

Personality Insights

General Description

- *“Ingenious and innovative, INTJ’s have a unique talent for looking at almost anything and seeing how it can be improved, whether it’s the smallest product or household chore, or an entire organizational system. By far their favorite subject for improvement is themselves. Most INTJ’s are on a constant quest to increase their knowledge and, by extension, their overall competence.”*
 - I have always enjoyed seeing how a way of doing things can be improved, e.g. the fraternity rush brochure
 - I always want to broaden my knowledge
 - This will help me as I move along in my career
- *“INTJs sometimes have difficulty operating comfortably in the “real world.” They tend to spend most of their time and energy in the inner world of ideas and possibilities, and they may be unaware of, or uninterested in, the more realistic details of their physical surroundings. This can result in small consequences, such as absentmindedly bumping into furniture or wearing mismatched socks, as well as larger ones, such as failing to realistically assess the feasibility of a project because they are unaware of the costs of necessary resources.”*
 - I really appreciate a well thought out plan or design.
 - Designing the school newspaper and thinking of ways to make it really interesting and different is something I really enjoy. Dealing with the week to week deadlines is not as much fun
 - I will have to watch for this in my work life, maybe getting partners who are more grounded but not as creative
- *“They especially do not like to share their ideas or feelings until they can articulate them perfectly. INTJs are most comfortable operating on an intellectual level, so they are sometimes unaware of or surprised by the emotional reactions of others.”*
 - I like to think things out before sharing them with others. Because I have spent so much time and they have not I tend to not give their ideas much weight in the discussions.
 - I fail to realize just the process of asking people for their input is valuable
 - I also fail to realize asking for it earlier in the project will stop me from getting locked into a path that might not be the best
- *“Hard workers capable of persevering against great odds, INTJs have enviable focus and determination, and they will not be deterred from reaching their goals.”*
 - I have no problem working for long periods of time on a project.
 - I am definitely goal oriented – I get fixated on achieving goals

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- *“Their single-mindedness comes with a price, however, as INTJs also may have trouble making the transition from one project to another. Usually it takes an even more fascinating, unique, or complex challenge to recapture their attention.”*
 - I prefer to stay focused on one goal
 - It does take some time to get going on another project but once I switch gears I pick up momentum really fast
 - I will have to learn how to multi-task

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Work Related Strengths & Weaknesses

- Strengths

- Ability to focus and concentrate deeply on issues
 - This has and will be extremely valuable
- Confidence and commitment to your vision
 - I would not have pulled off founding and running the school newspaper w/o believing given some of the doubters.
 - I am sure this will help me in the future
- Ability to work well alone; independent and self-directed
 - I need to find jobs that leverage this talent and preference
- Logical and analytical decision-making skills
 - I need to find jobs that leverage this
- Decisiveness and strong organizational skills
 - I have demonstrated this on the newspaper, the fraternity Rush Brochure and the fraternity Homecoming Display – all of these required me to build a plan and organize and manage people
 - I want to be an executive down the road in my career

- Weaknesses

- Loss of interest in projects after creative process has been completed
 - I hope to find creative projects or create them
 - Where I have to do the implementation and maintenance I have to just suck it up. I have to remain a top performer
- Tendency to drive others as hard as you drive yourself
 - This is not all bad if I can make sure they have also bought in to the goals and we have discussed them before hand
 - If I am just expecting them to work the weekend because I am then that is not good
- Inflexibility about your ideas
 - I need to be more open about other people's ideas
- Tendency to be too theoretical and not consider practical realities
 - It needs to be on my checklist – is this practical?, Ask XYZ, because he/she has that mindset
- Impatience with “social niceties” required of some jobs
 - I have to learn how to make small talk in a genuine way
 - I need to take other people's life into account
- Propensity to overemphasize work life to the detriment of home life
 - I need to have a life outside of school work now
 - When I am working I need to have a life outside of work
 - When I have a long term relationship I need to invest time in it and not just work

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Note: In the Introduction to the “Do What You Are” Career Report the author points out that the only factor that remains constant over the entire course of a person’s lifetime is their Personality Type. I did not have the opportunity, as you are, to take a Meyers-Briggs Type Indicator Assessment when I was in college. If I had I am sure I would have been the same INTJ (Introvert, Intuitive, Thinking, Judging) I am today. I am going to share how my 40 year career validates the power of understanding your Meyers-Briggs Type. You will see how my personality did not change and how much it drove what I did in my career. You should grasp the power of understanding your Type and leveraging it as you move through your career because it is going to be with you – both good and bad – for the rest of your life.

At the very end of the “Do What You Are” Career Report they provide a section called “The Secret to Success”. For an INTJ, me, it is:

Understand that using your strengths is easy.

- 1) It has always been easy for me to make decisions based on an objective analysis of the situation and logic. Many people are impressed by this, but it is not really a skill, rather a part of my personality.
- 2) Taking a planned and organized approach requires no work for me, unlike it does for others. It is second nature because I am obviously wired to take that approach.

The secret to success for an INTJ is learning to:

“Consider practical realities, recognize the value of input from others, and balance your work and personal life.”

- 1) ***Consider practical realities***: This does not come easily to me and it has tripped me up over and over again in my career (and life). Sometimes I have been able to have people on my staff that would provide a “real world” view. Other times I just had to force myself to stand back. I still struggle with this problem.
- 2) ***Recognize the value of input from others***: When you spend a lot of time inside your head carefully thinking out your ideas before exposing them to the outside world their ideas can feel like they are not of much value. It took me a long time to realize two things, one logical and one emotional.
 - a. Logically I was better off getting people’s input earlier in the process because they might have views I could see. As a typical linear thinker I could use some lateral input.
 - b. Emotionally people need to feel they have a chance to contribute and waiting so long to ask for input invalidates them. It is even worse when you basically reject their input because you present such an air tight case for your decision. Getting their input earlier makes them feel better about themselves and you. I realized I needed to ask more, not less, people because then I could pick and choose what input I used. Then I did not have to feel pressured to use any one person input, or reject it.

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3) *Balance your work and personal life:*

- a. This started in college and graduate school. When I got out in work world it actually got worse because there were no limits on the amount of work you could do – there was not final or paper that marked the end of the work required. For example as a financial analyst you could always find more things you needed to do on your projects. Then there were things to do to improve yourself to increase your chances for a promotion. The pressure to balance the personal and work life went up after you got married – now someone was at home 7 days/week – not just dates on the weekend. Then when you had kids the balancing act became even more complicated. By then you were higher up in the management chain and the work pressures were more intense, but so were the demands of the family. You wanted to be home for dinner with the family, but there were 7pm meetings.
- b. It might come from taking a planned and organized approach (Judging) to life. I am always driven to get things accomplished and way too focused. It also probably comes from Thinking vs. Feeling method of making decisions. If I had more of a Feeling personality I would take a more people-centered approach and realize how my personal life often suffers when I focus too much on work.
- c. I have made major improvements as I have aged but this insight would have helped earlier in my career.