**INTP Overview**

For INTPs the driving force in their lives is to understand whatever phenomenon is the focus of their attention. They want to make sense of the world-as a concept-and they often enjoy opportunities to be creative. INTPs are logical, analytical, and detached in their approach to the world; they naturally question and critique ideas and events as they strive for understanding. INTPs usually have little need to control the outer world, or to bring order to it, and they often appear very flexible and adaptable in their lifestyle.

Logic and analysis are paramount for the INTP. Things simply must make sense, and they should. INTPs have a drive to analyze, to understand, and to make sense of ideas and events. In fact, their internal juggling of ideas almost has a life of its own. INTPs think naturally in terms of cause and effect and logical consequences. They look for the underlying principles that explain the nature of the world or for the principles that capture the essence of their area of interest; INTPs enjoy solving complex problems.

INTPs are naturally skeptical and critical. They question, question, and question some more. As a result, INTPs may appear to others to be challenging, though they do not intend to criticize others. Because they value precision, INTPs are simply looking for logical inconsistencies in writing, speech, thought, and ideas. Exactness in definitions is of great importance to them, and without restraint they may engage in unnecessary hairsplitting. INTPs may also have dramatic powers of concentration, and in using these they may develop an amazingly deep and complex understanding of some area(s) of interest. In fact, they may become so involved in the inner world and in their subject of interest that they may forget about the passage of time.

Intuition orients the INTP's Thinking to the future, and to the abstract and symbolic, but Intuition is always subordinate to the INTP's need to analyze and understand ideas and events.. New ideas and new ways of doing things fascinate INTPs. In fact, INTPs are infinitely curious: about ideas, books, systems of thought, computers, or any other current area of interest. They may use their logic and intuition to develop new and highly intricate systems of thought, and thus they can be brilliant and innovative thinkers. INTPs are organizers in the world of abstract ideas; they view things systemically and creatively. They want the freedom to pursue their ideas in their own way, and thus INTPs seek variety and independence in their lives.

INTPs may have scientific, theoretical, or artistic interests, and can be found in computer, physical, or social sciences. They may be teachers, researchers, or thinkers in any field in which abstract and complex thought is required, as in philosophy. For the INTP, experience provides data, and the data is then analyzed for its fit into the complex mental models that the INTP has been developing, possibly over a lifetime. The model is often more important than the experience itself, and INTPs are usually more interested in understanding and solving abstract problems than in the actual application of their ideas. They need to find a career where a deep and intensive understanding of some subject is important.

INTPs are often nontraditional. Their questioning attitude and need for autonomy may even lead to their being or appearing iconoclastic. They do, however, value intelligence and prize competence. INTPs give respect to others based on others' perceived competence and depth of understanding rather than on the basis of position or external trappings of power. This is a natural extension of their strong valuing of autonomy. INTPs are usually tolerant and adaptable and give other people wide leeway of behavior, feeling little need to control others. However, when the INTP's principles (which may not be immediately apparent) are violated, the INTP can be seen as very firm, even stubborn.

INTPs are usually more interested in ideas and concepts than in people, though people may certainly be the subject of their acute thinking and analysis. A consequence of this detached and analytical orientation is that INTPs may miss interpersonal nuances, not appreciate the need for social niceties, and end up in hot water as a result. They can appear reserved and impersonal, though they do usually enjoy discussions with other people who share their own keen interest in ideas. Additionally, INTPs may be insensitive to the emotional needs of others and others may see them as aloof or unapproachable. At worst they may be or appear to be arrogant and critical.

Without development of their extraverted Intuition, INTPs may remain aloof and incomprehensible, unable to work out or apply their ideas in the outside world. Development of their Intuition will also help them take in information that can be processed using their logical Thinking. Without that development, INTPs may become entangled in the inner world of logical thoughts and systems, and become too distant from the outer world of people and action. As a result, they may become certain of the truth of their logic, but be unwilling to check whether their "truths" apply to what is really happening in the world outside of their own minds. By attending only to what is logical, INTPs may also forget to attend to what is important to them as a person. INTPs may at times be weak on follow­ through and self-direction, and they may even forget to attend to the details of everyday life. Appropriate development of Sensing and Feeling will help them avoid these traps as well as help INTPs give greater attention to interpersonal issues.

Under stress, INTPs may feel overwhelmed and misunderstood. However, because they are so adaptable they may remain in a situation rather than leave it or negotiate a change. INTPs may also feel confused when people in general or significant others don't behave in a manner logical to the INTP. INTPs need to understand that relationships have a logic of their own that the INTP may neglect to register as valid or important. Under great stress, and in contrast to their usual calm cool style, INTPs may erupt with out-of-proportion expressions of emotion, particularly in response to relationship stresses.