

ISTPs are pragmatic, aware of facts, expedient, realistic, and not likely to be convinced by anything but reasoning. They enjoy working independently, relying on logic and resourcefulness to solve immediate organizational problems.

### Contributions to the Organization

- Act as troubleshooters, rising to meet the needs of the occasion
- Function as walking storehouses of information in areas in which they have an interest
- Figure out practical ways to get things done, overcoming obstacles in the way
- Remain calm during crises and thus have a settling effect on others
- Add expertise to projects where they have technical skills

### Leadership Style

- Lead through action and by setting an example
- Prefer that everyone be treated as equals and pull his or her own weight
- Respond quickly when trouble arises, using the most expedient techniques
- Manage others loosely and prefer minimal supervision themselves
- Operate from clear, logical principles

### Preferred Learning Style

- Lively and entertaining
- Useful content and practical applications that are interesting to them

### Potential Pitfalls

- May keep important things to themselves and thereby appear unconcerned
- May seem to lack follow-through, moving on before their prior effort bears fruit
- May conserve efforts, be overly expedient, and take shortcuts
- May appear indecisive, lacking in interest, energy, and follow-through

### Order of Preferences

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

\* See pages 26–29 for further explanation.

### Problem-Solving Approach

- Want to use their internal logic to structure problems and solutions (T) while attending to the facts and specifics (S)
- May need to consider other possibilities (N) and the impact on people (F) for optimal results

### Preferred Work Environments

- Contain action-oriented people focused on the immediate situation
- Are project-oriented and task-focused
- Pay attention to what is logical
- Reward a quick response to problems
- Allow for hands-on experience
- Offer freedom to do the job as they see fit
- Foster independence and autonomy

### Suggestions for Development

- May need to open up and share concerns and information with others
- May need to develop perseverance or communicate changes in direction
- May need to plan and put in the effort necessary to achieve desired results
- May need to develop methods of setting and keeping goals

the lines or figuring out what is happening behind the scenes.

### *Common Threads*

Although Richard and Jill have different backgrounds, experiences, and careers, there are certain common threads woven 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 ISTPs.

What follows is a list of the most important elements — the formula, if you will — for ISTP satisfaction. Given the uniqueness of all individuals — even those who share the same type — this list will not describe each ISTP equally well. The important thing is that these ten elements, with varying degrees of intensity and in different orders of importance, identify what ISTPs 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 that might be true for one work situation but not for another.

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

1. Lets me identify and use resources that are available to me in the most efficient manner possible
2. Lets me practice, master, and then use skills I have acquired, especially mechanical skills or those requiring the use of tools

3. Lets me apply my understanding and technical knowledge of the world around me and see the logical principles underlying my work; lets me engage in troubleshooting and problem solving
4. Has clear directions; where I can work expediently and deal with real and practical products
5. Is fun and active and lets me work independently with frequent opportunities to get out of my work space and be outdoors
6. Is done in an environment without excessive rules or operating standards imposed by others; where I can enjoy spontaneous adventures and step in to manage any crisis
7. Lets me work independently, with a minimum of supervision, and where I am not required to closely supervise others
8. Gives me plenty of time to pursue my interests and hobbies
9. Gives me a substantial amount of enjoyment and is continually challenging
10. Lets me use an economy of motion and energy and does not require needless routine or procedures

Work-related strengths and weaknesses of ISTPs include:

#### STRENGTHS

Work well with real and tangible tasks and products  
 Able to bring order to confused data and unrecognizable facts  
 Usually enjoy using hands and mastering the use of tools  
 Usually enjoy working alone or alongside others they respect  
 Identify and use available resources well

**WEAKNESSES**

- May lack interest or ability in verbal communication
- Often have little patience for abstract and complex theories
- May get bored and restless easily
- May appear to be insensitive to needs and feelings of others
- May be unpredictable and unreliable

*Popular Occupations for ISTPs*

In listing occupations that are popular among ISTPs, it is important to note that there are successful people of all types in all fields. However, the following are careers ISTPs 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.

**ACTION**

- Police officer
- Race car driver
- Pilot
- Weapons operator
- Hunter
- Intelligence agent
- Marshal
- Fire fighter

The appeal of action careers for ISTPs derives from their desire not to feel confined by a lot of structure and regimentation. They work well on impulse and enjoy situations that are spontaneous and call on their ability to quickly assess their resources and then take appropriate actions. They work well alone but will pull together as part of a team when necessary. ISTPs often enjoy mastery of tools or machinery of a specialized style and enjoy being outdoors and physically active.

**TECHNICAL**

- Chiropractor
- Medical technician
- Computer programmer

- Electrical engineer
- Dental hygienist

ISTPs often find satisfaction in technical careers because they are interested in how and why things work. They tend to be good in mechanical areas because they possess great observational powers and a capacity to remember and use important facts and details. They usually enjoy working with their hands and like work that provides them with a constant source of sensory information. Their logical analysis is best used when based upon solid facts that they themselves gather through their five senses.

**BUSINESS/FINANCE**

- Purchasing agent
- Office manager
- Banker
- Securities analyst
- Economist
- Legal secretary

Pragmatic and accurate with numbers, ISTPs can find enjoyment in business and financial careers. The working environment is extremely important, however, and needs to allow for personal freedom and flexibility for ISTPs to be satisfied. Opportunities that allow the ISTP to work autonomously, without excessive meetings or office politics, are best.

