

ESTP Essentials

Promoter Executor™

Extraverting • Sensing • Thinking • Perceiving



Core Themes

ESTPs smoothly get on top of things. They are tactical and quickly play off of the relevant details. They set a priority while staying open to options. They enjoy exhilaration at the edge. They have a talent for negotiating and can win over people to get a lot done through others. ESTPs want a bottom-line measure of their success. They enjoy acting as a consultant. They have a deep, heart-felt care for their family and friends. They are disappointed when others don't show respect.

Unpack the Stack: ESTPs...

Lead with “Active Adapting” (Se)

Enjoy the external world using their five senses and take concrete actions based on options before them.

Support by “Skillful Sleuthing” (Ti)

Analyze and define situations, solve problems, and apply leverage according to universal logical principles.

Struggle at “Friendly Hosting” (Fe)

Tend relationships, social norms, and people's needs and values as they organize and make thoughtful decisions.

Aspire to “Keen Foreseeing” (Ni)

Focus on a vision of the future, and on insights and realizations from the inner hidden world of the unconscious.



Let's explore...

this type from various angles including 4 developmental variants. As you read, consider what fits for you (or others), what has remained the same or changed over time, and options for where to go from here.

How ESTPs Lead with Heroism

Energize the Process

Seek out stimuli. Often appear random, emergent, and enthusiastic. Attend to the here and now.

Active Adapting

Immerse in the present context.

Extraverted Sensing (Se)

Act quickly and smoothly to handle whatever comes up in the moment. Excited by motion, action, and nature. Adept at physical multitasking with a video game-like mind primed for action. Often in touch with body sensations. Trust your senses and gut instincts. Bored when sitting with a mental/rote task. Good memory for relevant details. Tend to be relaxed, varying things a little and scanning the environment, until an urgent situation or exciting option pops up. Then you quickly get “in the zone” and use your whole mind to handle whatever is happening. Tend to test limits and take risks for big rewards. May be impatient to finish.

What flavor of Active Adapting?

ESTPs can express this process in two ways. They likely develop a bias for one way early in life and may develop the other later.

“Mover” Se

Analytic/Yang Style: *active, focused, fixed, outward, top down*

Physically active. Move, and move others. Aggressive style. Tackle problems directly. Alert for relevant data. Court danger. Focus on actionable options for tangible, bottom-line results. Impulsive, strong, and can be crude.

“Sensate” Se

Holistic/Yin Style: *receptive, diffuse, flexible, inward, bottom up*

Absorb sensory experiences. Enjoy life’s pleasures. Trust rich sensory data. Prefer fun, relaxing activities. Attend to others’ motion and get in synch with them. Sensual style. Appreciate beauty. Artistic, graceful, and inviting.

How ESTPs Give Flexible Support

Refine Decision Making

Clarify what's universal, true or worthwhile. Often appear quietly receptive. Trust own judgments.

Skillful Sleuthing

Gain leverage using a framework.

Introverted Thinking (Ti)

Study a situation from different angles and fit it to a theory, framework, or principle. This often involves reasoning multiple ways to objectively and accurately analyze problems. Rely on complex/subtle logical reasoning. Adept at deductive thinking, defining and categorizing, weighing odds and risks, and/or naming and navigating. Notice points to apply leverage and subtle influence. Value consistency of thought. Can shut out the senses and “go deep” to think, and separate body from mind to become objective when arguing or analyzing. Tend to back-track to clarify thoughts, and withhold deciding in favor of thorough examination. May quickly stop listening.

What flavor of Skillful Sleuthing?

ESTPs can express this process in two ways. They likely develop a bias for one way early in life and may develop the other later.

“Critic” Ti

Analytic/Yang Style: active,
focused, fixed, outward,
top down

Stubborn on principles. Stick to a singular, most worthy framework that can explain everything. Define precisely. Provide expert logic and guidance. Bring order to ideas. Correct errors, poor thinking, and wrong approaches.

“Systemist” Ti

Holistic/Yin Style: receptive,
diffuse, flexible, inward,
bottom up

Take multiple points of view. Find patterns in the chaos. Notice how systems scale, and apply principles in a fluid way. People, art, nature, and technology all interrelate. Understand and find leverage in the messiness of life.

ESTPs In Their Own Words

From Conversations*: *What's it like to be you?*



I make it happen. How I work—I have a picture in my head on how things will be, and I'm totally involved in the here and now. I am go, go, go. And that creates a lot of successes. I just dodge my way through the sparks and problems. I'm very task oriented. I like to do something, get it done, and move to the next thing. I love circumstances where it's a challenge.

