**ISTJ Career Profile**

ISTJs are most likely to find interesting and satisfying those careers that make use of their depth of concentration, their reliance on facts, their use of logic and analysis, and their ability to organize. ISTJs are very often found in management careers, particularly in the areas of government, public service, and private business, and they are often found in technical and production-oriented careers as well. Their task orientation, realistic grounding, dependability, and respect for the facts often draw them to careers that call for an organized approach to data, people, or things. These same qualities can also lead to their effectiveness as managers.

Their patience and dedication is often communicated to those around them as a calm composure, thus they often bring a stability to their work environment. As a result they can engender a degree of trust in others that leads to their placement in management positions or supervisory positions that require the overseeing of practical matters. In addition, their dedication can make them very hard to distract or discourage from a given task, an orientation that leads to thoroughness and accuracy in their work. They will also painstakingly follow through on any commitments they make. ISTJs are exceptionally practical and though they may not always agree with the goals of a work setting or institution, they do find a comfort in structure and will guarantee that procedures are followed.

These characteristics of ISTJs are also relevant to the other careers in which they are often found, careers where realistic precision and technical know-how are required. They also tend to be found in careers where detailed knowledge is required and where the work involves practical or hands-on experience. ISTJs report being attracted to careers where there is some structure, where the demands and rewards are clear, where they can take on responsibilities, and where they can work to gain status and security. In addition, they enjoy working alone, and if they must work with groups they tend to prefer smaller ones; they also like being able to prepare projects or group presentations ahead of time. ISTJs want results from their work that are tangible, and will work to perfect the efficient delivery of a ser­ vice or product.

For ISTJs the job search tends to be a very thoughtful and practical process. They are excellent gatherers of job-related information, and they can be very organized and thorough in preparing application materials or in marketing themselves. Their depend­ ability and willingness to take on responsibility will usually be communicated to others during the job search. Potential drawbacks for ISTJs in the job search may include a tendency to narrow the search too much, failure to consider unusual opportunities or job options, and a tendency to be cautious and undersell themselves. Under stress, ISTJs may become pessimistic during this process, and they may also become uncharacteristically impulsive. They may find it useful to engage their ability to be objective, and to see the importance of developing some flexibility in their inter­ actions with others. They may also benefit from developing a healthy amount of enthusiasm and assertiveness as they engage in the job search.

Examples of careers often chosen by ISTJs include management in business or government, accounting, engineering, computer operations and analysis, technical/trade, teaching, police/corrections work, and skilled trade and crafts work. Other careers in which ISTJs are often found are listed in the next section of this report.

ISTJs are found much less often in careers that are characterized by a great deal of nurturing work and/or relationship-oriented work. They are also found less often in careers that require ongoing attention to more theoretical, abstract, and symbolic material. They are also found much less often in careers in the arts and careers that require a significant amount of spontaneous adaptation or expressiveness in a group context. Careers in which ISTJs are less often found are also listed in the next section of this report.

## • Careers in which ISTJs 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 ISTJ. The specific occupations listed below are occupations in the CAPT data­ bank that have the highest and lowest percentages of ISTJs.

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

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

1. City Works Technician
2. Steelworker
3. Police Officer: Manager
4. Regional Utilities Manager
5. Manager: City, County, or State Government
6. Small Business Manager
7. Corrections Officer
8. Accountant
9. Manager: Public Service
10. Manager: Retail Store
11. Manager: Federal Executive
12. School Bus Driver
13. School Principal
14. Manager: Corporate Executive
15. Purchasing Agent
16. Computer Professional
17. Dentist
18. Coal Miner
19. Auditor
20. Electrician
21. Engineer: Mechanical
22. Cleaning Service Worker
23. Electrical or Electronic Engineering Technician
24. Teacher: Mathematics
25. Teacher: Trade, Industrial, or Technical
26. Military Officer or Enlistee
27. Law Enforcement, Corrections, Park Rangers, and Guards
28. Factory or Site Supervisor
29. Nursing: Administrator
30. Police Detective
31. Manager: Financial or Bank Officer
32. Computer Operations, Systems Researcher, or Analyst
33. Administrator: Social Services
34. Craft Worker
35. Engineer: Electrical or Electronic
36. Factory Worker or Machine Operator
37. Public Service Aide or Community Health Worker
38. Educational Administrator
39. Chemist
40. Personnel or Labor Relations Worker
41. Engineer: All Categories
42. Management Consultant
43. Engineer: Chemical
44. Farmer
45. Teacher: Coaching
46. Banking and Finance
47. Manager: Fire
48. Engineering or Science Technician
49. judge
50. Physician: Pathology

## •Careers least often selected by ISTJs

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

1. Dental Hygienist
2. Fine Artist
3. Counselor: Runaway Youth
4. Clergy
5. Musician or Composer
6. Psychodrama Therapist
7. Psychologist
8. Teacher: Pre-School
9. Public Relations Worker or Publicity Writer
10. Suicide or Crisis Counselor
11. Clerical Supervisor
12. Religious Educator
13. journalist
14. Restaurant Worker
15. Social Scientist
16. Minister
17. Writer
18. Speech Pathologist
19. Actor
20. Research Worker

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

ISTJs who work in careers that make use of their natural type preferences will more likely be satisfied and energized than ISTJs 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."

ISTJs 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 ISTJs. Alternatively, you may need to find a way out­ side 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 ISTJs 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 ISTJs, 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 ISTJs? 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 IST)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 ISTJs. 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 a sensing type you may be more inclined to gather and trust the facts and realities (e.g., jobs avail-able, 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 thinking type you may be inclined to pursue and trust information you consider to be the most objective. Thus, you may be inclined to make use of reference materials and job analyses. You may also be more inclined to work through various exercises and analyses of your interests, skills, and other relevant information. In your pursuit of objective information you may miss information available from significant others or people you trust. You may also want to trust that you care about something, even if it seems illogical.

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 thinking, you may also be inclined to:

* approach your decision-making in a more critical and impersonal manner, attempting to weigh all of the information objectively, including information about yourself.
* look at all of the consequences, both good and bad, of the various choices you have available to you.
* analyze your degree of fit with a career based on what you know of yourself and of your career options.
* make objective decisions which involve ideas or people you care about.

For a more thorough evaluation of your career situation, you may want to consider not only what is logical, but also how much you personally care about the various career options and whether a given career would be good or bad for your well-being. You may also want to consider the impact the choices may have for your long-term values, and on those about whom you care.

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 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 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 follow­through 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 thinking may show in a tendency to:

* establish a strategy for the job search, and move logically from step to step.
* be good at doing objective research on a career or employer.
* be good at communicating competencies on paper or in interviews.
* be good at standing your ground in a tough interview.

Possible blindspots may be that you expect the process to proceed more logically than real life usually does, or that you may be too rigid in your use of a particular strategy. Other potential blindspots may be that you ignore useful information if the interviewer does not meet your expectations of competence, or that you appear too task-oriented in the interview and not sensitive to any interpersonal concerns involved in the position.

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.