

# ENTP

PREMIUM PROFILE



16Personalities

## *What Will You Find in This Profile?*

This profile is designed to cover all the main aspects of your personality and areas of your life – your type description, relationships, academic path, career and professional development, your communication and friend-making skills, parenting tips and advice, and much, much more. It combines the personality type theory with practical, real-world advice coming directly from other people who share your personality type.

Personality types have been the topic of many discussions, some of them dating back to ancient times – and it is wise to draw from that source of knowledge and experience, especially when you are unsure how to handle a particular situation. This kind of knowledge gives you a lot of power – power to control and understand yourself. As Aristotle said millennia ago, “the hardest victory is the victory over self”. Consider this profile your battle plan.

## What Does It Mean to Be an ENTP?

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ENTPs belong to the **Analyst** type group, along with ENTJs, INTJs and INTPs. They have an Extraverted, Intuitive, Thinking and Prospecting personality:

Extraverted – ENTPs are expressive, outgoing, prefer group activities, are eager to speak their minds, feel more comfortable when around other people than when alone, and get energized by social interaction.

Intuitive – ENTPs are introspective, rely on their imagination, are absorbed in ideas and focus on what might happen as opposed to what is happening or has already happened.

Thinking – ENTPs are tough, follow their minds, suppress their feelings and emotions, and focus on objectivity and rationality.

Prospecting – ENTPs are very good at improvising, prefer keeping their options open, are relaxed about their work, and seek freedom

All Analysts prefer ideas to facts and focus on whatever works best.

## Table of Contents

What Will You Find in This Profile? .....	1
The Puzzle of Personality .....	5
Five Personality Aspects.....	8
Mind: Introverted vs. Extraverted.....	8
Energy: Intuitive vs. Observant.....	9
Nature: Thinking vs. Feeling.....	10
Tactics: Judging vs. Prospecting.....	11
Identity: Assertive vs. Turbulent.....	12
Type Groups.....	13
Roles .....	13
Strategies.....	14
Type Overview .....	16
Strengths and Weaknesses .....	20
Strengths .....	20
Weaknesses.....	21
Motivation and Self-Esteem.....	23
Self-Esteem .....	24
Self-Respect.....	25
Self-Confidence .....	26
Personal Growth.....	27
What Are The Things That Cause Most Problems For ENTPs?.....	27
How to Make Good Use of ENTP Traits? .....	30

Your Dark Side.....	33
Emotional Stability .....	35
Romantic Relationships .....	38
Potential Pairings.....	41
An Introverted (I) Partner .....	41
An Extraverted (E) Partner.....	43
An Intuitive (N) Partner .....	44
An Observant (S) Partner .....	46
A Thinking (T) Partner.....	48
A Feeling (F) Partner .....	49
A Judging (J) Partner.....	51
A Prospecting (P) Partner .....	53
Assertive or Turbulent? .....	54
Friendships .....	59
Analyst Friends.....	61
Diplomat Friends.....	62
Sentinel Friends .....	63
Explorer Friends .....	64
Parenthood .....	66
Analyst Children .....	68
Diplomat Children .....	69
Sentinel Children .....	70
Explorer Children.....	71
Academic Path .....	73

How ENTPs Learn.....	73
ENTPs in High School .....	75
Work or College? .....	77
When ENTPs go to College.....	77
Career and Professional Development.....	80
Getting on the Career Ladder .....	81
Professional Development .....	84
Communication between Types.....	87
Analysts – Analysts .....	87
Analysts – Diplomats .....	90
Analysts – Sentinels.....	92
Analysts – Explorers.....	95
Career Progression .....	97
Alternative Options.....	99
Suitable Careers .....	100
What Would Make a Job Unsuitable for an ENTP?.....	103
Workplace Habits .....	104
ENTP Colleagues .....	104
ENTP Managers.....	105
ENTP Subordinates .....	105
What Do Other ENTPs Say? .....	106

## *The Puzzle of Personality*

Often the very first question people ask after completing our personality test is “What do these four letters mean?” We are of course referring to those mysterious acronyms like INTJ, ENFP, or ESTJ. As you may have already read in the free Type Descriptions or additional articles available on our website, each letter refers to a specific trait, with an additional variant listed at the end. But before we discuss those traits, let’s first take a brief historical detour.

Since the dawn of time, we have tried to describe and categorize ourselves in many ways. From the four temperaments of the Ancient civilizations – sanguine, choleric, melancholic and phlegmatic – to the latest advances in psychology, people have been restless in their pursuit of a good, reliable way to fit something as complex and fluid as human personality into a well-defined model. We are still some time away from being able to do that, although the current models account for the majority of our personality traits and can often predict with a high degree of confidence how we are likely to behave in specific circumstances.

That said, it is important to bear in mind that regardless of which model we rely on, our personality is just one aspect of many – our actions are also influenced by our environment, experience, and individual goals. In these profiles, we describe how people belonging to a specific personality type are *likely* to behave – however, remember that these are just indicators and tendencies, not definitive guidelines or answers. There’s a big difference between scoring 10% on a trait, and scoring 80%. This information is meant to inspire personal growth and better understanding of others, not to be taken as gospel.

Our approach has its roots in two different philosophies. One dates back to early 20<sup>th</sup> century and was the brainchild of Carl Gustav Jung, the father of analytical psychology. Jung’s theory of psychological types is perhaps the most influential creation in personality typology, and it has inspired a number of different theories, including our own. One of Jung’s key contributions was the development of the concept of *Introversion* and *Extraversion* – he theorized that each of us falls into one of these two categories, either focusing on the internal world (Introvert) or the outside world (Extravert). These terms are usually defined differently nowadays, with Extraversion being synonymous with social prowess – however, the original Jungian definitions focused on where the person tends to get their energy from. In that sense, Introversion does not imply shyness, and Extraversion does not necessarily mean good social skills.

