

INTJ Essentials

Conceptualizer Director™

Introverting • iNtuiting • Thinking • Judging



Core Themes

INTJs are abstract, self-directed thinkers. They have a drive for self-mastery to make the most of what they can achieve. They have a talent to calculate far ahead and see deep reasons behind things. They think in terms of concepts, evidence, efficiency, systems, and strategies. INTJs build a vision and take steps to realize progress to their goals. They like to stay independent and are invariably at the leading edge. Their secret is creative flow. They can find it hard to let go to interact freely with others.

Unpack the Stack: INTJs...

Lead with “Keen Foreseeing” (Ni)

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

Support by “Timely Building” (Te)

Utilize measurable data, tools, resources, and efficient procedures as they organize and make effective decisions.

Struggle at “Quiet Crusading” (Fi)

Listen to their feelings, convictions, and conscience to make choices that align with their identity and beliefs.

Aspire to “Active Adapting” (Se)

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



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 INTJs Lead with Heroism

Chart the Process

Reflect on data and perceptions. Often appear focused and preoccupied. Attend to reference points.

Keen Foreseeing

Transform with a meta-perspective.

Introverted Intuiting (Ni)

Withdraw from the world and tap your whole mind to receive an insight. Can enter a brief trance to respond to a challenge, foresee the future, or answer a philosophical issue. Avoid specializing and rely instead on timely “ah-ha” moments or a holistic “zen state” to tackle novel tasks, which may look like creative expertise. Manage your own mental processes and stay aware of where you are in an open-ended task. May use an action or symbol to focus. Sensitive to the unknown. Ruminate on ways to improve. Look for synergy. Might try out a realization to transform yourself or how you think. May over-rely on the unconscious.

What flavor of Keen Foreseeing?

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

“Visionary” Ni

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

Stick to a singular vision of the future to improve self and society. Be certain of a few compelling insights. Don’t let go or water down. Turn realizations into principles. Apply many complex concepts. Act as a guiding spirit.

“Oracle” Ni

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

Hold lightly many interrelated insights. Connect to the many facets of the archetypal world. Open to transformation. Respond to others’ questions, and innovate for the group. Cultivate an aesthetic or spiritual practice.

How INTJs Give Flexible Support

Expedite Decision Making

Proactively meet goals. Often appear sure and confident.
Organize and fix to get positive results soon.

Timely Building

Measure and construct for progress.

Extraverted Thinking (Te)

Make decisions objectively based on measures and the evidence before you. Focus on word content, figures, clock units, and visual data. Find that “facts speak for themselves”. Tend to check whether things are functioning properly. Can usually provide convincing, decisive explanations. Value time, and highly efficient at managing resources. Tend to utilize mental resources only when extra thinking is truly demanded. Otherwise, use what’s at hand for a “good enough” result that works. Easily compartmentalize problems. Like to apply procedures to control events and achieve goals. May display high confidence even when wrong.

What flavor of Timely Building?

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

“Manager” Te

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

Eyes success at a few ambitious goals. Speak logically and confidently. Apply a business mind-set to affairs. Manage and drive others as resources to get things done. May put speed and profit above usefulness or accuracy.

“Builder” Te

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

Helpful hard worker. Efficient, frugal, economical, and timely. Focus on doing work right. Avoid distractions. Perfect details and optimize functionality. Comfortable with different forms of complexity and multiple projects.

INTJ Self-Portrait

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



I often feel I am missing something, that I have a perspective or viewpoint that isn't widely shared and that I am decades ahead of my time, maybe more. It's like being caught in a time warp.

I tend to be someone who looks at all the what-ifs, thinking way ahead with a vision of things and anticipating. I'm always interested in extending myself into areas I don't do well in. I'm a good problem solver from that perspective. I like to go through anything I can think of before I act—the implications, what others have tried before and their effect, my options and their consequences, who to mobilize and in what time frame. I like coming up with new ideas about how to approach a situation until I find a solution that feels right. And I like to think that solution will be something that works for everyone. I experience problems as challenges, not as things that can't be dealt with or accomplished. Challenges can always be dealt with.

