importance, identify what INTJs need to be satisfied.

After you have reviewed this list, we recommend that you go back and try to 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 that might be true of one work situation but not of another.

*As an INTJ, career satisfaction means doing work that:*

1. Lets me create and develop original and innovative solutions to problems to improve existing systems
2. Lets me focus my energy on the implementation of my good ideas, working in a logical and orderly way, and in a setting that rewards my perseverance
3. Lets me work with other conscientious people whose expertise, intelligence, and competence I respect
4. Gives me credit for my original ideas and lets me maintain authorship and control over their execution
5. Allows me to work independently but with periodic interaction with a small group of intellectual people within a smooth-running environment free from interpersonal squabbles
6. Exposes me to a steady stream of new information, providing me with new ways to increase my proficiency and competence
7. Lets me produce a product that meets with my own high standards of quality rather than with the personal likes or dislikes of others
8. Does not require the repetitive execution of factual and detail-oriented tasks

9. Provides me with a high degree of autonomy and control, with the freedom to effect change and develop people and systems
10. Is judged by uniform and fair standards for all, where performance evaluations are based on established criteria rather than on personality contests and that compensates me fairly for my contributions

Work-related strengths and weaknesses of INTJs include:

#### STRENGTHS

Visionary and excel at creating systems  
 Enjoy creative and intellectual challenges  
 Good at theoretical and technical analysis and logical problem solving  
 Work well alone and are determined even in the face of opposition  
 Can understand complex and difficult subjects

#### WEAKNESSES

May be less interested in projects after creative problem solving is completed  
 Drive others as hard as they drive themselves  
 May have difficulty working with or for others they consider less competent than they  
 May be too independent to adapt to corporate culture  
 Can be inflexible and single-minded about their ideas

#### *Popular Occupations for INTJs*

In listing occupations that are popular with INTJs, it is important to note that there are successful people of all types in all fields. However, the following are careers INTJs may find particularly satisfying and some of the reasons why. This is by no means a comprehensive listing. It is in-

cluded to suggest possibilities you may not have previously considered.

#### TECHNICAL

- Scientist/scientific researcher
- Computer systems analyst
- Technician: electrical/electronic
- Design engineer
- Astronomer
- Computer programmer
- Environmental planner

The technical fields appeal to the INTJ's interest in logical systems. These fields offer an opportunity to work with rapidly developing high-tech equipment and products. Often INTJs are able to use their creativity to develop ingenious and inventive systems.

#### EDUCATION

- Teacher: university
- Academic curriculum designer
- Administrator

Higher education appeals to the INTJ much more than elementary or secondary education because it usually involves teaching complex theories and systems with a more global perspective. Developing educational curricula or systems and making sure they are run efficiently allows the INTJ to make improvements. The world of higher education also exposes INTJs to an environment where they can gather and manipulate information and interact with other intellectual people with whom they can expand their own level of competence.

#### MEDICINE

- Psychologist
- Psychiatrist
- Neurologist
- Biomedical engineer
- Cardiologist
- Pharmacologist



The more technical areas of medicine are fields in which many INTJs often find success and satisfaction. These fields include highly complex systems, and allow the INTJ to work independently, with minimal outside intervention or input.

#### PROFESSIONAL

- Attorney: administrative/litigator
- Management consultant
- Strategic planner
- Investment/business analyst
- Manager
- Judge
- News analyst/writer
- Engineer

The professional occupations offer a variety of appealing aspects for the INTJ. All but "manager" require independent research and planning. The development of strategies, systems, and long-range plans utilizes INTJs' future orientation (Intuition) and their ability to plan out how to reach their goals in a sequential and logical manner. The INTJ manager often finds the most satisfaction when working in a fairly small organization with employees who are a lot like him or her. If the staff does not require a great deal of personal support or hands-on supervision, the INTJ is more likely to find satisfaction in management.

#### CREATIVE

- Writer/editorial writer
- Artist
- Inventor
- Designer
- Architect

The appeal of the creative occupations is the ability to do original work. Writers and artists use their Intuition to create new expressions and statements. Inventors are able to create new systems or devices that improve current ways of living or solve vexing

problems. All three of these jobs require that INTJs work independently, meeting their own goals and standards, with themselves as the ultimate critic.

### *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 valu-

able search technique, many ways to implement it.

## Pathways to Success

Because many of the tasks involved in the job search are not usually enjoyed by INTJs, you may not find this process to be particularly enjoyable. Remaining focused on your larger goal of finding challenging and interesting work will prevent you from becoming too impatient with the necessary details and seemingly frivolous social niceties required.

As an INTJ, your most effective strategies will build on your abilities to:

### *Anticipate trends, forecast future needs.*

- Use your ability to look at current situations and project how they will need to be different in order to meet the changing context
- Demonstrate ability to forecast future needs by explaining how your involvement can help employers meet their new demands

When Jim was debating a career as a college professor, he did a little research and learned there were very few colleges with large philosophy or theology departments. He realized that the trend would continue and the opportunities for good jobs would decline further, making the competition fierce. Recognizing his waning interest in his field of study, he looked instead to where he might find the challenge, intellectual stimulation, and opportunity to use his excellent analysis and strategizing skills and decided upon a career in law.

