

# INTP

**Introverted, Intuitive, Thinking, Perceiving**

Estimated to be between 3 and 4 percent of the American population

Temperament: [Deep Green](#) (NT)

Dominant Function: [Introverted Thinking](#) (your greatest gift/talent)

Auxiliary Function: [Extraverted Intuition](#) (your supporting gift/talent)

As dominant Introverted Thinkers, INTPs are intensely logical, analytical people. They are at their best turning concepts, ideas, and problems over in their minds. Like the tumblers inside a lock rotating until they find the correct combination, INTPs search for the perfect solution or approach. Detached, intellectual, and complex people, INTPs are constantly on the lookout for increasingly difficult creative challenges.

Independent, skeptical, and often brilliant, INTPs are innately self-assured people. They possess an inner confidence that they can tackle any problem by logically working their way through it. In a crisis, they are generally unflappable, remaining amazingly calm and unperturbed, even when they are up against seemingly insurmountable odds. They are fascinated with power and are rarely intimidated by anyone or anything.

But INTPs are also easily bored with simple issues, and tend to pay little attention to mundane facts or details. They are especially intolerant of redundancy, in thought or discussion, and may simply ignore those things they see as trivial. This tendency can also give them a rather arrogant attitude, especially when they tune out people who may still be struggling to understand something the INTP has already figured out. Since Extraverted Feeling is their least developed function, they are less generally aware of, and often out of touch with, the needs, and especially the feelings, of others. So while they are usually patient with people who are genuinely eager and quick to learn, they may be demanding and condescending with those who need more hand-holding.

Creative and often ingenious, INTPs see possibilities where others do not. They have a global perspective and are quick to find subtle connections between things and imagine far-reaching implications. Intellectual risk takers, they are usually very curious and eager to learn new things, in an effort to become more competent. While they are especially capable at almost anything they deem worth the effort, they are often not nearly as competent in the area of interpersonal relationships, closing off those who love them from their most private reactions and feelings. And often, they are not even aware of their own or others' feelings about important issues. They do not understand that other people need more reassurance than they do, since they view their commitments as self-evident.

Because INTPs often spend so much time in the world of ideas, they can become so complicated and removed that it is difficult for them to communicate simply and effectively with other people. And since they rarely focus their impressive powers of concentration on the details, they may miss important realities that could make their ideas more workable. INTPs absorb new information with incredible speed, and can synthesize it almost immediately. They are good at seeing flaws in ideas and generating innovative solutions. But because they are really energized by the creative process and working out the problems, they often have more energy for starting projects than they do for finishing them. Although they usually resist it, when they occasionally allow others to help them implement their vision, the results can be impressive.

## How to get along with INTPs

- Be prepared to consider as many options as possible, and anticipate that decisions which have been made may change as new information becomes available.
- Challenge their creative problem-solving skills. INTPs seldom encounter a problem that they cannot solve. The trickier the issue, the more they will enjoy it, and the more energized they will become.
- Give INTPs adequate time to "noodle" ideas around before expecting them to act on them.
- If possible, spare them the boredom of working out the details. Instead, let them focus on the creative, more challenging aspects of a problem or situation.
- Let them know that you respect their competence and expertise.
- Respect their privacy and don't probe for information about their personal lives unless they are willing to share. Even close friends are wise to let the INTP initiate personal discussions.

## Tips for INTPs

- Be sensitive to others' desires and needs. Learn about what matters personally to those you care about.
- Beware of being overly critical, condescending, or so focused on what you are saying that you ignore others' lack of interest.
- Learn to simplify what you write or say so that others will be able to understand you.
- Express appreciation and acknowledgement for others' accomplishments and talents. Give praise even for the little things.
- Don't put off making decisions just because there is one flaw in your plan. Move plans out of the conceptual stage and take action.
- Learn to be more self-revealing and experiment with communicating how you feel inside.
- Speak up in group discussions even though a thought or idea may seem obvious to you.
- Avoid responding defensively when your logic or ideas are challenged.
- Beware of being so busy observing and figuring out life that you may forget to participate in life itself.

## Hallmarks of an INTP

Innovative	Principled	Logical	Independent
Ingenious	Scholarly	Analytical	Theoretical
Precise in Thought	Precise in Language	Skeptical	Detached
Reserved	Speculative	Self-determined	Autonomous
Quick Thinkers	Questioning	Deep Thinkers	Problem Solving

# Career Satisfaction for INTPs

As an INTP, career satisfaction means doing work that:

1. Lets me develop, analyze, and critique new ideas.
2. Lets me focus my attention and energy on a creative, theoretical, and logical process, rather than on an end product.
3. Is challenging and deals with complex problems, where I am able to try unconventional approaches, and take risks to find the best solution.
4. Lets me work independently with plenty of quiet, private time to concentrate and complete my thinking process.
5. Lets me set and maintain my own high standards for my work and determine how my performance will be evaluated and compensated.
6. Is done in a flexible, non-structured environment, without useless rules, excessive limitations, or unnecessary meetings.
7. Lets me interact with a small group of highly regarded friends and associates, all of whom I respect.
8. Gives me opportunities to constantly increase my own personal competence and power and lets me meet and interact with other powerful and successful people.
9. Lets me develop ingenious ideas and plans and lets me delegate the implementation and follow-through to an efficient support staff.
10. Does not require me to spend time directly organizing other people or supervising or mediating personal differences.

