Portrait of an INTJ
Introverted iNtuitive Thinking Judging
(Introverted Intuition with Extraverted Thinking)

The Scientist

As an INTJ, your primary mode of living is focused internally, where you take things in primarily via your intuition. Your secondary mode is external, where you deal with things rationally and logically.

INTJ's live in the world of ideas and strategic planning. They value intelligence, knowledge, and competence, and typically have high standards in these regards, which they continuously strive to fulfill. To a somewhat lesser extent, they have similar expectations of others.

With Introverted Intuition dominating their personality, INTJ’s focus their energy on observing the world, and generating ideas and possibilities. Their mind constantly gathers information and makes associations about it. They are tremendously insightful and usually are very quick to understand new ideas. However, their primary interest is not understanding a concept, but rather applying that concept in a useful way. Unlike the INTP, they do not follow an idea as far as they possibly can, seeking only to understand it fully. INTJ’s are driven to come to conclusions about ideas. Their need for closure and organization usually requires that they take some action.

INTJ's tremendous value and need for systems and organization, combined with their natural insightfulness, makes them excellent scientists. An INTJ scientist gives a gift to society by putting their ideas into a useful form for others to follow. It is not easy for the INTJ to express their internal images, insights, and abstractions. The internal form of the INTJ's thoughts and concepts is highly individualized, and is not readily translatable into a form that others will understand. However, the INTJ is driven to translate their ideas into a plan or system that is usually readily explainable, rather than to do a direct translation of their thoughts. They usually don't see the value of a direct transaction, and will also have difficulty expressing their ideas, which are non-linear. However, their extreme respect of knowledge and intelligence will motivate them to explain themselves to another person who they feel is deserving of the effort.

INTJ’s are natural leaders, although they usually choose to remain in the background until they see a real need to take over the lead. When they are in leadership roles, they are quite effective, because they are able to objectively see the reality of a situation, and are adaptable enough to change things which aren't working well. They are the supreme strategists - always scanning available ideas and concepts and weighing them against their current strategy, to plan for every conceivable contingency.

INTJ’s spend a lot of time inside their own minds, and may have little interest in the other people's thoughts or feelings. Unless their Feeling side is developed, they may have problems giving other people the level of intimacy that is needed. Unless their Sensing side is developed, they may have a tendency to ignore details which are necessary for implementing their ideas.

The INTJ's interest in dealing with the world is to make decisions, express judgments, and put everything that they encounter into an understandable and rational system. Consequently, they are quick to express judgments. Often they have very evolved intuitions, and are convinced that they are right about things. Unless they complement their intuitive understanding with a well-developed ability to express their insights, they may find themselves frequently misunderstood. In these cases, INTJ’s tend to blame misunderstandings on the limitations of the other party, rather than on their own difficulty in expressing themselves. This tendency may cause the INTJ to dismiss others input too quickly, and to become generally arrogant and elitist.

INTJ’s are ambitious, self-confident, deliberate, long-range thinkers. Many INTJ’s end up in engineering or scientific pursuits, although some find enough challenge within the business world in areas which involve organizing and strategic planning. They dislike messiness and inefficiency, and anything that is muddled or unclear. They value clarity and efficiency, and will put enormous amounts of energy and time into consolidating their insights into structured patterns.

Other people may have a difficult time understanding an INTJ. They may see them as aloof and reserved. Indeed, the INTJ is not overly demonstrative of their affections, and is likely to not give as much praise or positive support as others may need or desire. That doesn't mean that he or she doesn't truly have affection or regard for others, they simply do not typically feel the need to express it. Others may falsely perceive the INTJ as being rigid and set in their ways. Nothing could be further from the truth, because the INTJ is committed to always finding the objective best strategy to implement their ideas. The INTJ is usually quite open to hearing an alternative way of doing something.

When under a great deal of stress, the INTJ may become obsessed with mindless repetitive, sensate activities, such as over-drinking. They may also tend to become absorbed with minutia and details that they would not normally consider important to their overall goal.

INTJ’s need to remember to express themselves sufficiently, so as to avoid difficulties with people misunderstandings. In the absence of properly developing their communication abilities, they may become abrupt and short with people, and isolationists.