### *Synthesize information.*

- Engage your ability to understand and assimilate complex information to be-

come fully versed in the technology of the discipline

- Demonstrate that ability by summarizing what you see as the strengths and weaknesses of the market or industry, explaining how your unique skills will help the employer by meeting his/her goals

Monica's skills at understanding the "big picture" helped her get the job at the children's hospital. In fact all of the jobs she has enjoyed are those where she had no predecessor and was hired because of her ability to sell her vision of a needed position. When she interviewed for the job as telethon coordinator, she explained that she saw her role as one who would see what needed to be done, find the existing flaws in the system, and pull the people together who would create a successful event. She described her role and how she would manage those around her. She was able to see and then communicate her vision to others.

### *Create your own career options, design your own job.*

- Use your natural ability to see opportunities before others do and put yourself in an advantageous position early on in the interviewing process.
- Use your creativity to develop a unique career opportunity, selling a potential employer on how that job will help meet goals and solve problems.

Frustrated with the way his original ideas were so altered during the production process, Jack left the world of advertising copy writing to become a news writer. Even though he lacked news writing experience, Jack devised a plan to get himself where he wanted to go. He looked up an old friend in Arizona who was the editor of a small maga-

zine. Jack wrote a couple of free-lance articles that led to an offer as a staff writer. Instead of taking the job, he relocated to a larger city and took the experience and his portfolio with him. He was able to create a job as a reporter based on only a few articles and the letter of recommendation from his past employer.

#### *Develop an innovative career plan.*

- Use your creativity to plot out a campaign in a new and different way — setting you apart from other candidates with potential employers.
- Use your organizational skills to stay on top of the project, make a plan, be on time, remember to send a note after the interview, follow up with prospective employers, etc.

Margaret's situation was not unique. As a single working mother with two young children, she could not afford to quit her administrative job at a large hospital to go on an all-out job search. She decided what she lacked in free time, she would make up for in innovation. She determined that she wanted to use her skills and experience in finance to become an investment analyst. So in an effort to gain some real experience, and also to market herself, she developed a newsletter on her personal computer at home. She worked on the newsletter in the evenings, designing it to be professional-looking, interesting, and valuable to potential employers. She focused each issue on a particular industry and then on several new rising companies. She did analysis of their markets, looked into the major shareholders, and made predictions about their movement in the stock market. She sent the newsletter to a very focused list of potential employers with cover letters that said she was interested in providing these kinds of insights for them should a position become available.

She so enjoyed working on the newsletters that the next seven months flew by. When she was offered a job at one of the targeted companies, she persuaded them to let her continue to produce a newsletter, this time for their clients.

#### *Make decisions.*

- Organize your ideas into thoughtful and systematic work plans and stick with your agenda.
- Use your skills at critical analysis to eliminate unfavorable options along the way, reorganizing your plan when necessary.

When his wife accepted a job in a new city, it meant job search time for Stuart. He had been an assistant art director at a large advertising firm and decided he would look for an art director position. Stuart developed a list of criteria for the job, made an organized plan of attack, and began to call on agencies in the area.

After only a couple of days, he was offered an assistant art director job at another large agency. After thinking it over, he declined the offer because it would not give him the creative control or autonomy he had decided were critical to him. Finally, he received an offer from a small firm, whose growth necessitated the creation of a new department devoted to consumer advertising, his area of expertise. While the position was still assistant art director, Stuart accepted because he would have the autonomy and control he wanted as the head of the new division. He was willing to trade off the title because he was getting all that he had wanted in a director position.

### Possible Pitfalls

Although all people are unique, there are certain *potential* blind spots that many INTJs

share. We underscore “potential” because some of the following *may* be true of you, while others may clearly not apply. While considering them, you may notice that these tendencies do not relate just to the job search, but rather describe pitfalls that 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 experience 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 (Feeling 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.

*Attend to all necessary and relevant facts, not just the new and novel ones.*

- Spend time focusing on the realities and practical applications of your ideas rather than just on the innovative implications.
- Concentrate on not letting things fall through the cracks because you assume they are already taken care of.

*Use tact and diplomacy in getting others to buy your ideas.*

- Try to be persuasive in your approach rather than being unyielding in your style, allowing others to comment or challenge your viewpoint.
- Try to consider the ramifications and impact a decision or comment may have

on another person, understanding that others often take criticism personally.

*Avoid appearing arrogant and condescending to potential employers.*

- Remember you are in a selling position, attempting to portray yourself as part of a team of workers, someone who can and will contribute to the goals of the whole organization.
- Take time to listen fully and completely to other people and repeat back to them what they said to be sure you haven’t made incorrect assumptions.

*Try to remain flexible and open-minded when making decisions.*

- Try to be willing to give in on less important points while still holding firm to the elements that are truly vital to you.
- Decide to give everything a second look, even after you discount it. Some opportunities may appear more attractive when you give yourself the extra time to get all the information.

### *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 INTJ, 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 now 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.