ISTPs are often able to bring order to confused data and unrecognizable facts. They easily see the realities of an economic situation and are ready and able to respond to immediate changes.

**TRADES**

- Farmer
- Mechanic
- Coach/trainer
- Carpenter
- Computer repair person
- Automotive products retailer
- Commercial artist

The independence and hands-on practicality of the trades often appeal to ISTPs. ISTPs prefer tasks that are real and concrete and provide the opportunity to use their hands. They work the most diligently on projects that fully absorb their interest, so if theirs is a love of sports, they will enjoy coaching and training much more than another seemingly similar trade career. Making a career out of a hobby is an excellent strategy for the ISTP.

### *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 we will detail in the following pages, your strengths and talents for the job search include your careful attention to detail, logical analysis of current problems, and unpretentious communication style. However, your need for honesty may sometimes prevent you from seeing the importance of establishing rapport with potential employers.

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

#### *Gather and remember all relevant data.*

- Use your tremendous powers of observation to notice the people and surroundings of a potential workplace. Compare your recollections later as you think about whether the setting is right for you.
- Explain your ability to serve as a walking storehouse of information. Provide examples of how that capability has proved useful to past employers.

When Susan interviewed for a new job, she did her homework. She found people who were knowledgeable, people she respected, and sought their advice. She tried to think through the possible interview questions before the interview. Once she was prepared and ready, she felt comfortable winging it on some less important issues.

*Adapt and take advantage of available resources.*

- Persevere in your job search even when faced with obstacles.
- Demonstrate your skills at developing instant solutions to immediate problems when they pop up during your job search or during an interview.

From her research talking to friends, Margie knew the attorney who interviewed legal secretaries liked to ask hypothetical questions. Rather than be thrown by it, Margie decided to act as though the situation were a real one that currently existed, since she knew that she was good at on-the-spot problem solving. So when presented with the scenario, she was able to come up with a good solution to a “real” problem and impress the attorney in the process.

*Demonstrate to potential employers your ability to think things through carefully and logically.*

- Take time to apply your ability to figure out how things work to assess the organization and the people in it. Ask yourself how your prospective role will fit within it as it currently exists.
- Be straightforward and honest in your responses to all questions.

During a performance review, Rich was asked what he thought of a newly adopted reporting system. He knew that giving a completely honest answer might hurt his chances of being promoted because he did not think that the system was an improvement. Rather than speaking with his usual naked honesty and blunt style, Rich took a minute and answered that while the system apparently provided more important infor-

mation, he didn’t think it really affected him because he continued to work according to his own high standards.

*Analyze opportunities objectively.*

- Use your well-developed logic to see the natural consequences of actions and choices.
- Let prospective employers know you can remain calm, even during unexpected changes in plan or during a real crisis. Include in your listing to prospective employers the ability to keep your head about you when others are upset.

Stan found himself in an interesting spot while interviewing for a position as surveyor for a town building department. About ten minutes into the interview, the town manager got an emergency call from the field. One of the surveyors had been hurt in a fall. Seeing that his interviewer was flustered about what to do, Stan suggested that he call 911 while the town manager drove out to the site. Stan made the call and then followed in his own car, arriving before the emergency team. He pulled a blanket from his car and was able to help comfort the injured man until the professionals arrived. Stan’s interview continued over a beer with the rest of the crew once they learned their co-worker was going to be all right.

*Take reasonable risks.*

- Look for opportunities when it is appropriate to be impulsive and spontaneous. Show your true colors — a person who enjoys working hard and also having a good time. People are more likely to view you as a member of the team if they can imagine having a cup of coffee together.

- Demonstrate your ability to troubleshoot by researching some of the potentially current problems being faced by a prospective employer and offering your suggestions for ways to solve them.

Peg was beginning to get bored in her job in the corporate finance department of a large insurance company. She had been in many jobs during her long career there and usually got "antsy" after a couple of years. She was about to put out the word that she was interested in a new assignment when she was asked to serve on a panel to look into a way to restructure the entire company. During her evaluation of the company, she determined that her current position would no longer be needed under the new structure. She reported the findings, with the knowledge that she might be out of a job. She was. But she was offered a new and challenging position once the reorganization was begun. The risk proved to be a win for her.

### Possible Pitfalls

Although all people are unique, there are certain *potential* blind spots that many ISTPs share. We specify "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 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 (Intuition and Feeling). 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.

*Try to plan ahead and follow an organized job search.*

- Don't move on to a more exciting challenge before waiting to see if your previous efforts have paid off.
- Make a conscious effort to develop your perseverance, remembering that hard work and sticking to your plan of action will give you the results you really want.

*Look for possibilities beyond those that exist at the moment.*

- Try not to take stopgap jobs. Resist the temptation to prematurely end the process by accepting an adequate but not truly satisfying option.
- Set long-range goals for yourself and your career. Ask yourself what you hope to accomplish five and ten years from now. Assess whether the job you are considering will help you reach those goals.

*Beware of the propensity not to exert any more effort than is absolutely necessary.*

- Avoid taking tempting shortcuts even though you readily see them. Pay close attention to all phases of your job search and conduct each with the same energy and diligence.
- Remember that employers look for conscientiousness in employees. Demonstrate your willingness to go the extra mile to get the job done right.



*Don't postpone a decision too long.*

- Make decisions and then move on. Eliminate poor options and keep yourself in the running for job options you really want.
- Don't let yourself appear undependable and lacking direction by procrastinating too long.

### *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 ISTP, 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.