INTJ’s have a tremendous amount of ability to accomplish great things. They have insight into the Big Picture, and are driven to synthesize their concepts into solid plans of action. Their reasoning skills give them the means to accomplish that. INTJ’s are most always highly competent people, and will not have a problem meeting their career or

education goals. They have the capability to make great strides in these arenas. On a personal level, the INTJ who practices tolerances and puts effort into effectively communicating their insights to others has everything in his or her power to lead a rich and rewarding life.

Jungian functional preference ordering:
Dominant: Introverted Intuition
Auxiliary: Extraverted Thinking
Tertiary: Introverted Feeling
Inferior: Extraverted Sensing

INTJ's generally have the following traits:

- Able to absorb extremely complex theoretical and complex material
- Driven to create order and structure from theoretical abstractions
- Supreme strategists
- Future-oriented
- See the global, "big picture"
- Strong insights and intuitions, which they trust implicitly
- Value their own opinions over others
- Love difficult theoretical challenges
- Bored when dealing with mundane routine
- Value knowledge and efficiency
- Have no patience with inefficiency and confusion
- Have very high standards for performance, which they apply to themselves most strongly
- Reserved and detached from others
- Calm, collected and analytical
- Extremely logical and rational
- Original and independent
- Natural leaders, but will follow those they can fully support
- Creative, ingenious, innovative, and resourceful
- Work best alone, and prefer to work alone

More so than any other personality type, INTJ's are brilliant when it comes to grasping complex theories and applying them to problems to come up with long-term strategies. Since this type of "strategizing" is the central focus and drive of the INTJ, there is a happy match between desire and ability in this type. Accordingly, the INTJ is happiest and most effective in careers which allow this type of processing, and which promote an environment in which the INTJ is given a lot of autonomy over their daily lives.

INTJ Relationships
INTJ's believe in constant growth in relationships, and strive for independence for themselves and their mates. They are constantly embarking on "fix-up" projects to improve the overall quality of their lives and relationships. They take their commitments seriously, but are open to redefining their vows, if they see something which may prove

to be an improvement over the existing understanding. INTJ’s are not likely to be "touchy-feely" and overly affirming with their mates or children, and may at times be somewhat insensitive to their emotional needs. However, INTJ’s are in general extremely capable and intelligent individuals who strive to always be their best, and be moving in a positive direction. If they apply these basic goals to their personal relationships, they likely to enjoy happy and healthy interaction with their families and friends.

INTJ Strengths

- Not threatened by conflict or criticism
- Usually self-confident
- Take their relationships and commitments seriously
- Generally extremely intelligent and capable
- Able to leave a relationship which should be ended, although they may dwell on it in their minds for awhile afterwards
- Interested in "optimizing" their relationships
- Good listeners

INTJ Weaknesses

- Not naturally in tune with others feelings; may be insensitive at times
- May tend to respond to conflict with logic and reason, rather than the desired emotional support
- Not naturally good at expressing feelings and affections
- Tendency to believe that they're always right
- Tendency to be unwilling or unable to accept blame
- Their constant quest to improve everything may be taxing on relationships
- Tend to hold back part of themselves

What does Success mean to an INTJ?

People with the INTJ personality type are serious, analytical and often perfectionist. They look at a problem or idea from multiple perspectives and systematically analyze it with objective logic, discarding things that turn out to be problematic, and evolving their own understanding of something when new information turns out to be useful. There is no other personality type who does this as naturally as the INTJ. They are natural scientists and mathematicians. Once given an idea, they are driven to understand it as thoroughly as possible. They usually have very high standards for their own understanding and accomplishments, and generally will only value and consider other individuals who have shown that they meet or surpass the INTJ's own understanding on a given issue. INTJ’s value clarity and conciseness, and have little esteem for behaviors and attitudes that are purely social. Social "niceties" often seem unnecessary and perhaps even not genuine to the INTJ, who is always seeking to improve their substantive understanding. INTJ's highly value social interaction that is centered around the meaningful exchange of ideas, but they usually dismiss the importance of being friendly or likeable in other social contexts, and they are likely to be uncomfortable with interactions that are primarily emotional, rather than logical. INTJ’s value structure, order, knowledge, competence, and logic. Above all, they value their own ideas and intuitions about the world. An INTJ's feeling of success depends primarily upon their own level of understanding and

accomplishment, but also depends upon the level of structure in their life, and their ability to respect the intelligence and competence of those who share their life.