Besides Introversion and Extraversion, Jung also coined several additional concepts. The ones most relevant to us are the so-called *Judging* functions (either *Thinking* or *Feeling*) and *Perceiving* functions (either *Sensing* or *Intuition*). According to Jung, each person prefers one of these cognitive functions and finds it most natural to rely on it in everyday situations. However, other functions also have their place and can emerge depending on the circumstances. These functions are also defined by the person's Introversion or Extraversion – e.g. someone whose dominant function is Introverted Feeling is likely to think differently from someone with Extraverted Feeling at the helm.

In the 1920s, Jung's theory was noticed by Katharine Cook Briggs, who later co-authored one of the most popular personality indicators used today, the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator® (MBTI®). Briggs was a teacher with an avid interest in personality typing, having developed her own type theory before learning of Jung's writings. Together with her daughter, Isabel Briggs Myers, they developed a convenient way to describe the order of each person's Jungian preferences – this is how the four-letter acronyms were born. There were four possible pairs of personality traits:

- Introversion (I) or Extraversion (E)
- Intuition (N) or Sensing (S)
- Thinking (T) or Feeling (F)
- Judging (J) or Perceiving (P)

You'll recall these terms from the paragraphs dedicated to Jung. According to the Myers-Briggs model, the first letter determines the *attitudes* of the dominant and subsequent functions, while the last letter shows which function *is* dominant. For Extraverts, the dominant function is focused on the outside world. J means that one of the Judging functions (Thinking or Feeling) is dominant; P points to one of the Perceiving functions (Intuition or Sensing). For Introverts, J and P show the auxiliary rather than dominant function – the dominant function itself is internalized. Of course, this is just a very simplified description of the Myers-Briggs theory – readers interested in learning more should read "Gifts Differing: Understanding Personality Type" by Isabel Briggs Myers.

Due to its simplicity and ease of use, the four-letter naming model is now shared by a number of diverse theories and approaches, such as Socionics, Keirsey Temperament Sorter®, Linda Berens' Interaction

Styles and many others. However, it is important to remember that while these acronyms may be identical or very similar, their meanings do not always overlap. One of the reasons behind such a lengthy introduction is that we want to make it clear that there is no single definition assigned to these type concepts – each theory defines them in their own way and it is entirely possible that if you meet five people who all say “I am an INFJ”, their definitions of what INFJ means are going to differ. There is certainly a lot of overlap between the theories sharing these type names – however, their type descriptions are by no means identical.

But let’s leave the typological theories aside for a moment. A different way to look at people’s personalities is through the lens of a *trait-* rather than *type-based* model. What do we mean by that? Instead of attempting to create 4 (or 8, 16, 32...) type constructs and fit people within them, we could simply define a number of traits and measure people’s preferences using well-defined scales, looking at their scores but not categorizing them. You may have heard the term *Ambivert*, which is a perfect example in this case. Ambiversion means that someone is more or less directly in the middle of the Introversion-Extraversion scale, being neither too social or outgoing, nor too withdrawn – which flies in the face of Jungian models described above. Every type-based theory is likely to have difficulties categorizing people whose scores end up right on the dividing line, regardless of how many dividing lines you have.

Trait-based theories would simply say that an Ambivert is a moderately Extraverted person and leave it at that, without assigning them a personality type. Such an approach certainly makes it much easier to reliably measure correlations between personality traits and other characteristics (e.g. political attitudes), which is why trait-based approaches dominate psychometric research – but that’s it, more or less. Unlike with type-based theories, it becomes impossible to define categories and types which could then be used as easily accessible concepts for discussions and recommendations. Consequently, while categories such as Extravert or Introvert are unavoidably limiting, they also give us a chance to describe a significant part of human personality and create theories that attempt to explain *why* we do what we do – something that a more scientifically reliable, but nondescript statement such as “you are 37% Extraverted” simply cannot do.



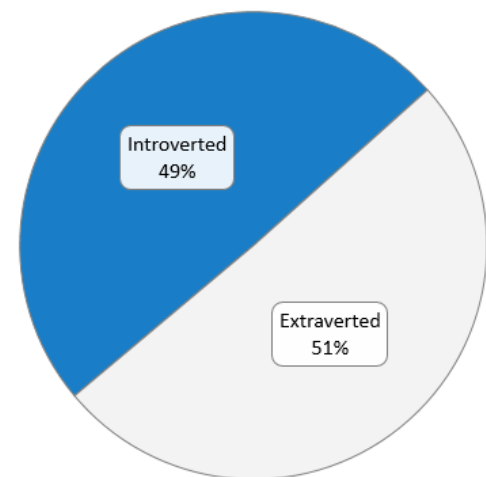
With our model, we've combined the best of both worlds. We use the acronym format introduced by Myers-Briggs due to its simplicity and convenience – however, we have redefined several Jungian traits and introduced an additional one, simplifying our model and bringing it closer to the latest developments, namely the dimensions of personality called the Big Five personality traits. Furthermore, unlike Myers-Briggs or other theories based on the Jungian model, we have not incorporated cognitive functions such as Extraverted Thinking or Introverted Sensing, or their prioritization, instead choosing five independent scales and building our types around them. This has allowed us to achieve high test accuracy while also retaining the ability to define and describe distinct personality types.

Let us now go through our five personality aspects one by one. The pie charts in each section will show the estimated distribution of each trait, based on our research and testing data.

## Five Personality Aspects

### *Mind: Introverted vs. Extraverted*

It is safe to say that this is probably the oldest notion in the history of personality theories. It has long been observed that some people are expressive, outgoing and comfortable in social situations – while others are reserved, quiet and more comfortable alone. It is as if the former (Extraverted individuals) sincerely enjoy engaging with the external world and recharge by communicating with other people, and the latter (Introverted individuals) prefer to rely on themselves and their own inner world instead of seeking stimulation from the outside. However, being Extraverted does not necessarily imply that the person will be an excellent public speaker; likewise, being Introverted does not mean that the individual is bound to be clumsy or antisocial. Rather, this trait shows the average degree of expressiveness and the overall tendency to seek stimulation from one or the other source.