I am naturally organized, structured, and analytical. If a project enters my mind it immediately assumes the form of its pieces, its basic structure, and what order—first, next, last—it will take to get it done. This isn't something I do, it happens instantaneously without effort. Issues are multifaceted and I try to think from different perspectives, not only my perspectives but others' too. And I've found it's good to gather as many facts as I can. Sometimes there is a piece that needs to be thrown out, or maybe it's the seed of another project.

I won't do something if I feel I can't do it well. I prefer trying something, then critique after the fact. I will integrate the experience and never make the same mistakes again. I am satisfied when things work well, and I like to improve people's lives by reorganizing and introducing things in an understandable way that is explicit and clear and makes sense. Then someone else can come in and take over. I set very high standards for myself, and I believe it is possible to be competent at anything and everything I set my mind to.

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

I keep myself very private; that's a part of who I am. I keep people at arm's length. They have to gain my trust and interest. People are curious about me, I think, but only the brave try to figure me out. I feel very serious, but some I meet I just like a lot, and I can be spontaneously playful. I have a sensitivity to people and can feel warm with them, although many perceive me as intimidating, aloof or annoyed, or incredibly calm and competent about everything. People say I ask them good questions, not to make the decision for them, but to help them think through things. I look for systems that will make things better, and I am very much a person who seeks fairness and equality. People are very important, and I want to help them develop the skills they need to get on in life, whatever that means for each one of them.

There's always something to occupy my mind or attention. I must be using my mind in a purposefully creative way, pushing the envelope with the most creatively challenging thing I can do, being the originator of a solution to a problem that doesn't exist yet. It's a complex world, and I believe we each should develop as complex an inner life as possible with the facility to react or initiate in a wide variety of ways. The more successful one is at actively developing all of that and having access to that, the better things can be. If something really interests me I have an incredible ability to stick with it—even though I have a larger perspective, I can be very focused and zero in on a point. I have always seen the world at many levels.

Autonomy is important, to be respected for my own thoughts and feelings, ideas and creativity. I am turned off when people try to discredit my ideas or don't listen before they even understand, or when people don't try to do the best they can or fight against progress. And if the emotional piece is not well managed in my life, or not compartmentalized, work is very difficult. Chitchat is tedious. I don't know what to say, and I figure the other person isn't actually interested in me anyway.

Over time I have built a world-view, like constructing a map of the cosmos, and from this, essentially everything is understandable and anything is possible. All the things I've done, have been self-taught by picking up on or asking myself good, clear, penetrating questions to expose and articulate the hidden structures that underlie the experience of living.

INTJ Reminders* for Growth and Success

- ☐ Seeing through life's fog, and managing a lot of complexity, are among your top talents.
- ☐ Recruit people who believe in you and your ideas. And show other people your projects—get feedback to keep your vision realistic.
- ☐ Find an environment with the tools and resources to build and test your ideas.
- ☐ A mentor is a good way to get ahead.
- ☐ When possible, consider ways to automate and delegate to free you to focus on what only you can do.
- ☐ Attend to your impact on others, especially in how you communicate.
- ☐ Ask what others may need, and learn “people tools” to change how you feel and understand whom to trust.
- ☐ Try to keep at least three good friends.
- ☐ Remember to give expression to your feelings. And if you allow someone to influence your heart then you will never be alone.
- ☐ You don't need to experiment or push every relationship in order to learn.
- ☐ Treat others as more human than you treat yourself.
- ☐ Account for your health, body, and environment in all plans.
- ☐ Collect the feeling or meaning of each of your life experiences, and have as many kinds of experiences as possible.
- ☐ Consider that there are always more choices.
- ☐ Be ready to rethink what “success” means.

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



What Now?

Now that you've explored INTJ:

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.