Allowing Your INTJ Strengths to Flourish

As an INTJ, you have gifts that are specific to your personality type that aren't natural strengths for other types. By recognizing your special gifts and encouraging their growth and development, you will more readily see your place in the world, and be more content with your role.

Nearly all INTJ's will recognize the following characteristics in themselves. They should embrace and nourish these strengths:

The INTJ's mind is naturally geared towards systematically analyzing information from many contextual perspectives, and rejecting or retaining information as they become aware of its usefulness or validity. They probably do very well in school, and in any pursuit that requires serious analytical thinking.

They're extremely insightful, and see things that are not obvious to others. This ability to see patterns and meanings in the world can help the INTJ in many different ways.

When given a goal or context, an INTJ is able to generate all kinds of possibilities. They're able to see the problem from many different angles, and come up with a solution that fits the needs of the current situation.

They don't take criticism personally, and are open to changing their opinions when they're shown a better idea or better way of doing something.

An INTJ has a "stick to it" attitude. They're not afraid of hard work, and will put forth a great deal of effort towards something that they are interested in. This persistence will help the INTJ to achieve any identified goal.

Usually intelligent and able to concentrate and focus, the INTJ can usually grasp difficult ideas and concepts.

INTJ's who have a well-developed Extraverted Thinking function to complement their dominant Introverted iNtuition will enjoy these very special gifts:

They can discriminate well amongst their intuitions and build ingenious systems to meet identified goals, or determine a successful plan of action to meet an identified need. In such a way, they may be brilliant scientists, doctors, mathematicians, or corporate strategists.

Their deep understanding, logical abilities, and persistence may enable them to make discoveries or uncover new ways of looking at something. In such a way, they may perform a great service to society. For example, an INTJ is the likely personality type to discover the cure for cancer.

The INTJ with well-developed judgment will be able to grasp and process concepts that are beyond what their natural intelligence appears to be able to handle.

If they have achieved a good amount of life wisdom, an INTJ can become a powerful political force.

Potential Problem Areas

With any gift of strength, there is an associated weakness. Without "bad", there would be no "good". Without "difficult", there would be no "easy". We value our strengths, but we often curse and ignore our weaknesses. To grow as a person and get what we want out of life, we must not only capitalize upon our strengths, but also face our weaknesses and deal with them. That means taking a hard look at our personality type's potential problem areas.

INTJ's are rare and intelligent people with many special gifts. This should be kept in mind as you read some of the more negative material about INTJ weaknesses. Remember that these weaknesses are natural. We offer this information to enact positive change, rather than as blatant criticism. We want you to grow into your full potential, and be the happiest and most successful person that you can become.

Most of the weaker characteristics that are found in INTJ's are due to their dominant function (Introverted iNtuition) overtaking their personality to the point that the other forces in their personality exist merely to serve the purposes of Introverted iNtuition. In such cases, an INTJ may show some or all of the following weaknesses in varying degrees:

- May be unaware (and sometimes uncaring) of how they come across to others
- May quickly dismiss input from others without really considering it
- May apply their judgment more often towards others, rather than towards themselves
- With their ability to see an issue from many sides, they may always find others at fault for problems in their own lives
- May look at external ideas and people with the primary purpose of finding fault
- May take pride in their ability to be critical and find fault in people and things
- May have unrealistic and/or unreasonable expectations of others
- May be intolerant of weaknesses in others
- May believe that they're always right
- May be cuttingly derisive and sarcastic towards others
- May have an intense and quick temper
- May hold grudges, and have difficulty forgiving people
- May be wishy-washy and unsure how to act in situations that require quick decision making
- May have difficulty communicating their thoughts and feelings to others
- May see so many tangents everywhere that they can't stay focused on the bottom line or the big picture

Explanation of Problems

Most of the problems described above are a result of Introverted iNtuition overtaking the INTJ's personality to the point that all of the other functions become slaves to Introverted iNtuition. A healthy personality needs to have a good balance between its dominant and auxiliary functions. For an INTJ, the dominant Introverted iNtuition needs to be well-supported by the auxiliary Extraverted Thinking function. If Extraverted Thinking exists only to support the desires of Introverted iNtuition, then neither function is being used to its potential.