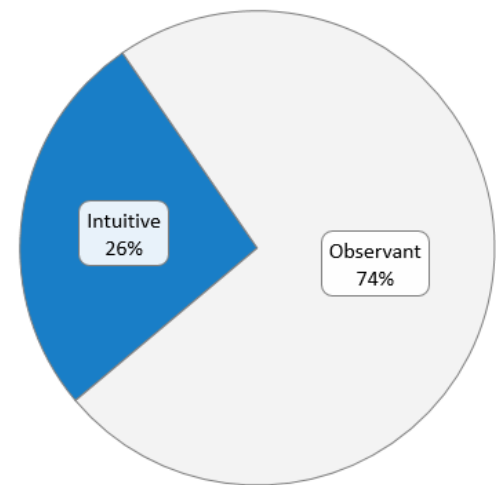


ENTPs are Extraverted – they tend to have good social skills and feel recharged after spending time in the company of other people. Individuals belonging to this personality type enjoy taking command and

issuing orders, often going ahead and voicing their opinion even before it has fully formed in their own mind. That being said, ENTPs socialize in a rather unique way – they enjoy socializing, but are always driven by a specific purpose, usually interacting with other people because they have a specific goal in mind, not because they care about the latest gossip or concrete things. People with this personality type cannot stand nonsense and do not like wasting their time chit-chatting about things of little importance.

### *Energy: Intuitive vs. Observant*

All personality types can be divided into groups of those who favor the Intuitive energy style (more interested in ideas, focusing on the inner world) and those of the Observant energy style (more interested in facts and observable things, focusing on the external world). In our opinion, this dichotomy is the most important – while the other four determine how you interact with the world (Introverted / Extraverted), make decisions (Thinking / Feeling) and schedule your activities (Judging / Prospecting), the chasm between Intuitive and Observant individuals is far more significant as it actually determines how you see the world and what kind of information you focus on. It may seem like your decisions are the most important, but a decision is only as good as the understanding that backs it up.



Individuals with the Intuitive preference prioritize introspection, relying on their imagination, ideas and theories. They dream, fantasize and question why things happen the way they do, always feeling slightly detached from the actual, concrete world. One could even say that these individuals never actually feel as if they truly belong to this world. They may observe other people and events, but their mind remains directed both inwards and somewhere beyond – always questioning, wondering and making connections.

In contrast, individuals with the Observant trait focus on observing the actual world. They enjoy seeing, touching, feeling and experiencing things – and leave theories to others. They want to keep their feet on the ground and focus on the present, instead of wondering why or when something might happen.

Consequently, people with this preference tend to be better at dealing with facts, tools and concrete objects as opposed to introspecting or theorizing.

These traits determine the communication style as well – Intuitive individuals talk about ideas and have no difficulties with allusions or reading between the lines, while Observant types focus on facts and practical matters. This is why Intuitive types are likely to find it quite challenging to understand someone with the Observant trait, maybe even thinking that the latter is materialistic, unimaginative and simplistic. Likewise, an Observant individual is likely to think that their Intuitive conversation partner is impractical, naïve and unobservant. Both sets of assumptions can be quite damaging and it takes a mature person to get past them – but statements like these are fairly common.

ENTPs are Intuitive individuals – this is why they are so good at coming up with plans, strategies and ideas. People with this personality type spend far more time engaging in various internal discussions than observing concrete things around them. ENTPs are not that concerned about what is happening – they focus on what might happen or why something has happened. This is the skill ENTPs keep improving throughout their lives, which makes them bright and imaginative thinkers.

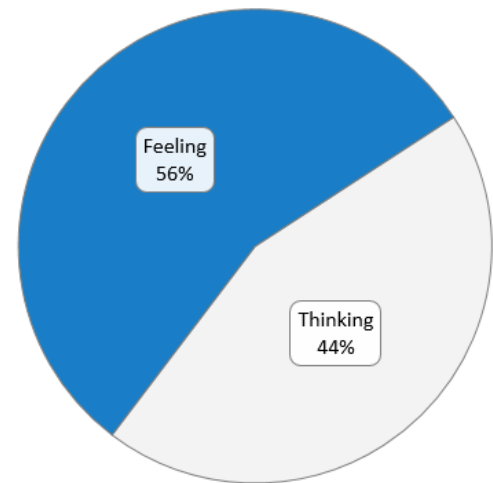
Of course, every stick has two ends. Introspection comes at a cost – by directing all their mental resources inwards, ENTPs inevitably have to discard the information that is being provided by their senses. They are likely to have difficulties dealing with concrete, practical matters, or managing large collections of facts – even missing things happening right under their nose if they are not paying attention. This is also one of the reasons ENTPs tend to have so many difficulties finding a partner – as the majority of the population have the Observant trait, people with this personality type often find it very challenging to connect with others.

#### *Nature: Thinking vs. Feeling*

This trait determines how we make decisions and cope with emotions. People with the Thinking trait seek logic and rational arguments, relying on their head rather than their heart. They also do their best to safeguard their emotions, shielding them from the outside world and making sure that they are not clearly visible. “Whatever happens, you must always keep a cool head” – this is the motto of Thinking types.

In contrast, people with the Feeling trait follow their hearts and emotions and care little about hiding them. From their perspective, we should not be afraid to listen to our innermost feelings and share them with the world – these individuals tend to be compassionate, sensitive and highly emotional.

That being said, it is important not to make the mistake of thinking that the first group is cold-blooded and indifferent, and that the second one is sentimental and irrational. This is a false dichotomy – people with the Thinking trait are often just as emotional as those with the Feeling trait, they simply try to hide and suppress their emotions; and people with the Feeling trait are fully capable of being rational, although they are likely to use different arguments, putting compassion and cooperation above efficiency and hard facts. It is unreasonable to dismiss or disparage either of these perspectives – both are perfectly valid.