I'm a doer. What's the mission and how are we getting there? Let's work together. Let's go. Throw any obstacle, I'll find a way.

New stuff, that's the thrill. I love to learn. I can take a prior experience and lay it right on top of what I'm doing today and carry it all forward, and it's a snap. I do a lot of brainstorming on my feet, organizing the points in my mind mentally. What's to worry? Just adapt. But draw me a picture, get me a list, or put it on my calendar.

Sitting still is hard for me. I am really activity oriented and I don't need lots of supervision. I look for variety in most positions. If it's not there, I tend not to stay. I'd rather go out there and do it, just get on with things, and I can communicate that without having to spend a lot of time explaining. People know that if I have something that needs to be done, I do it. And I ask for help when it's needed.

I am totally a people person. Working through people is the way to get things done. All of my energy, fun, and most uplifting experiences are focused around people. I don't beat around the bush. Sometimes I have to tone it down a little bit—people may read me the wrong way. I'm very comfortable working either together as a team or individually. I like having flexibility, options, negotiating points. Some people need somebody to be very clear, very direct, and very to the point. That's how I operate. And work needs to be mutually enjoyable for all of the parties involved. Celebrate achievements. Recognition or reward runs very high in my value system.

* Reprinted from *16 Personality Types: Descriptions for Self-Discovery*

I love the challenge of creating something pleasing to the eye. I like the order, to walk into a place that's totally chaotic, nothing's happening, and there's a great opportunity to straighten things out. I like to get the job of placing all the stuff, making it right so it works.

I like somebody with a little sizzle. The most important thing in relationships is absolute autonomy and independence. I admit I like to be in control and yet I'm kind of easygoing in that I just want freedom. Freedom to me is leave me alone, let me do it. Anything that constrains me around that I don't like and kind of rebel against. I don't like to be told what to do or what to think. And although I know it's good for me, I don't like feedback either. It takes a lot to rattle me, and even then I just go on. I tend not to dwell on things, but sometimes I have a tendency to imagine worst-case scenarios, especially when I am stressed.

Family is very important. Just getting together and being close with the family, I think that's satisfying. I don't have a whole lot of really deep friendships, but yet I like to think people would describe me as dedicated, determined, and loyal. I sometimes have difficulty concealing what I am thinking or feeling. I don't like the pressure of having to say no. I can be somewhat cool but a genuine friend as a personal relationship evolves. Trustworthiness in personal relationships is very important, that we can disagree and still be friends, and if our backs were ever to the wall, I'm there and I would expect the same.

If I don't respect someone, I avoid them. If I can find another way to do business I will. I surround myself with people that I feel comfortable with, but they're totally my selection.

I like taking on something that I want to do and getting it done and seeing results, keeping things moving along just to see that I have met some goals—a feeling of accomplishment in a day. I'll always take bigger risks if I feel confident enough. Then I'll work with it for a while, and if I see it's not going anywhere, I just move on and go from there. I guess that summarizes how I deal with situations.

ESTP Reminders* for Growth and Success

- ☐ Noticing relevant evidence, to quickly arrive at a reasoned action, is your strength.
- ☐ When trying to convince or recruit others, you will get the most buy-in when your approach matches their values.
- ☐ People also respond well to curiosity.
- ☐ Keep in mind that your talent for negotiating around (or through) problems can be misread as manipulation or rules-breaking.
- ☐ After you win people over, they want follow-through.
- ☐ Find ways to move ahead while maintaining the company of those close to you.
- ☐ Imagine how much impact you can make problem solving with a team.
- ☐ Remember that others cannot go as fast as you—or have as much confidence to just “jump into” things.
- ☐ Mind that disagreements are not disrespect, and not everything should be measured or argued.
- ☐ Trust that the biggest pay-offs can take patience.
- ☐ Clients do not count as friends.
- ☐ In relationships, give others generous opportunities to exercise being in charge, too.
- ☐ Respect is best earned through wisdom.
- ☐ You don’t need to be conventional—your creativity will win in the end.
- ☐ Exploring the subtleties of life’s philosophical questions is its own reward.

* Adapted from *Quick Guide to the 16 Personality Types in Organizations*



What Now?

Now that you’ve explored ESTP:

1. How do the strengths and challenges of this type show up in your life?
2. What’s an insight or goal you can act on today in some way?
3. See the later chapters to leverage your subtype, neurotic zone, energy, and aspirations.