Introverted iNtuition is a personality function that constantly gathers information, and sees everything from many different perspectives. As the dominant player in a personality, it has the effect of constantly bombarding the psyche with new information to consider. Introverted iNtuition is sort of like a framework for understanding that exists in the mind. As something is perceived, it is melded into the existing intuitive framework. If an entirely new piece of information is perceived by the Introverted iNtuitive, that person must redefine their entire framework of reference. So, Introverted iNtuitives are constantly taking in information about the world that needs to be processed in a relatively lengthy manner in order to be understood. That presents quite a challenge to the INTJ. It's not unusual for an INTJ to feel overwhelmed with all of the things that he or she needs to consider in order to fully understand an idea or situation.

When Introverted iNtuition dominates the INTJ such that the other functions cannot serve their own purposes, we find the INTJ cutting off information that it needs to consider. If the psyche is presented with information that looks anything like something that Introverted iNtuition has processed in the past, it uses Extraverted Thinking to quickly reject that information. The psyche uses Extraverted Thinking to reject the ideas, rather than analyzing the information within its intuitive framework, and therefore reduces the likelihood that the framework will have to be reshaped and redefined.

Using Extraverted Thinking in this manner serves the INTJ's psyche in two ways: 1) it saves it the energy that would have to be expended to truly consider new information, and 2) it protects the INTJ's sacred inner world. In either case, it is not ideal. It causes the INTJ to not consider information that may be useful or critical in developing a real understanding of an issue. It also probably causes the INTJ to come off as too strongly opinionated or snobbish to others.

The better use of Extraverted Thinking for an INTJ would be to use it to assess the INTJ's rich insights and weigh them against the external world. When the INTJ personality uses Extraverted Thinking to cut off incoming information, rather than to judge internal intuitions, it is effectively cheating itself. It's like getting the answers to a test without having to really understand the questions. It's easier to get the answer right away, rather than to have to figure everything out. For the INTJ, who has a tremendous amount of information and "studying" that needs to be done, it's very tempting to take shortcuts. Most INTJ’s will do this to some extent. The real problems occur when an INTJ personality has become so imbalanced that its owner is extremely self-important and rarely consider anyone else's opinions or ideas.

Solutions
To grow as an individual, the INTJ needs to focus on applying their judgment to things only after they have gone through their intuition. In other words, the INTJ needs to consciously try not to use their judgment to dismiss ideas prematurely. Rather, they should use their judgment against their own ideas. One cannot effectively judge something that they don't understand. The INTJ needs to take things entirely into their intuition in order to understand them. It may be necessary to give your intuition enough time to work through the new information so that it can rebuild its global framework of understanding. INTJ's need to focus on using their judgment not to dismiss ideas, but rather to support their intuitive framework.

An INTJ who is concerned with personal growth will pay close attention to the subject of their judgments, and their motivation for making judgments. Are they judging something external to themselves, or are they judging something that they have sifted through their intuition? Is the motivation for judging something to be able to understand its usefulness in the world, or to dismiss it? Too often, an INTJ will judge something without properly understanding it, and with the intention of dismissing it. Seek first to understand, then to judge.

Living Happily in our World as an INTJ
Some INTJ's have difficulty fitting into our society. Their problems are generally associated with not knowing (or caring) how they come across to others, with having unreasonable expectations for others' behaviors, and with not putting forth effort to meet others' emotional needs. These issues stem primarily from the common INTJ habit of using Extraverted Thinking to find fault externally, rather than internally, and therefore diminish the importance of the external world, and increase the importance of the INTJ's own internal world. INTJ's who recognize that their knowledge and understanding (and therefore general happiness and feeling of success) can be enriched by the synergy of other people's knowledge and understanding will find that they can be committed to their rich internal worlds and still have satisfying relationships with others. In order to accomplish this, the INTJ needs to recognize the importance of extraversion, and develop their highest extraverted function, Extraverted Thinking.

An INTJ who uses Extraverted Thinking to find fault externally rather than internally may become so strongly opinionated that they form rigid and unreasonable expectations for others. Their hyper-vigilant judgments about the rationality and competence of others may be a very effective way of keeping themselves at an emotional distance from others. This will preserve the sanctity of the INTJ's inner world of ideas, but will reduce a lot of valuable input, arrest the development of their social character, and stagnate the development of the INTJ's rich structural framework of understanding. In extreme cases, the INTJ may find himself or herself quite along and lonely.