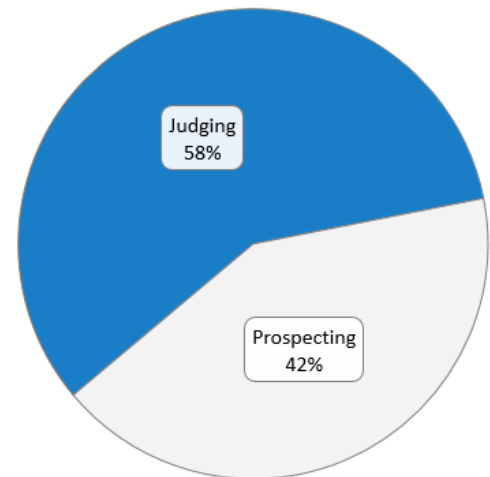
ENTPs belong to the Thinking group – they trust and prioritize logic, relying on rational arguments and doing everything they can to keep their true feelings and emotions deep below the surface. As already mentioned in the previous section, people with this personality type are renowned for their use of the “is this going to work?” filter regardless of the circumstances – an ENTP will question everything, starting with their teachers’ methods and ending with the prospects of their romantic relationships. The Intuitive and Thinking traits form the core of the ENTP personality, making them highly intelligent, open-minded and utilitarian individuals, capable of amazing intellectual feats, especially in scientific or technological fields. However, they also push ENTPs away from the majority of the population, making it difficult for them to relate to other people, especially when it comes to handling emotions.

#### *Tactics: Judging vs. Prospecting*

This set of traits determines how we approach planning and available options. People with the Judging preference do not like to keep their options open – they would rather come up with five different contingency plans than just go ahead and deal with the challenges as they come. They prefer clarity and closure, always going with the plan rather than the flow. People with this trait likely keep a checklist,

and when something is crossed off that list, it is done and not open to reassessment. This goes as much for groceries (“Was it on the list?”) as it does for life goals, like buying a house. Furthermore, these individuals also tend to have a very strong work ethic, putting their duties and responsibilities above everything else.

In contrast, Prospecting individuals are always scanning for opportunities and options, willing to jump at them at a moment’s notice. People with this preference are perfectly aware that life is full of possibilities and are reluctant to commit to something that might well prove to be an inferior option in the future. They are also likely to focus more on what makes them happy as opposed to what their parents, employers, or teachers expect – if a specific task is not that important or interesting, a Prospecting individual will always be able to come up with something better to do.



ENTPs are Prospecting individuals – they want to be able to look for alternative options, knowing that there is always a better way. This may lead to unfinished projects or missed deadlines, but ENTPs would rather take that risk than lock themselves into a position where the existing commitments would limit their freedom. ENTPs also tend to be quite relaxed about their immediate surroundings – they do not obsess over tidiness, often paying far more attention to their latest mental exercise. Finally, people with this personality type are likely to have a relaxed attitude towards their work or studies, refusing to get stressed about deadlines, templates, or rules.

### *Identity: Assertive vs. Turbulent*

You may have noticed that we did not highlight either of these options, unlike before – this is because this particular trait affects all others, showing how confident you are in your abilities and decisions. Assertive individuals are emotionally stable, calm, relaxed and refuse to worry too much about minor matters. In contrast, individuals with Turbulent identity tend to care about their image, be self-conscious, success-driven and perfectionists. This does not necessarily mean that having an Assertive identity is better – for instance, Turbulent individuals perform better in certain roles as they push themselves to

achieve superior results, while Assertive ones do not care about the outcome that much. However, Assertive individuals tend to benefit from higher emotional stability and increased self-confidence.

## Type Groups

Now you know what each type consists of. But how do they fit together?

Our system has two layers: the first (inner) one defines our **Roles**, the second (outer) one – our **Strategies**.

### *Roles*

The Role layer determines our goals, interests and preferred activities. Each of the four roles covers a set of personality types that are very similar; we will use these groups later in this profile to draw contrasts and similarities between personalities. They also serve to highlight the importance we have placed on the Energy trait – each personality type will share either the Observant or the Intuitive trait with all other members of their group, as well as one other key trait.

#### *ANALYSTS (INTUITIVE AND THINKING [ \_NT\_ ] TYPES, BOTH ASSERTIVE AND TURBULENT VARIANTS)*

These personality types embrace rationality and impartiality, excelling in intellectual debates and scientific or technological fields. They are fiercely independent, open-minded, strong-willed and imaginative, approaching many things from a utilitarian perspective and being far more interested in what works than what satisfies everybody. These traits make Analysts excellent strategic thinkers, but also cause difficulties when it comes to social or romantic pursuits.

#### *DIPLOMATS (INTUITIVE AND FEELING [ \_NF\_ ] TYPES, BOTH ASSERTIVE AND TURBULENT VARIANTS)*

Diplomats focus on empathy and cooperation, shining in diplomacy and counselling. People belonging to this type group are cooperative and imaginative, often playing the role of harmonizers in their workplace or social circles. These traits make Diplomats warm, empathic and influential individuals, but also cause issues when there is a need to rely exclusively on cold rationality or make difficult decisions.

#### *SENTINELS (OBSERVANT AND JUDGING [ \_SJ\_ ] TYPES, BOTH ASSERTIVE AND TURBULENT VARIANTS)*

Sentinels are cooperative and highly practical, embracing and creating order, security and stability wherever they go. People belonging to one of these types tend to be hard working, meticulous and

traditional, and excel in logistical or administrative fields, especially those that rely on clear hierarchies and rules. These personality types stick to their plans and do not shy away from difficult tasks – however, they can also be very inflexible and reluctant to accept different points of view.

#### *EXPLORERS (OBSERVANT AND PROSPECTING [ \_S\_P ] TYPES, BOTH ASSERTIVE AND TURBULENT VARIANTS)*

These types are the most spontaneous of all and they also share the ability to connect with their surroundings in a way that is beyond reach of other types. Explorers are utilitarian and practical, shining in situations that require quick reaction and ability to think on your feet. They are masters of tools and techniques, using them in many different ways – ranging from mastering physical tools to convincing other people. Unsurprisingly, these personality types are irreplaceable in crises, crafts and sales – however, their traits can also push them towards undertaking risky endeavors or focusing solely on sensual pleasures.

#### *Strategies*

The Strategy layer shows our preferred ways of doing things and achieving goals. There are four strategies:

#### *CONFIDENT INDIVIDUALISM (INTROVERTED AND ASSERTIVE [ I\_\_\_ (A) ] TYPES)*

Confident Individualists prefer doing things alone, choosing to rely on their own skills and instincts as opposed to seeking contact with other people. They know what they are good at and have high self-confidence. These personality types firmly believe that personal responsibility and trust in yourself are very important values. Confident Individualists do not pay much attention to other people's opinions and prefer to rely on themselves.

