**ISTP Overview**

For ISTPs the driving force in their lives is to understand how things and phenomena in the real world work so they can make the best and most effective use of them. ISTPs are logical and realistic people, and they are natural troubleshooters. When not actively solving a problem, ISTPs are quiet and analytical observers of their environment, and they naturally look for the underlying sense to any facts they have gathered. ISTPs often pursue variety and even excitement in their hands-on experiences. Although they do have a spontaneous, even playful side, what people often first encounter with them is their detached pragmatism.

ISTPs are logical and analytical people who believe things in the world should make sense. As quiet and realistic observers of the world, they are intensely curious. ISTPs seek experience in the outer world, and they boil that experience down so they can understand the underlying principles of how things work. ISTPs strive for an objective understanding of things not solely for the sake of understanding, but because they want to use things effectively. ISTPs love solving hands-on problems.

ISTPs are naturally critical and come to logical conclusions easily, but since their thinking is brought to bear primarily on their inner world of ideas, others may not see the results of these analyses unless the ISTP chooses to share them. What others typically first encounter with ISTPs is their active involvement in the outer world of the senses and their tolerant and easygoing approach to life. Their attitude toward life is playful at times, and when they move into action, ISTPs are spontaneous and flexible, even impulsive. When their principles or independent lifestyle are trod upon, however, they can surprise others by becoming quite firm and possibly stubborn.

Sensing provides ISTPs with a way to stay open to new information, but the gathering of information is always secondary to their need to make sense of things. Their preference for Sensing data means that their analysis is brought to bear on the objects, events, and people of the real world, and their Thinking tends to be concrete and pragmatic. Thinking in conjunction, with Sensing also tends to make ISTPs utilitarian; if something cannot be used, then it tends to be of less interest to them. Too much abstraction or theory can frustrate them. In contrast, they do appreciate and have a good memory for factual information. ISTPs tend also to be task-oriented rather than people-oriented and are usually more interested in organizing data or objects than either people or circumstances.

Stimulation of the senses, and sensual experience in general, is of great importance to ISTPs. They often value their material possessions and may also love the outdoors. Having a low tolerance for boredom, ISTPs will pursue excitement and often create action if none is to be found. They enjoy physical activity just for the sheer joy of living in their bodies in the here-and­ now. ISTPs may be highly skilled athletes and it is not unusual for them to like adventurous or risky sports. They enjoy honing their ability to respond to the needs of the moment. ISTPs are good in crises, and they may also be excellent trouble-shooters. ISTPs can be naturals for work in emergency services.

ISTPs often have not only an acute bodily intelligence but a magnificent ability with physical tools and instruments, whether the tool is a computer, a car, or a football. Precision in action and skilled operation of the environment are things to be admired, particularly technical skill, and ISTPs are often mechanically minded. They use their analysis and natural understanding of the world to achieve maximum effect from their efforts; they seek efficiency. In their work, ISTPs like to see some kind of tangible result, and thus they are often found in engineering or construction. Since ISTPs often have a very hands-on learning style, traditional classrooms may hold little interest for them. If they can see the practical application of an idea and can learn in a more active way, they will continue in school.

ISTPs are quite independent, and do not have a great deal of appreciation for rules and regulations. What they do respect are skill, logic, and the ability to respond effectively to problems. Competition is certainly not foreign to ISTPs, and they enjoy responding in more "effective" ways than their competitors. ISTPs are commonly found in police work, business, and other areas where this need can be met. They are also found in law, computer programming, and accounting, or any career where they can bring logical order to a mass of facts. Whatever their career, ISTPs need variety and opportunities to learn and to apply their skills. Since ISTPs often enjoy solitary activities and hobbies, they also need a career where some in-depth interest can be used.

In relating to others, ISTPs often have a reserved and detached style. ISTPs can be tough-minded and a bit cool; they tend to control their emotions, and little leaks out. They may even be shy, but once they know you, they can be quite playful. Much of their expression is nonverbal, because to ISTPs, actions speak louder than words, and when they do express themselves verbally, they tend to be matter-of-fact. ISTPs prefer relation­ ships that are collegial, and since ISTPs respect skill in others, they often build relationships around shared activities (e.g., scuba diving). ISTPs may frustrate others with their strong needs for independence and freedom. They resist feeling controlled, which may at times manifest as a lack of commitment, or lack of follow­through.

Development of extraverted Sensing will help ISTPs stay open to new information that can be processed using their logical Thinking. Without that development, they may get tangled in the world of logic, become certain of the truth of their conclusions, and be unwilling to check out whether or not their "truths" apply to what is really happening in the world outside of their own minds. ISTPs can benefit from learning to establish long term goals and from adhering to the commitments they make. With maturity, they will also be less inclined to put off decisions. Since ISTPs may sometimes be insensitive to others' needs for feedback and appreciation, they can be seen as unapproachable. Development of feeling will help them attend more to personal and interpersonal issues, including their impact on others, as well as to what others and they themselves care about. Under stress, ISTPs can feel suddenly trapped or bound by rules or expectations, at which point they may impulsively move out of the constricting situation. In addition, they may become cynical and see only negative possibilities for the future, and as a result put off decisions.

Under stress, ISTPs can feel cut off from others, and misinterpret comments made by others as intentionally hurtful. In surprising contrast to their reserved and cool style, under great stress ISTPs may even have out-of-proportion explosions of emotion.