**INFP Career Profile**

INFPs are most likely to find interesting and satisfying those careers that make use of their depth of concentration, their grasp of possibilities, their warmth and sympathy (i.e., their emphasis on interpersonal values), and their adaptability. INFPs are very often found in careers where there are opportunities for creating and communicating, or where there are opportunities to help others. Their very personal approach to life, their sensitivity to people, and their willingness to look beyond what is present and obvious often draw them to careers in which they can foster growth and development in others. These qualities can also lead to an ability to quickly establish rapport with others, and the development of excellent communication skills.

Their idealism provides them with a strong sense of what constitutes the "good," especially where people are concerned. This idealism, in conjunction with their open­ mindedness and tolerance, makes them exceptionally well suited to work in which a vision or understanding of human nature and potential is needed, though at times their perfectionism can hinder their work. Though human values are deeply important to the INFP, their deep feeling and warmth may not always be apparent at first meeting, and what is more likely to be seen in the external world of their career is their adaptability, their focus on possibilities and their communication skills. They may have well-developed writing or speaking skills, are often drawn to higher education, and they may have a particular affinity for languages and the arts. INFPs tend to dislike a great deal of structure or rules in their work environment, and they are usually patient with complexity.

These characteristics of INFPs are also relevant to other careers in which they are often found, careers in which the work requires quiet concentration, where they can work with people in a more private, one-to-one relationship, and/or where interpersonal sensitivity is important. They also tend to be found in careers where they can be creative or where the work they do leads to an increased understanding of the human condition and ways human suffering can be alleviated. INFPs report being attracted to careers where they can work with and develop relationships with others, particularly other creative and caring people, where they can help others, and where they feel the job has meaning and purpose. They also report being attracted to careers that allow them the flexibility to be creative, where they are intellectually stimulated, and where there is room for variety and learning. A degree of privacy and alone time in their work is usually very important to INFPs.

For INFPs the job search can be an opportunity to use their creativity, flexibility and their skills in self­ expression. They can generate a variety of job possibilities, consider them for their ability to fulfill their values, and pursue them using their skills in communicating with others, either in writing or in person. Their idealism, commitment, flexibility and people skills will usually be communicated to others in the job search. Potential drawbacks for INFPs in the job search include unrealistic expectations for a job, feelings of inadequacy or lack of confidence, and inattention to the details of jobs or of the job search. Under stress, INFPs may become quite critical of others and themselves, and they may hold themselves back because they feel incompetent as they engage in this process. They can benefit from allowing their intuition to give them a new perspective on the possibilities available in the situation. They may also find it helpful to truly acknowledge their skills, as well as the importance of communicating those skills to others. In addition, INFPs can benefit from developing realistic expectations about the job search, and from objectively looking at the logical consequences of the various decisions they make.

Examples of careers often chosen by INFPs include fine arts careers, writing and journalism, psychology and psychiatry, social sciences, counseling, architecture, education (religion, art, drama, music, and foreign languages), librarian, acting and entertainment. Other careers in which INFPs are often found are listed in the next section of this report.

INFPs are found much less often in careers that require skills and interests in management, business, factory work, and other fields requiring attention to detail, systematic logical analysis, or highly structured work. They are also found much less often in careers that require a great deal of interpersonal competition, or careers that involve a significant amount of hands-on, manual, or mechanical work. Careers in which INFPs are less often found are also listed in the next section of this report.

## • Careers in which INFPs are most and least often found

In the previous type description you have read about some of the general career patterns that are often associated with being an INFP. The specific occupations listed below are occupations in the CAPT databank that have the highest and lowest percentages of INFPs.

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All of the careers in the databank can be ranked from highest to lowest, based on the percentage of INFPs found in that career. Careers at the top of the ranking are the careers in which there are a greater than average number of INFPs, and careers at the bottom of the ranking are careers in which there are fewer than the average number of INFPs. It is important to remember that not all careers or classes of careers are represented in these lists.

The careers listed are intended to suggest patterns of interest for INFPs, and to provide you with specific career ideas you may not have yet considered. They are not intended to be a list of careers that would absolutely be "right" for you. In fact, a wide variety of types are found in all careers and in any given career.

## • Careers most often selected by INFPs

The careers in this list are the careers in CAPT's databank that have the highest percentage of INFPs. The list begins with the careers that have the highest percentages.

1. Fine Artist
2. Physician: Psychiatry
3. Counselor: Runaway Youth
4. Architect
5. Editor
6. Research Assistant
7. Suicide or Crisis Counselor
8. journalist
9. Psychologist
10. Religious Educator: All Denominations
11. Social Scientist
12. Writer
13. Laboratory Technologist
14. Consultant: Education
15. Counselor: School
16. Laboratory Technologist or Technician
17. Physical Therapist
18. Teacher: Art, Drama, or Music
19. Carpenter
20. Restaurant Worker
21. Social Worker
22. Media Specialist
23. Counselor: Rehabilitation
24. Counselor: Vocational or Educational
25. Actor
26. Research Worker
27. Teacher: English
28. Cook
29. Scientist: Biology
30. Librarian
31. Speech Pathologist
32. Artist or Entertainer
33. Employment Development Specialist
34. Public Health Nursing
35. Musician or Composer
36. Psychodrama Therapist
37. Teacher: Reading
38. Secretary: Executive or Administrative Assistant
39. Engineer: Aeronautical
40. Surveyor
41. Designer
42. Physician: All Specialties
43. Teacher: Foreign Language in junior or Senior High School
44. Waiter or Waitress
45. Minister
46. Clergy
47. Attorney: Administrator, Non-Practicing
48. Priest or Monk
49. Health Technologist or Technician
50. Administrator: Education