#### *PEOPLE MASTERY (EXTRAVERTED AND ASSERTIVE [ E\_\_\_ (A) ] TYPES)*

People Masters seek social contact and tend to have very good communication skills, feeling at ease in social events or in situations where they need to rely on or direct other people. These types are confident in their abilities and do not hesitate to express their opinions. Playing an active role in the society and knowing what makes other people tick mean a lot for People Masters; however, they are not too concerned about what other people think about them.

*CONSTANT IMPROVEMENT (INTROVERTED AND TURBULENT [ I\_\_\_ (T) ] TYPES)*

Constant Improvers are quiet, individualistic people. They tend to be perfectionistic and success-driven, often spending a lot of time and effort making sure that the result of their work is the best it can be. As their name says, Constant Improvers are high achieving individuals dedicated to their craft – however, they also tend to worry too much about their performance.

*SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT (EXTRAVERTED AND TURBULENT [ E\_\_\_ (T) ] TYPES)*

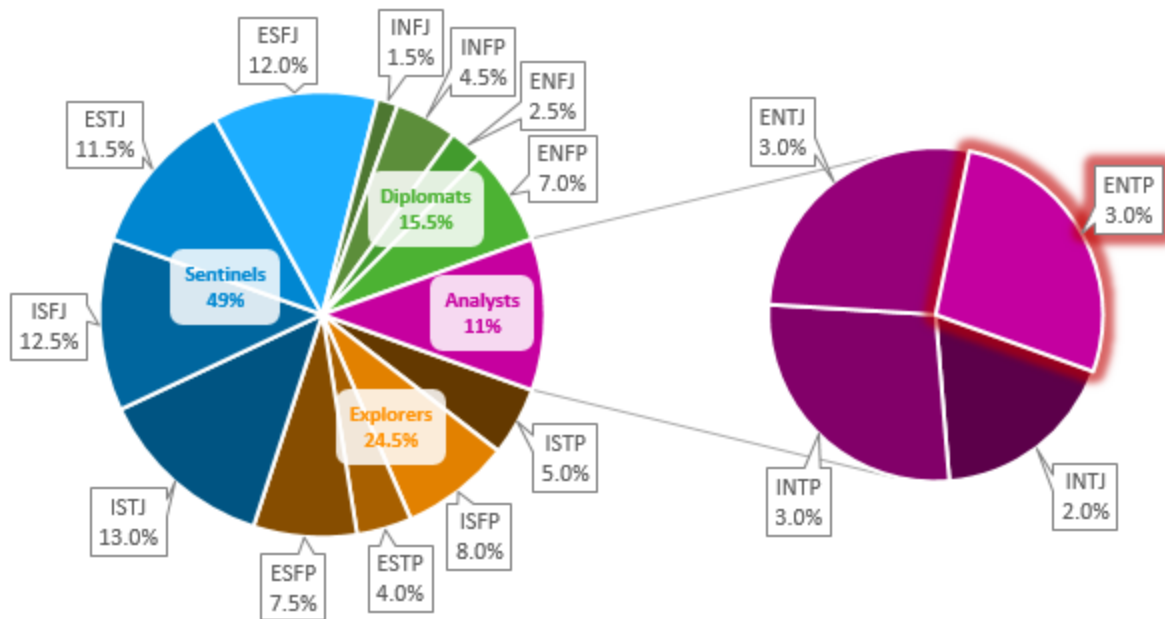
The last strategy is adopted by sociable, energetic and success-driven types. Social Engagers tend to be restless, perfectionistic individuals, prone to experiencing both very positive and very negative emotions. Their curiosity and willingness to work hard also mean that they are usually high-achieving, even if quite sensitive people. Types favoring this strategy also tend to place a lot of importance on other people's opinions; they value their social status and are eager to succeed in everything they do.

With all this in the background, let's now proceed to discussing your personality type and its place in the world!



## Type Overview

The ENTP personality type is one of the rarest and most interesting types. Only about 3% of Americans are believed to be ENTPs – averaging 4-5% among men and 2% among women. These percentages seem to vary across regions – for instance, countries in Asia tend to have higher percentages of Introverted and Thinking types, with locations like Hong Kong or Singapore also leaning towards a higher number of Intuitive individuals.



People with the ENTP personality type are often called devil's advocates, and for a good reason. ENTPs absolutely love to argue and they do not really care that much what the argument is about, as long as it is fun. They may not actually support the idea they are arguing for, but may decide to go against the prevailing opinion, seeing this as a mental exercise. ENTPs are very quick-witted and original, which gives them a great advantage in debates, academia and politics – however, they also tend to do very well in many other areas that require willingness to challenge the existing ideas and juggle multiple arguments.

ENTPs love intellectual challenges and believe that everything can be analyzed and improved. They are not that concerned about the real world and practical things – from the ENTPs' perspective, that is often less exciting than ideas and intellectual pursuits. People with this personality type have no difficulties

noticing patterns where others cannot – this makes ENTPs brilliant theorists and analysts, as long as they are able to focus on a specific issue. Not surprisingly, there is usually little middle ground with strongly expressed ENTP personalities – other types either find their quirkiness mysterious and attractive, or feel uncomfortable and get offended. The ENTPs themselves rarely care about being seen as eccentrics, staying true to their arguments and convictions instead of trying to mimic the behavior of other people. These attitudes soften as people grow and develop, but they tend to be very black-and-white at a younger age.

One of the reasons why ENTPs are able to hold their ground in nearly every debate is their impressive knowledge and ability to jump from one idea to another, making unorthodox connections in the process. They do this with amazing speed and without much effort – the onslaught of arguments coming from the ENTP may easily confuse their opponent. This can be both a good and a bad thing, depending on who the ENTP is arguing with – they can easily shred their opponent's arguments in a debate about politics, but cause immense stress in a romantic relationship if they try to do that to their partner.

As always, there is no trait that is universally positive – in this case, ENTPs need to be careful to keep that love of arguments in check as the actual process is often more important than the truth. People with this personality type know this very well, but they also need to understand that what they see as fun can be very hurtful to another person.

