**ISFJ Career Profile**

ISFJs are most likely to find interesting and satisfying those careers that make use of their depth of concentration, t heir reliance on facts, their warmth and sympathy (i.e. their emphasis on interpersonal values), and their ability to organize. ISFJs are very often found in careers that involve nurturing or healing others and also in some spiritually oriented careers. Their sense of duty, personal commitment and practicality often draw them to careers in which they can support and be of service to others. These same qualities can also lead to their effectiveness in the helping and health oriented careers.

Their loyalty and respect for tradition often helps create a feeling of stability in the work environment around them. In addition, their quiet warmth and tact are clearly felt by others even as they attend to their own work, ensuring that organization or work goals are met. Their willingness to take on responsibility is grounded in a very personal conclusion that the job is worth doing and is of benefit to others; they are exceptionally dependable. Once they have dedicated themselves to a job, they tend to carry it all the way through until it is done. Their pragmatism and sense of order often leads them to careers where they need to impose or maintain order on a body of information (e.g. a library) or some setting (e.g., an office). ISFJs do appreciate a degree of structure and organization in their work, and they are often found scenes ensuring that things are running smoothly.

Other careers in which ISFJs are often found also draw on this characteristic personal orientation, as well as on their capacity for precision and painstaking attention to detail. Thus, we see that ISFJs often tend to be found in careers that require direct personal care of others, attention to their physical or spiritual well-being, and/or some technical knowledge. ISFJs report being attracted to careers where they can be of help to others or provide some form of practical service to others, where they can take on responsibility and organize what they do, and where they can see tangible results from their work. In addition, they typically enjoy working in an environment that is stable, where they can make pragmatic use of their attention to detail, and where they can focus their attention fully on a project or person. At times ISFJs do need a place or space where they can work alone in an uninterrupted fashion, and when they do work with others they prefer working one-to-one rather than with larger groups of people.

For ISFJs the job search tends to be a very thoughtful and practical process. They are excellent gatherers of job-related information, and can be very thorough and organized in their job search, job application, or marketing themselves. Their perseverance, stability and warmth are usually communicated to others during the job search. Potential drawbacks for ISFJs in the job search may include a tendency to overlook unusual job possibilities or options, a tendency to undersell themselves, and sensitivity to rejection. Under stress, ISFJs may feel some pessimism during this process, and they may become uncharacteristically impulsive. They can benefit from discussing their concerns with a trusted friend, and from seeing the importance of developing a larger perspective on their situation. They may also benefit from cultivating a healthy amount of assertiveness and optimism as they go about the job search.

Examples of careers often chosen by ISFJs include teaching (particularly K-12), medical fields with high patient contact (including family medicine and nursing), religious work, librarian, office and clerical work, and personal and social service work. Other careers in which ISFJs are often found are listed in the next section of this report.

ISFJs are found much less in careers that are characterized by a great deal of analytically oriented technical work or work that requires ongoing attention to more theoretical, abstract, and symbolic information. They are also found much less often in careers that require continual adaptation and frequent change, and careers that require a more distant or analytic approach to people. Careers in which ISFJs are less often found are also listed in the next section of this report.

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

In the previous type description you have read about to some of the general career patterns that are often others or provide some form of practical service to associated with being an ISFJ. The specific occupations listed below are occupations in the CAPT databank that have the highest and lowest percentages of ISFJs.

All of the careers in the databank can be ranked from highest to lowest, based on the percentage of ISFJs found in that career.. Careers at the top of the ranking are the careers in which there are a greater than average number of ISFJs, and careers at the bottom of the ranking are careers in which there are fewer than the average number of ISFJs. 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 ISFJs, 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 ISFJs

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

1. Religious Order: Lay Member
2. Licensed Practical Nurse
3. Clerical Supervisor
4. Teacher: Grades 1 through 12
5. Doctor of Osteopathy
6. School Bus Driver
7. Teacher: Pre-School
8. Administrator: Social Services
9. Teacher: Speech Pathology or Therapy
10. Teacher Aide
11. Nursing Aide
12. Librarian
13. Priest
14. Private Household Worker
15. Nursing: Public Health
16. Corrections Officer
17. Guard or Watch Keeper
18. Physician: Family and General Practice
19. Health Service Worker
20. Typist
21. Teacher: Reading
22. Food Service Worker
23. Bookkeeper
24. Medical Technologist
25. Library Attendant
26. Minister
27. Dental Hygienist
28. Registered Nurse
29. Administrator: Nursing
30. Health Education Practitioner
31. Probation Officer
32. Child Care Worker
33. Legal Secretary
34. Physical Therapist
35. Health Technologist or Technician
36. Dietitian or Nutritionist
37. Dental Assistant
38. Secretary
39. Hairdresser or Cosmetologist
40. Cashier
41. Office, Clerical, and Related Worker
42. Public Service Aide or Community Health Worker
43. Transportation Operator
44. Engineering: Aeronautical
45. Nursing: Critical Care
46. Electrician
47. 4 7. Police Detective
48. Radiologic Technologist or Technician
49. Nursing: Educator
50. Nursing: Consultant