# **Work that Attracts Personality Type INTP: The Designer/Theorizer**

**The INTP theme is designing and configuring.** The INTP talents lie in grasping the underlying principles of something and defining its essential qualities. They seek to define precisely and bring coherence to systems based on the pattern of organization that is naturally there. They easily notice inconsistencies. INTPs enjoy elegant theories and models for their own sake and for use in technical and human problems. They're interested in theorizing, analyzing, and learning. They thrive on exploring, understanding, and explaining how the world works.

## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

### Preferences:

Introverting (**I**): Inward and reflective focus. They're energized by their internal world.

iNTuiting (**N**): Imaginative, innovative, inspired. Pay attention to insights & abstract information.

Thinking (**T**): Make decisions according to objective, logical principles.

Perceiving (**P**): Seek openness. Like flexibility. Want things open so they can be spontaneous.

### Temperament: **NT** (Knowledge Seeker/Rational)

NTs are analytical, hypothetical, conceptual, inventive, logical, abstract and investigative. They are motivated by a need to knowledge and competency. They value intelligence, insight, fairness and justice.

Satisfying work for an NT might include:

- An environment where they can create or develop models, explore ideas or build systems
- Work that constantly challenges their mind and requires solving complex problems ingeniously
- Working alone or with other competent people whose expertise and intelligence they respect

### Dominant Function: **Introverted Thinking** – *Analyzing/Problem-solving* (their greatest gift)

- Inward and reflective focus on the subjective world of reason that seeks understanding through finding the logical principles behind phenomena
  - Analyzing, categorizing, and figuring out how something works
  - Giving order to ideas (rather than objects)
  - Seeking the "truth"
  - Tough-minded (and often categorical) analysis
  - Reliance on and trust in own logic that may go against the "norm."

### Auxiliary Function: **Extraverted Intuition** – *Brainstorming/Patterning* (their second greatest gift)

- Outward and active focus on the new, the possibilities, meanings & patterns in the outer world
  - Inferring relationships, noticing threads of meaning, and scanning for what could be
  - Hypothesizing, seeing potentials, wondering and brainstorming
  - Attention to the outer world of ideas, symbols and possibilities
  - Noticing and making "connections" while watching the world or by talking out loud
  - Adaptability and opportunity-seeking
  - An orientation to change

### Interaction Style: **Behind-the-Scenes**

- INTPs see value in contributions from many people and information sources
- They make consultative decisions, integrating many sources of input
- INTPs focus on understanding the process to get a high quality outcome
- They define specifications to meet standards and apply principles

## **INTPs at Work**

- Naturally approach the world in an open and flexible way using logic
- Love theory and abstract ideas; enjoy playing with systems and models
- The "truth" seekers who want to understand the underlying principles and structures behind things
- Easily see the logic (or illogic) behind decisions and actions
- Often brilliant and ingenious but if not, at the very least creative and insightful
- Work best alone; need time and space to reflect on a problem for the solution to arise
- Prefer to work at their own pace and have control over their work
- Have very high standards for performance, which they apply to themselves
- Live primarily in their own minds and may appear to be detached and uninvolved with people
- Trust their own insights and opinions above others
- Independent and original, even eccentric; the "absent-minded professor" type

## **Greatest Challenges for INTPs**

- Following social protocol
- Getting others to understand their complex, theoretical thought processes
- Dealing with rules and regulations

## **Typical INTP Occupations**

### **SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY**

Biologist  
Chemist  
Computer analyst  
Computer animation  
Computer programmer  
Computer software designer/developer  
Computer specialist  
Computer systems analyst  
Economist  
Electrical or electronic technologist  
Electrician  
Engineer  
Forensic research  
Machine operator  
Mathematician  
Network integration specialist  
Physicist  
Social scientist  
Surveyor

These occupations focus on objective, scientific principles, investigation, and problem solving, which are of interest to INTPs.

### **ARTS AND DESIGN**

Actor  
Architect  
Entertainer  
Fine artist  
Inventor  
Musician  
Photographer

If you have a creative flair, you might want to pursue a career in the arts and design field.

## **LEGAL**

Attorney  
Investigator  
Judge  
Legal assistant

These occupations appeal to INTPs because they also provide opportunities to use investigation and problem solving. If you would enjoy working in the legal system, one of these careers may be suitable for you.