ENTP personalities tend to use their mind in a very specific way and this is especially noticeable in the professional environment – they enjoy brainstorming and outlining all the options, but do their best to stay away from actual implementation. Again, such a trait can be very valuable in certain situations, but cause tension in the workplace as the ENTP may be perceived as having fingers in many pies, but not willing to work hard to implement their ideas. ENTPs also tend to be non-conformists and love challenging existing rules and routines, which makes them irreplaceable where there is a need to rip up the existing models and come up with new, original plans.

People with this personality type may also find it quite difficult to explain their thoughts to others, even when it becomes obvious that their theories are not easily graspable. ENTPs may also move on to another topic before their co-workers or partners have figured out what the ENTP wanted to say. Similarly,

ENTPs cannot stand routine work – they would much rather tackle a difficult theoretical problem. ENTP personalities really have no limits when it comes to theoretical riddles – if there is no easy solution and the topic is interesting enough, an ENTP can spend ages trying to come up with a solution.

It is also worth mentioning that ENTPs usually prefer dealing with complex ideas and difficult challenges rather than day-to-day concerns. They enjoy thinking big and are good at it – it may take a while for an ENTP to reach the position that would allow them to fully utilize such a trait, but once they do, the flow of ideas will become unstoppable. However, the ENTP will still need to rely on other people to put them in place.

ENTPs are usually very direct and honest. They do not really care about being seen as sensitive or compassionate, so their honesty may be quite brutal sometimes. ENTPs say what they think and do not mince their words – furthermore, they dislike people who try to beat around the bush, especially if they are about to ask the ENTP for a favor. Consequently, ENTPs tend to be respected, but not necessarily liked – many people not only tolerate being lied to, they actually hope for and need to hear a lie in certain situations. The society tends to put feelings, sensitivities and comfort above the unpleasant truth – this is likely to frustrate many ENTPs.

Individuals with the ENTP personality type are likely to be very open-minded and socially tolerant. These traits, combined with their expressiveness, capacity for inventiveness and original thought, make up a very powerful mix – it is not surprising that ENTPs are responsible for many scientific discoveries. An ENTP is unlikely to care much about social expectations and the “usual” goals such as job security – however, they will do their best to find an environment where their creative genius and potential can be expressed.

In general, ENTP personalities are very rational and do not see much value in emotions or emotional arguments. Consequently, they are great when it comes to logical thinking, but likely to have difficulties in the emotional area – ENTPs’ confidence and keen sense of humor are usually very attractive, but they can easily (and often inadvertently) hurt an individual belonging to a different personality type. F types are especially vulnerable in such situations as they strongly dislike criticism and arguing, while ENTPs thrive on this.

Some famous ENTPs:

- Alexander the Great
- John Adams, a former U.S. president
- James A. Garfield, a former U.S. president
- Rutherford B. Hayes, a former U.S. president
- Theodore Roosevelt, former U.S. president
- Matthew Perry, Chandler (“Friends”)
- The Joker (“Batman” series)
- Thomas Edison, inventor
- Julia Child
- Suzanne Pleshette
- George Carlin
- Valerie Harper
- John Candy
- John Sununu
- “Weird Al” Yankovick
- Alfred Hitchcock
- Tom Hanks, actor
- David Spade
- Céline Dion, singer
- Rodney Dangerfield

## *Strengths and Weaknesses*

ENTP personalities are often very imaginative and resourceful – their ingenuity and curiosity push them to come up with original solutions and ask questions that other types may be unwilling to touch. Furthermore, ENTPs are highly rational, pragmatic and utilitarian, seeking knowledge and intellectual challenges wherever they go. More often than not, hearing that a specific task is “impossible” motivates rather than discourages people with this personality



type – the ENTP will jump in and, in all likelihood, come up with a solution that no one else has thought of before.

However, every coin has two sides and ENTPs are not an exception to this rule. For all their resourcefulness, people with this personality type are likely to run into problems when it comes to implementing their plans or dealing with situations where scientific or rational solutions are less than useful. Let us start by taking a closer look at their strengths and weaknesses.

### *Strengths*

- **Quick thinkers.** ENTP personalities find it easy to come up with arguments and counterarguments in any discussion, jumping from one idea to another without much effort. They also enjoy being devil’s advocates.
- **Great analysts.** ENTP personalities are great at noticing patterns and seeing the big picture. They also possess an impressive ability to jump from one idea to another, linking them in ways that usually bewilder most other personality types.
- **Very knowledgeable.** ENTPs enjoy learning new things and accumulating knowledge. They tend to be very successful in the academic environment, especially where there is a need for original and bold solutions.

- **Excellent brainstormers.** People with this personality type can easily see both sides of the coin and do not get emotionally attached to a specific viewpoint or an idea. They simply enjoy the process of looking for possible solutions.
- **Original.** ENTPs are not afraid to experiment and suggest ideas that are unconventional or even drastic. They are especially well suited for coming up with novel solutions for historical, systemic problems.
- **Charismatic.** Quick-witted and confident ENTPs tend to also be charming and popular, intriguing and attracting people around them.
- **Energetic.** ENTP personalities can be very enthusiastic and energetic if something excites them. They can spend ages looking for a solution to an interesting problem.
- **Honest and straightforward.** ENTPs do not play social games and see no point in sugar-coating their words. They will clearly state their opinion and expect others to return the favor.
- **Open-minded.** ENTPs tend to be open-minded and willing to accept ideas different from their own, provided that they are supported by facts and logic. Furthermore, ENTPs are usually fairly liberal when it comes to social norms and traditions, judging people solely on the basis of their ideas.
- **Imaginative and strategic.** ENTPs are very good strategic thinkers, often using this strength to devise multiple contingency plans in both professional and personal situations. They like to plan ahead and be prepared, imagining all the potential scenarios and consequences.

## Weaknesses

- **Very argumentative.** ENTPs enjoy debates and see them as mental exercises – this attitude can easily upset more sensitive or stability-oriented types.
- **Insensitive.** ENTP personalities are very rational, which is likely to make it difficult for them to recognize other people's feelings or express their own.
- **May find it difficult to focus.** ENTPs' mind is used to jumping from one interesting idea to another – they may have difficulties staying focused on one specific topic.