More commonly, an INTJ's interpersonal problems will occur when they express their displeasure to those close to them in very biting and hurtful terms. Everyone needs emotional distance at one time or another and the INTJ wants more than most types.

Perhaps this is why INTJ’s are famous for their biting sarcasm. An INTJ's internal world is extremely important to them. They may be protecting their internal world by using sarcasm to keep others at an emotional distance, or they may be sarcastic with others because they believe that they have the more evolved and logical understanding of the issue at hand, and seek to cut off the spurious input that they're receiving. This is an important distinction to recognize. An INTJ who is seeking an emotional respite can find ways to be alone that don't require injuring feelings and damaging relationships. When distance is required, the INTJ should just "leave". If an explanation is necessary, an INTJ should use their Extraverted Thinking to explain their need rationally and objectively, rather than using Extraverted Thinking to insult the other person, and therefore prod them into leaving.

Specific suggestions:
Take care to listen to someone's idea entirely before you pass judgment on it. Ask questions if necessary. Do whatever it takes to make sure that you understand the idea. Try not to begin judging anything about the idea until you have understood it entirely.

Before you begin talking to another person, pause for a moment and look at that person. Take in that person's attitude and feelings at that moment. Be aware of the person with whom you're speaking.

If you become upset, walk away immediately. DO NOT express anger. When you get angry, you lose. After you have calmed down, apologize for leaving and continue with what you were doing.

Try to identify the personality type of everyone that you encounter frequently in your life. Remember that people with the Sensing preference need to be communicated with in a direct, concise manner. Speak plainly and simply with Sensors, giving "yes" or "no" answers.

Try to be on good terms with all people, even those that you consider beneath you. Try to understand that everybody has something to offer.

When you make judgments or decisions, try to be aware of your motivation for making the judgment. Are you more interested in finding fault externally, or in improving your own understanding? Seek first to understand, and then to judge.

Ten Rules to Live By to Achieve INTJ Success

1. Feed Your Strengths! Do things that allow your brilliant intuition and logical abilities to flourish. Explore the fascinating worlds of science, mathematics, law and medicine. Give your mind an outlet for its exceptional analytical abilities, and watch them grow.
2. Face Your Weaknesses! See your weaknesses for what they are, and seek to overcome them. Especially, strive to use your judgment against your internal ideas and intuitions, rather than as a means of disregarding other people's ideas.

3. Talk Through Your Thoughts. You need to step through your intuitions in order to put them into perspective. Give yourself time to do this, and take advantage of discussing ideas with others. You'll find externalizing your internal intuitions to be a valuable exercise. If you don't have someone to discuss your ideas with, try expressing your ideas clearly in writing.
4. Take in Everything. Don't dismiss ideas prematurely because you don't respect the person generating the ideas, or because you think you already know it all. After all, everybody has something to offer, and nobody knows everything. Steven Covey says it so well when he says: "Seek first to understand, and then to be understood."
5. When You Get Angry, You Lose. Your passion and intensity are strong assets, but can be very harmful if you allow yourself to fall into the "Anger Trap". Remember that Anger is destructive to your personal relationships. Work through your anger before you impress it upon others, or you will likely find yourself alone. Disagreements and disappointments can only be handled effectively in a non-personal and dispassionate manner.
6. Respect your Need for Intellectual Compatibility Don't expect yourself to be a "touchy-feely" or "warm-fuzzy" person. Realize that your most ardent bonds with others will start with the head, rather than the heart. Be aware of other's emotional needs, and express your genuine love and respect for them in terms that are real to YOU. Be yourself.
7. Be Accountable for Yourself. Don't blame the problems in your life on other people. Look inwardly for solutions. No one has more control over your life than you have.
8. Be Humble. Judge yourself at least as harshly as you judge others.
9. Assume the Best. Don't distress yourself and others by dwelling on the dark side of everything. Just as there is a positive charge for every negative charge, there is a light side to every dark side. Remember that positive situations are created by positive attitudes. Expect the best, and the best will come forward.
10. Don't Get Isolated! Recognize the value that the external world represents to you, and interact with it in the style that's natural to you. Join clubs and internet e-mail lists that house in-depth discussions of topics that you're interested in. Seek and foster friendships with others of like competence and capacity for understanding. Extravert in your own style.

This content comes from: http://www.thepersonalitypage.com/, and much of it was written by Robert Heyward.