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An ISTP profile

ISTPs tend to be averagely distributed amongst the '16 different ways of being normal'. In the Australasian population they represent about 6 percent. This type is often styled 'the Artisan', characterised by self-directed action orientation, seeking a mastery of tools, excitement and precision.

Introvert, Sensing, Thinking and Perceiving by preference, they are likely to be cool onlookers, quiet, detached and reserved, loyal to their 'brothers', possibly artful, analysers of life with flashes of original humour. They tend to be interested most in cause-and-effect and can often be skilled tacticians.

ISTPs are likely to be highly spontaneous, even impulsive, but may be quite inflexible if they see their chosen life-style threatened. Expression tends either to be non-verbal or with a devastating 'one-liner', which may be highly amusing but still seen by others as being inappropriate or tasteless. As with many 'SP' types, they may well fail to see the benefit of routine or theoretical classroom learning and its practical value, thus tending to favour more practical, utilitarian subjects. Not for them the desire to conform, expressed by many 'SJ' types, but rather a desire for personal excitement, risk and adventure, independent of social expectation, rule and authority.

Their motto may well be 'let me do my own thing - you do yours', and even 'I'll try anything once'. Theory is unlikely to serve them well as they tend to prefer direct action. Practical, detailed data, in the here and now, is likely to be much more appealing. Philosophical discussion is quite likely to be irrelevant, especially if this stands in the way of more practical, immediate goals and opportunity. Others may see them as restless, non-conformist and defensive.

ISTPs may well appreciate some inner calm, perhaps through meditation or a symbolic greeting with others (such as a hug or the shaking of hands), but they may also quite readily ignore those they have met before. Their desire tends to be for independence, personal space, flexibility and, quite probably, self-fulfilment. It is also quite likely that they will

expect others to behave in the same manner - and that will be fine.

Their 'dominant function' is introverted Thinking, which tends to manifest itself in 'I'll do my thing, you do yours', focused on gathering large amounts of specific data. Drawn inwards, this thinking may be quite rich, but personal, private and free-spirited. If challenged, their view is most likely to be bound by their own logical structure, impervious to others. 'Your baggage is yours, leave me out of this' might well suggest the nature of their thoughts. Under pressure they may become cynical or negative.

Their 'auxiliary function' is extraverted Sensing, allowing them uncannily to make machinery and other inanimate objects work, to find any practical malfunction and solve it. It may also serve them particularly well if they are keen on sports, to decide what is physically necessary and 'just do it'. Their spirit of adventure and the excitement derived from this might well see them through.

Their 'tertiary function' is Intuition and, being tertiary, is likely to be under-developed and experienced as unprocessed 'gut reaction'. Not for them endless debate and discourse. It either works and seems right, or it doesn't.

Their 'inferior function' is extraverted Feeling. Being least well developed, it may be simplistic or hypersensitive, resulting in trust in 'ne'er-do-wells', unexpected catastrophe or black-and-white emotional statements that, under extreme pressure, may result in loss of control.

ISTPs are often found in action-oriented jobs, such as the military, farming, fire-fighting, engineering maintenance, construction, cooking and carpentry. They may also be found in law-enforcement, nursing and education.

To be persuaded, they are likely to want to know the facts, but these had better be practical, easily verified and analysed, and relevant, to serve them well. Logic (whose? yours or mine?), vision (who can tell?) and feelings (not the point?) are likely to be much less convincing to this type.