- **Dislike practical matters.** ENTPs are more interested in ideas and solutions than practical, daily matters. They may have no difficulties coming up with the perfect plan, but are likely to be far less interested in actually putting it in place, checking all the details etc.
- **May be intolerant.** ENTP personalities may sometimes be intolerant and dismissive, especially when they have to deal with people who try to avoid debates or cannot defend their ideas.
- **Get bored quickly.** ENTPs need to feel excited – routine tasks bore and frustrate them. They may even come up with imaginative problems or start suggesting unnecessary improvements, just to keep their mind occupied.
- **Absent-minded.** ENTPs are able to focus all their efforts on analyzing a specific idea, but this usually comes at a cost of ignoring everything else. They may be forgetful or simply miss things that have nothing to do with the object of their interest.
- **Second-guess themselves.** ENTP personalities may be excellent analysts, but they often lack the decisiveness of J types. An ENTP may find it quite difficult to decide which idea is the best one, always looking for more information and doubting their own conclusions.
- **Loathe rules and guidelines.** ENTPs need a lot of freedom and have little respect for rules and traditions which put artificial limits on their imagination. People with this personality type would rather have less security and more autonomy.
- **Loathe highly structured environments.** ENTP personalities do not respect rules or regulations just because they are there, they need to be confident that those restrictions make sense. Consequently, ENTPs strongly dislike environments that are built on blind obedience, traditions or respect for authority – they are likely to challenge the status quo and clash with people who prefer stability and safety.

## *Motivation and Self-Esteem*

Closely related but different, your self-esteem, self-respect and self-confidence are the sources of your motivation. Self-esteem speaks to your sense of your own worth. Self-respect speaks to how much you like yourself. Self-confidence is where you find the energy that moves you forward in your life. Much of our core motivation comes from trying to successfully satisfy these core aspects of ourselves. Think of them as three powerful psychological engines that, when understood and harnessed, can lead to a successful and fulfilling life.

However, like anything in life, if you allow these engines to overwhelm you, they can also be a source of great difficulty. Think of it like an engine overheating. This is usually caused because something in our psychological make-up needs support, and so we overcompensate to gird that which feels weak to us. If for some reason we're not feeling self-confident, we might pour on the thing that gives us confidence. The problem is that sometimes we crank it up too high trying to compensate.

The first section in each part represents the tendencies in their healthy form. When people use these motivators in a balanced way, they can help them be productive and happy. This represents the ideal expression of the motivator.

The second represents tendencies to watch out for if the engine begins to overheat. The purpose is not to describe anyone specifically. The descriptions in the second part may sound extreme, and they probably are for most ENTPs and other Analysts. People generally exist at different degrees somewhere between fully this and fully that. Life has a way of socializing us and balancing us regardless of our foundational traits. When reading the second part, think in terms of tendencies and regard it more as a cautionary tale.

Self-improvement is about stepping outside one's comfort zone to expand your life for the better. The third section suggests a simple way to get along more effectively in the world through some simple rebalancing exercise.



## Self-Esteem

ENTPs base their sense of self-worth on their resourcefulness. Being able to use their agile minds to figure out what is what and find effective solutions makes them feel they are at their best. ENTPs are often knowledgeable and can perform like a walking search engine. They often have all the pertinent facts at their fingertips. Combining their preference for intuition and thinking, they can deftly put facts together in a logical and useful way.

Since this is such an integral part of their identity, it's natural that they measure their worth by how they see their resourcefulness. Preserving this resourcefulness is the basic motivator in their lives. ENTPs like to come across as experts who know how to apply facts and logic and as the person to go to if you need to make sense of anything. They can be most helpful in untangling complex problems and helping to discover solutions.

**When the quest for self-esteem goes out of balance:** ENTPs are not the most “socially smooth” people from any perspective. They can be awkward, condescending, and abrasive. They often believe what goes on in their heads is more important than the people around them.

If they need to strengthen their sense of self-worth, their resourcefulness can overheat and transform into arrogance. The ENTPs may begin to believe their own press. They may place their own ideas and solutions above the opinions of others. It's not a matter of the press not being true. It's just sometimes ingredients other than logic can sometimes contribute to the right decision.

ENTPs run the risk of discounting the contributions of others, damaging both social and career satisfaction and advancement. Condescension is not pretty, and nobody likes a know-it-all.

**Self-esteem rebalanced:** To rebalance, ENTPs may do well to use their analytical tools in a way that mimics empathy. Empathy doesn't come naturally to them and clearly isn't a strong point. Think Sheldon Cooper on “The Big Bang Theory” as an extreme example. Instead of trying to identify with others' feelings, ENTPs might learn what that looks like and note how others respond to the world.

For the ENTP, learning to deal with the other character types might take an intellectual exercise akin to visiting a foreign culture. While you may not necessarily “go native” when you visit a different culture,

you try to respect their way of life. You become an observer and learn the language and the customs to get along in the new setting. An anthropologist might relish the opportunity to learn about the culture.

ENTPs can do something similar. Playing the mental game of “anthropologist”, they can try to understand enough to take on repairing any alienation they might have created. It’s just a matter of deliberately channeling their analytical skills in a socially healthy direction. Learning the 16 personalities and their variants can be useful for this.

## Self-Respect

ENTPs respect themselves when they have a sense they are being independent. They like to keep their own counsel as they navigate the world using their ideas and heavy-duty thinking as much as possible. That’s when they feel that they are at their best. ENTPs interpret doing otherwise as being dependent. Depending on someone else’s ideas or conclusions is not nearly as satisfying. This motivator can lead down the “road less traveled” and that, in turn, can lead to fresh perspectives that can be useful and even revolutionary at times. ENTPs’ agile minds can see what others miss, and when this occurs, it can be a powerful point of pride and self-respect for this personality type.

