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| Dominant function: T <sub>I</sub>  | Tertiary function: S                     |
| Auxiliary function: N <sub>E</sub> | Fourth/inferior function: F <sub>E</sub> |

### At Their Best

People with INTP preferences are independent problem solvers who excel at providing a detached, concise analysis of an idea or situation. They ask the difficult questions, challenging others and themselves to find new logical approaches.

INTPs' best work may emerge when they are allowed to work independently on a problem whose solution requires an approach that runs counter to prevailing wisdom or knowledge. Though they typically work best alone, their incisive critiques and summaries can assist a group in getting to the core of complex problems.

### Characteristics of INTPs

INTPs use their Thinking primarily internally to find or develop underlying principles and logical structures for understanding and explaining the world. They approach almost everything with skepticism, form their own opinions and standards, and apply these standards rigorously to themselves. They highly value intelligence and competence. INTPs are likely to be

- Logical, analytical, and objectively critical
- Detached and contemplative

INTPs see possibilities and connections beyond the present and obvious. They are curious and seek knowledge for its own sake. They love to theorize and discuss abstractions. INTPs are usually

- Mentally quick, insightful, and ingenious
- Intensely curious about ideas, theories, and what makes things work

INTPs quickly see inconsistencies and illogicality and enjoy taking apart and reworking ideas. They naturally build complex theoretical systems to explain the realities they see. They find it difficult to work on routine tasks, but bring great energy, intensity, and focus to researching or analyzing a complex problem that arouses their curiosity.

### How Others May See Them

INTPs are usually quiet and reserved though they can be talkative in areas in which they are especially knowledgeable. Unless their work requires action, they are more interested in the challenge of finding solutions than in putting solutions to practical use. They prefer not to organize people or situations.

INTPs are tolerant of a wide range of behavior, arguing and raising issues only when they believe it is reasonable to do so. This flexibility disappears, however, when their ruling principles are challenged; then they stop adapting. INTPs prize precision in communication and dislike redundancy or stating the obvious. They want to express the exact truth, but they may make it so complex that others have difficulty understanding. Others usually see INTPs as

- Quiet, contained, calm, and detached observers
- Independent, valuing autonomy

### Potential Areas for Growth

Sometimes life circumstances have not supported INTPs in the development and expression of their Intuitive and Thinking preferences.

- If they have not developed their *Intuition*, INTPs may have no reliable way of taking in information and be immersed in their internal logical systems. Then they find it difficult to actualize or even communicate their ideas.
- If they have not developed their *Thinking*, they may go from insight to insight, never analyzing them with a critical eye or integrating them into a whole.

If INTPs do not find a place where they can use their gifts and be appreciated for their contributions, they usually feel frustrated and may

- Become cynical and negative critics
- Be sarcastic and destructively critical
- Isolate themselves and put off action
- Engage in verbal sparring and arguments

It is natural for INTPs to give less attention to their non-preferred Feeling and Sensing parts. If they neglect these too much, however, they may

- Be insensitive to the needs of others for information and emotional connection
- Decide something they or others value is not important because it is "not logical"
- Fail to consider the impact of their ideas or style of expression on others
- Be impractical, forgetting details such as appropriate dress, unpaid bills, physical needs

Under great stress, INTPs may erupt outwardly in inappropriate displays of emotion. The resulting explosive anger or hurt tearfulness is quite unnerving to others and embarrassing to the usually calm and controlled INTP.