## • Careers least often selected by INFPs

The careers in this list are the careers in CAPT's databank that have the lowest percentage of INFPs. The list begins with the careers that have the lowest percentages.

1. Police Detective
2. Manager: Fire
3. Computer Operations, System Researcher, or Analyst
4. Management Consultant
5. Purchasing Agent
6. Corrections Officer
7. School Bus Driver
8. Small Business Manager
9. Manager: Retail Store
10. Manager: Regional Utilities
11. Coal Miner
12. Police Officer: Manager
13. City Works Technician
14. Human Resources Planner
15. Social Services Worker
16. School Principal
17. Manager: City, County, or State Government
18. Sales Manager
19. Manager: Restaurant, Bar, or Food Service
20. Storekeeper

In looking at these lists and related data we find that INFPs tend to be drawn to those careers that appear to make use of their natural preferences. That is, the careers on the "most often selected" list are the careers to which we would expect INFPs to be drawn, based on what we know about their type. The careers on the "least often selected" list are also what we would expect based on what we know about INFPs.

INFPs who work in careers that make use of their natural type preferences will more likely be satisfied and energized than INFPs who work in careers that require them to make constant use of their nonpreferred functions. Working in a career that makes use of your natural preferences is more likely to be stimulating and enjoyable, and you are more likely to meet people of "like mind."

INFPs who enter a career in which their type is more rarely found may find that they are less often working with people of "like mind." This may present you with some disadvantages as well as advantages. You may, for example, have difficulty understanding or being understood by your coworkers. In addition, ongoing use of your nonpreferred functions may lead you to feel stressed or fatigued. On the other hand, you may bring a unique and exceptionally valuable perspective to your work, one that your coworkers will not have considered. You may also carve out a path or choose a specialty within that career that is particularly suited to INFPs. Alternatively, you may need to find a way outside of your career to satisfy your natural type preferences. As we noted earlier, there is much more to an individual than their type preferences, and all types tend to be found in all careers.

It is a fact that INFPs are found in many of the careers on the "less often selected" list, but it is equally true that they are not found in very high numbers. If you are considering a career less often selected by

INFPs, you may also want to clarify the different factors influencing your career decisions. Is this a career that you feel a call to pursue? Are your family, friends, or environment pushing you to be in a particular career, one that may be less satisfying to INFPs? Do you have an accurate picture of what is involved in that career? You may find it helpful to talk to a friend, persons in those careers, or counselor about some of these issues, in order to make more informed decisions.

*Gathering Career Information, Making Decisions, Planning and Taking Action*

You now have some sense of the patterns of career choice among INFPs. This section of the report will address how your type preferences may influence three activities often involved in career exploration: gathering information, making decisions, and taking action. As you read this section of the report, keep in mind the following question: What do you need to do to make use of your strengths and to minimize the potential blindspots of your type as you go about these activities?

## • Gathering information

An important step in career exploration is finding out more about yourself and the careers you are considering, and there are a variety of ways to do that. You can, for example, call and meet with people, read biographies or reference materials, talk with a counselor, take career instruments, or do volunteer work.

Gathering information about yourself and about careers is an ongoing process in career exploration. It is important not only to take advantage of your natural strengths, but to be sure you don't miss some forms of information-gathering that may be less preferred by INFPs. For example: As an introvert you may be more likely or more inclined to engage in information-gathering activities that involve more alone-time and time for reflection. Examples include reading, and working through self­ assessment exercises. You may want to be sure that you also take time to gather information in ways that require interacting with others and gaining direct experience. Examples include networking, interviewing, volunteering, or interning.

As an intuitive type you may be more inclined to look at patterns in the information that you have, in the careers to which you are attracted, and to look for the meaning in those patterns. You may also be more willing to trust your "hunches" in your career exploration. You may tend to pay attention to possibilities and become excited by distant future goals inherent in a career. You may want to be sure that you attend to factual material and information about careers (e.g., jobs available, salaries, location), and be sure to gather some first-hand experience.

As a feeling type you may be inclined to trust and make use of information gathered from others you respect and about whom you care. You may also be more inclined to make use of formal or informal counseling for career issues, particularly if you like and trust the counselor. In your pursuit of personal forms of information, you may overlook the wide range of information available elsewhere in more objective forms (e.g., job analyses and reference materials). You may also want to consider the importance of an objective analysis of your career situation, and the importance of attending to the long-range consequences of some of your decisions.

As a perceiving type you may be inclined to believe that you continually need more information, and you may benefit from making some judgments about the wealth of information you have already collected.

