**ISTJ Overview**

For ISTJs the dominant quality in their lives is an abiding sense of responsibility for doing what needs to be done in the here­and-now. Their realism, organizing abilities, and command of the facts lead to their completing tasks thoroughly and with great attention to detail. Logical pragmatists at heart, ISTJs make decisions based on their experience and with an eye to efficiency in all things. ISTJs are intensely committed to people and to the organizations of which they are a part; they take their work seriously and believe others should do so as well.

ISTJs are quiet, serious, and realistic observers of their environment, who naturally attend to and remember concrete facts. ISTJs give great weight to hands-on life experiences; they use their Sensing to internally process and file away data for later use. ISTJs usually have a massive amount of information stored inside and an impressive command of the facts. In recalling a past event, ISTJs often have a good memory for what was literally said or done. Their orientation to detail can also show as a concern for precision in action and in speech. It was an ISTJ who originally said, "Say what you mean."

ISTJs bring a detached pragmatism to all that they do, and they have a great deal of common sense; ISTJs are typically down-to-earth folk. They learn by doing, and want to know how an idea can be used or applied. As a result, they are often quite skeptical people. "Seeing is believing" to an ISTJ. They respect the facts and their experience, and they expect things to be logical. Period.

Thinking gives order and structure to ISTJs' experiences and puts their pragmatism in a logical context. ISTJs tend to be analytical and tough-minded, and they make decisions with an eye to impersonal consequences; they really want their decisions to be objective and fair. Thinking in conjunction with Sensing also gives ISTJs an eye to the efficient manipulation of real world phenomena. That is, they like to bring logical order to facts and things in their environment. ISTJs are usually more oriented to the tasks on which they are working than to the people with whom they work, and they may sometimes unrealistically expect all people to behave "logically."

ISTJs do like a structured and organized outer world, and find comfort in developing and adhering to a routine in their work. They like to know what their job is, and generally do not appreciate settings where the rules constantly change; in this sense, ISTJs are conservative. They guard what works, and they want to see evidence that a new way will work before they adopt it. "If it works, why change it?" This attitude gives ISTJs an atmosphere of patience and stability, and others often feel settled and calm in the ISTJs' presence.

Above all else, ISTJs are responsible. They do things just because they need to be done; ISTJs have a powerful work ethic. "Work hard, then play." ISTJs like getting things done, and they are thorough as they carry a task through to completion. Once an ISTJ commits to complete a task, he or she will do so; ISTJs are exceptionally dependable. In fact, they can be difficult to distract once they have begun to systematically work on a project. "Plan your work, and work your plan." ISTJs honor their commitments, and they expect others to do the same; they hold themselves and others accountable for getting things done.

Tradition, stability, and preparedness are usually valued by ISTJs. They respect the fine-tuned performance that characterizes established organizations, and ISTJs are often found working in such settings. Through their conscientiousness as well as by quietly building community, ISTJs form much of the backbone of society. They also provide stability through their often clear sense of what constitutes appropriate and inappropriate behavior, and through the keeping of traditions. Ceremonies and anniversaries, such as weddings, birthdays, and holidays, are valued and celebrated.

With their memory for facts and with their attention to getting things done, ISTJs often have great academic success, particularly in subjects that have applications and where results can be seen. Though they tend to have less interest in highly theoretical subjects, they can certainly succeed there as well.

ISTJs are often found in business, production, banking, law, auditing, engineering, and other areas where a mastery of factual data and a tough-minded concern for organization is needed. In their domain, ISTJs work toward efficiency and conservation of resources; they are naturals for quality control. ISTJs are often found in management or supervisory positions, overseeing the practical realization of institutional goals. Though they often like to work alone, ISTJs are willing and able to delegate work to ensure the business of the day gets done.

In relationships ISTJs look for fair play and dependability. They themselves tend to be quiet and serious; they are people of few words. They are inclined to be straightforward in their communications and controlled in the outward expression of their emotions. ISTJs do often have a hidden but quirky sense of humor that arises from their highly individual reactions to events. In the extreme, ISTJs may be insensitive and miss the "people part of the equation." At times, they may appear intolerant, and at worst, they may run over others who do not communicate their assertions in a logical and succinct manner.

Development of their extraverted Thinking will help ISTJs become more action-oriented and effective in the outer world. Otherwise, they may end up immersed and trapped in their inner world of impressions and memories. Development of Thinking will help bring order to their lives by helping them decide which are the most appropriate actions for them to take, and development of flexibility will help them avoid becoming too focused on details. ISTJs may need to work especially hard to understand others' needs for appreciation and emotional support; after all, they are inclined to overlook even their own contributions. Development of Feeling will ultimately help them attend more to the people impact of their words and actions. Further, development of Intuition will give them a greater respect for the big picture consequences of some of their actions and a greater appreciation for theory.

Under stress ISTJs may withdraw, focus only on their work, and bum out through pushing themselves to get too many things done. They may also become rigid about following rules and become excessively critical of others. Under extreme stress, they can become intensely pessimistic, seeing only negative possibilities in the future, for themselves, for others, and for the world at large.