## **MEDICAL AND HEALTH CARE**

Dentist  
Health practitioner  
Laboratory technician  
Occupational therapist  
Pharmacist  
Physician  
Plastic surgeon  
Respiratory therapist  
Veterinarian

One of these careers may be rewarding for you if you enjoy figuring out medical problems or like working with and helping people. Some of these occupations also involve a good deal of objective decision making, which INTPs usually excel at.

## **COMMUNICATIONS**

Editor  
Interpreter or translator  
Journalist  
Legal mediator  
Public relations specialist  
Writer (especially technical)

If you enjoy the precision of language, a communications career may suit you.

## **DATA MANAGEMENT**

Financial planner  
Investment banker  
Researcher

If you enjoy using your investigative skills as a primary focus, you may want to consider a career that allows you to research and analyze data.

## **TEACHING AND COUNSELING**

Counselor (especially suicide, crisis, runaway youth)  
Psychiatrist  
Psychologist  
Teacher (especially mathematics at university)

If you enjoy sharing your subject expertise or you are interested in helping people solve problems, one of these careers may be of interest to you.

## **MANAGEMENT**

Administrator – college  
Manager  
Strategic planner

Some INTPs like to use their long-range focus and planning ability in leadership and administrative roles. If you are skilled at leading others and sharing your visions, you may enjoy an occupation in one of these areas.

## **OTHER**

Forestry and Park rangers

# **Other careers that attract INTPs**

## **Computers/Technology**

- Business Analyst
- Change Management Consultant
- Computer Analyst
- Computer Animator
- Computer Programmer
- Computer Security Specialist
- Computer Software Designer
- Computer Software Engineer (especially systems software and applications)
- Desktop Publishing Specialist
- Information Services Developer (especially of new business or computer programming)
- Internet Architect
- Investment Banker
- JAVA Programmer/Analyst
- Management Consultant (especially of computer/information services, marketing, or reorganization)
- Network and Computer Systems Administrator
- Network Integration Specialist (telecommunications)
- Network Systems and Data Communications Analyst
- New Market/Product Conceptualizer
- Personal Financial Advisor
- Research and Development Specialist
- Software Developer
- Strategic Planner
- Web Developer
- Webmaster

## **Health Care/Technical**

- Biomedical Engineer/Researcher
- Geneticist
- Microbiologist
- Neurologist
- Pharmaceutical Researcher
- Pharmacist
- Physicist
- Plastic Surgeon
- Scientist (especially chemistry or biology)
- Veterinarian

## **Professional/Business**

- Anthropologist
- Architect
- Attorney (all kinds but especially intellectual property or corporate finance)

- Biophysicist
- Business Analyst
- Economist
- Entertainment Agent
- Entrepreneur
- Financial Analyst
- Intelligence Specialist
- Investigator
- Legal Mediator
- Physicist
- Psychiatrist
- Psychoanalyst
- Psychologist
- Venture Capitalist

## **Academic**

- Archaeologist
- Astronomer
- Economist
- Historian
- Interpreter/Translator
- Logician
- Mathematician
- Philosopher
- Researcher
- University/College Faculty Administrator
- University/College Teacher

## **Creative**

- Art Agent
- Art Director
- Artist
- Columnist/Critic/Commentator
- Creative Writer
- Director (especially of stage and motion pictures)
- Entertainer/Dancer
- Film Editor
- Informational-Graphics Designer
- Inventor
- Music Arranger
- Musician
- Photographer
- Producer

## **Architecture/Creative/Media**

- Architect

- Artist
- Creative writer
- Critic
- Editor
- Film/stage/motion picture producer
- Graphic designer
- Journalist
- Musician
- News analyst
- Photographer
- Web developer/designer

## **Business/Finance**

- Business analyst
- Financial analyst
- Financial planner
- Hedge fund manager
- Investment banker
- Investment broker
- Management consultant
- Market research & development specialist
- New market/product designer
- Security analyst
- Small business owner
- Statistician
- Strategic planner
- Venture capitalist

## **Computer/Information Technology**

- Computer programmer
- Computer security specialist
- Database administrator
- Hardware/software engineer
- Information systems manager
- Network integration specialist
- Network systems administrator
- Software designer
- Systems analyst
- Web developer/webmaster

## **Education**

- Researcher
- Higher education teacher/university professor

## **Health Science/Psychology**

- Medical faculty
- Medical scientist/researcher
- Neurologist
- Pharmaceutical researcher
- Pharmacist
- Plastic surgeon
- Psychiatrist
- Psychologist

## **Law**

- Lawyer (especially banking, corporate finance, energy, product liability or intellectual property)

## **Scientific Research, Engineering, Mathematics**

- Aeronautical engineer
- Aerospace engineer
- Aircraft engineer
- Astronomer
- Biochemist
- Biologist
- Biomedical engineer
- Biophysicist
- Chemical/civil engineer
- Chemist
- Environmental scientist
- Geneticist
- Geologist
- Inventor
- Mathematician
- Microbiologist
- Natural science manager
- Physicist
- Space scientist