## • Careers least often selected by ISFJs

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

1. Marketing Professional
2. Manager: Corporate Executive
3. Human Resources Planner
4. Management Consultant
5. Actor
6. Photographer
7. Social Services Worker
8. Manager: Retail Store
9. Psychodrama Therapist
10. Sales Manager
11. Social Scientist
12. Psychologist
13. Lawyer
14. Engineer: Mechanical
15. Fine Artist
16. Manager: Federal Executive
17. Insurance Agent, Broker, or Underwriter
18. Storekeeper
19. Architect
20. Physician: Pathology

In looking at these lists and related data we find that ISFJs 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 ISFJs 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 ISFJs.

ISFJs who work in careers that make use of their natural type preferences will more likely be satisfied and energized than ISFJs 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 enjoy­ able, and you are more likely to meet people of "like mind."

ISFJs 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 under­ stood 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 ISFJs. 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 ISFJs 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 ISFJs, 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 ISFJs? 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 ISF)s. 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 ISFJs. 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, inter­ viewing, volunteering, or interning.

As a sensing type you may be more inclined to gather and trust the facts and realities (e.g., jobs available, salaries, location) about potential careers, and you may be more inclined to pursue hands-on experiences such as interning or volunteering. You may tend to gather and trust information on those careers that are most consistent with your work history. You may want to be sure that you attend to what your pattern of values, interests, and skills tells you about your career development, and you may want to consider careers that don't appear to fit with your work history.

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 judging type you may be inclined to come to closure prematurely, and you may benefit from continuing to gather information, even if the information seems inconsistent with your initial direction.

• 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 blind­ spots 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 sensing, you may be most inclined to:

* trust more pragmatic kinds of information and pay the most attention to the facts, data, and givens in your career situation.
* face the realities of your career situation (e.g., your education, work history and experience, salary requirements, the commendations and criticisms you have received in the past).
* attend to what you have done in jobs in the past.
* attend to the facts of jobs and the market (e.g., what jobs and salaries are available, location).

For a more thorough assessment of your career situation, it may be important for you to allow yourself time to brainstorm career options without worrying about their practicality, or whether or not they fit with your past experience. You might also benefit from considering the possibilities for growth or change in various careers, and where you want to be several months or years down the road.

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 judging (I-J) are often described as reflective and difficult to dissuade from a direction they have chosen. IJ types often say that they feel open to options on the inside, while their outside behavior tends to appear very decisive and directed. If this description fits for you, it may be important for you to allow yourself the discomfort of not making a decision immediately, though you may feel the need to do so. It may be valuable for you to hold off on an immediate decision so that you can give yourself time to actively explore your environment for other options that may be available.

## • Making Plans and Taking Action

Once you have made some decisions, you need to make plans and take action. Planning may include such things as setting career goals and 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 blind­ spots 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 blind­ spots 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 sensing may show in a tendency to:

* make good use of a structured career plan and subgoals.
* remember and make use of data and facts well, both in planning and in interviews.
* represent yourself accurately, recalling important details and experiences.
* be thorough, systematic, and exhibit follow through on leads.

Possible blindspots may be that you do not want to try something new or consider a career change. You may also be in danger of focusing too much on past experience as the sole predictor of future options. Other potential blindspots may be that you interpret job requirements too literally, or you may have difficulty with such interview questions as "What would you do if ... ?"

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 inform tion than is needed in interviews.

Your preference for judging may show in a tendency to:

* be good at developing a series of steps for reaching goals and planning actions.
* be good at meeting deadlines and achieving goals set, and be more willing to act once a decision is made.
* communicate a task-orientation in interviews.
* communicate a willingness to take on responsibility.

Possible blindspots may be that you are impatient with the gathering of information and move to premature closure. You may also have difficulty staying open to new information as it presents itself if it does not fit your plan, or you may be rigid about career goals. Other potential blindspots may be that you appear inflexible in interviews, or that you mistake efficiency for effectiveness in planning and acting.