## • Making decisions

Even though it may feel as though there must be one big decision in your career exploration, in fact you are making decisions all along the way. You have probably already made some tentative decisions about your type preferences, and you have probably already decided against some career options even as you have considered others.

The purpose of this section of the report is to help you see what may be the strengths and potential blindspots for your type as you go about making career decisions.

Effective decision-making depends on having both good information (using sensing or intuition) and a reliable method for weighing that information (using thinking or feeling). The two middle letters of your type formula tell you which information-gathering function and which decision-making function you prefer to use.

As someone who prefers intuition, you may be most inclined to:

* trust the kind of career information that opens up new possibilities for your imagination.
* pay attention to meanings and/or patterns in the career information you have, and put it in the context of your life and future.
* be concerned with the potential for growth or change in a career, and be concerned with where you want to be several months or years down the road.
* consider a variety of career options, whether or not they fit with your past.

For a more thorough assessment of your career situation, it may be important for you to pay attention to pragmatic and factual kinds of career information as e such things as setting career goals and you assess yourself, such as education, skills, and work history. You may also benefit from attending to facts about jobs and the job markets, such as job availability, location, and salaries available.

As someone who prefers feeling, you may also be inclined to:

* approach your decision-making in a more personal manner, giving weight to the impact of decisions on yourself and others about whom you care.
* look at how much you care about the outcomes of the various choices you have available to you, and how the outcomes affect what is important to you.
* make decisions that are based on values that are of long-term importance to you.
* make personal decisions based on a sense of right and wrong, or good and bad, regardless of whether the choices are logical or not.

For a more thorough evaluation of your career situation, you may want to consider not only how much you care, but also what are the logical consequences, good and bad, of acting on each career option. You may also want to consider, objectively, how well you would fit in a career given what you know of yourself and that career option, regardless of how your decision might affect others.

There is another factor associated with your type that may have an effect on how quickly you make decisions, and how comfortable you are with those decisions. Persons with your combination of introversion and perceiving (1-P) are often described as reflective and adaptable. IP types are often able to make themselves comfortable in a variety of work environments, adapting themselves to careers that have varying degrees of fit for them, yet on the inside they often say that they have very high standards for what makes a career acceptable. They also report feeling undecided for long periods of time, even once they are in a career. If this description fits for you, it may be important for you to be aware that very high standards may slow your decision-making process and your willingness to commit yourself to one career. Remember, making a tentative commitment to a career doesn't mean you have closed off your options forever.

## • Making plans and taking action

Once you have made some decisions, you need to make plans and take action. Planning may include breaking those goals down into short term tasks to be accomplished. Career goals may include settling on a first career, planning to make changes within a career you already have, or changing careers entirely. Short term tasks may include plans for getting further training or education, making business contacts, going on information interviews, and/or (re-)writing your resume. Taking action means moving from the planning to the doing phase and acting on the goals and tasks you have set for yourself.

The purpose of this section of the report is to make you aware of some of the strengths and potential blindspots your type may bring to these planning and action steps.

Your preference for introversion may show in a tendency to:

* plan and set goals well.
* prepare well for interviews.
* appear thoughtful and answer questions with care in interviews.
* represent yourself well in writing or on the resume.

Possible blindspots may be that you spend too much time thinking, reflecting and planning and not enough time doing. You may also isolate yourself and not seek input from others or use networks. Other potential blindspots may be that you appear underenergetic and pensive in interviews, or that you may not respond as well to parts of the interview that are unexpected.

Your preference for intuition may show in a tendency to:

* be very good at setting up long term goals and envisioning steps for getting there.
* be good at seeing alternatives to traditional career search and development paths.
* represent yourself in an optimistic way in inter­ views and be very convincing (especially if extraverted as well).
* see possibilities for employment where others do not.

Possible blindspots may be that you see too many possibilities and have difficulty focusing or have difficulty acting on the possibilities. Other potential blindspots may be that you have difficulty following through once goals and plans are made, or that you underestimate or leave out important pragmatic steps in setting and achieving goals. It is also possible that you may not respond as well to interview questions asking for specific details.

Your preference for feeling may show in a tendency to:

* be willing and able to make use of networks and relationships, and information interviews.
* communicate a warm, personable and pleasant image in interviews.
* be able to read the expectations and needs of the interviewer.
* communicate in an interview your sensitivity to people issues.

Possible blindspots may be that you expect personal contacts alone to win a job, or that you take tough interviews or job rejections personally. Other potential blindspots may be that you present in an interview as too warm and not as someone who is task­ oriented, or that you may give more personal information than is needed in interviews.

Your preference for perceiving may show in a tendency to:

* be able to adjust plans and redefine goals as you go along.
* be able to see options that others do not.
* be open to seize opportunities as they come along.
* appear flexible, spontaneous, and adaptable in interviews.

Possible blindspots may be that you spend too much time gathering information, and you may have difficulty acting or committing. Other potential blindspots may be that you do not set realistic time frames or deadlines for achieving goals. You may also be in danger of appearing too flexible and not goal­ directed enough in interviews.