**When the quest for self-respect gets out of balance:** “Overheated” ENTPs may go so rogue that they come to disdain necessary structures that support their academic or career goals. They can take their loathing for conformity to an extreme and this can make them useless to an organization and simply unpleasant in most other ways. This is especially true if the system they’re bucking doesn’t mesh with their rational framework. If it doesn’t make sense to them, you can bet that they aren’t going to easily fall in line. To ENTPs that is the worst kind of dependence. However, no person is an island, even if that person is an ENTP. An extreme belief in going it alone can seriously hamper success.

**Self-respect rebalanced:** The solution for the ENTP will always be to return to their intellect and their world of ideas. For them, rebalancing extreme independence might mean learning to accept the idea there is such a thing as “healthy opportunism”. Logically, they don’t have to accept or agree with the principles of an organization or a social structure to benefit from it.

The question ENTPs might seriously ask when at odds with an idea or philosophy, “What can I get from this? How can this help me advance?” It sounds manipulative, but that’s because it is. Aren’t we all just trying to get our needs met? Why shouldn’t the ENTPs put their skills to good use? Certainly, with the resourcefulness of the ENTPs, they can figure out a way to make any system work for them if they need to. That’s independent thinking. And who knows? By “playing the game”, they may genuinely soften and expand their comfort zone to the point where they begin to understand the viewpoints of others.

## Self-Confidence

ENTPs move forward relying on their willpower. They have to believe that their will is strong enough to enable them to tackle any challenge that comes their way. They mostly trust their own thoughts and ideas, so they need to feel the locus of control is coming from inside them to confidently move forward. If that is where your trust lies, who else is there? And a strong-willed person with right values and insight can change the world.

**When the quest for self-confidence gets out of control:** When they invest too much in their own willpower, ENTPs may lose confidence in areas of their lives where that control means little. Sexual feelings are not always rational. Emotions will not always comply with how we want to feel at a particular time. Even if we adopt healthiest lifestyle habits, sometimes we get sick anyway. Other people will refuse to take direction no matter how much we feel that they should. People we care about die and there’s nothing we can do about it. When it becomes clear that their willpower can be useless in a certain situation, ENTPs may feel lost. It might even cause a fear reaction and result in inappropriate behavior in their attempt to regain confidence. They may try to push through even though reality says they can’t.

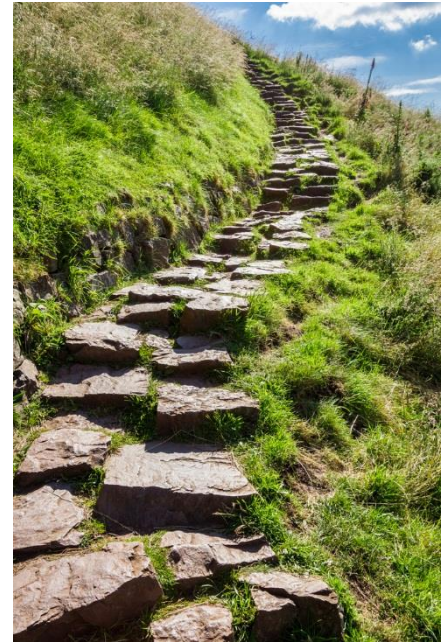
**Self-confidence rebalanced:** The Serenity Prayer, popularized by the many 12 Step programs, asks for divine help. It asks that God help the person praying to accept what he can’t change, change what he can, and know the difference between the two. This is a great exercise for ENTPs. Taking an inventory of these things and coming to grips with the undeniable truth that not everything will bend to their will may help ENTPs preserve their peace of mind. While this will not be deeply satisfying to them, acceptance can help them adopt a perspective that, nonetheless, allows them to enjoy a certain level of serenity and confidence.

## *Personal Growth*

Knowing your strengths and weaknesses is great, but leveraging or addressing them is even better. Let us take a look at some of the ways to do that.

### What Are The Things That Cause Most Problems For ENTPs?

ENTPs are insatiably curious and enthusiastic, always on the lookout for an exciting puzzle, be it scientific, technological or social. However, this tendency to rush into projects will often get the ENTP into trouble – the old cliché “failing to prepare is preparing to fail” is usually true, especially in cases where the project proves to be more complicated than it seemed at first. People with this personality type do not mind uncertainty and are great at improvising, but even the most inventive mind will struggle without adequate preparation. There are two ways to deal with this problem – 1) learn to avoid situations where preparation is necessary; 2) learn to balance preparation with the desire to jump in right away. ENTPs usually choose the first option, which is a natural coping mechanism for them – however, if you want to grow as an individual and become more well-rounded, you should learn to exercise self-restraint. Train your mind to seek more than just a rough outline of the idea before you commit to it and start re-focusing your mental resources.



This is closely related to another problem that is prevalent among ENTPs – impatience. People with this personality type loathe routine and will often find it difficult to focus once the project they are working on shifts from drafting to implementation. Following through on projects is not something that ENTPs find interesting or enjoyable and this can cause tension in the professional environment, with the more tedious tasks falling on the shoulders of their colleagues and the ENTP wandering off in search of a new project. ENTP personalities should try to keep this habit in check and try to find something interesting in even the most mundane task instead of choosing the easiest route and dropping that task altogether. This is especially important if the ENTP is prone to intentionally shaking things up just to avoid boredom.

– a mini-crisis can sometimes turn into a full-blown one, placing the ENTP's career in jeopardy. However, these traits are not limited to the professional environment – for instance, the ENTP's desire to experiment and take risks may endanger the financial stability of their family. People with this personality type should find time to ask themselves what is the main reason behind their desire to try something new – is it because there is a rational justification for it, or are they simply getting bored?

It is also important for an ENTP to remain open-minded and flexible. As people with this personality type value truth very highly, they may be unwilling to explore and experiment further if their mind is convinced that it already knows the answer to a specific question. This usually leads to the ENTP sticking to topics and ideas that they are familiar with and consequently missing many opportunities to grow and experience things beyond their comfort zone. This applies to scientific theories as well – even though ENTPs tend to love new ideas, they may be too afraid to actively seek them out. People with this personality type may justify such a behavior by telling themselves that this is not worth risking the stability of that immense collection of “verified” ideas stored in their mind. However, personal development inevitably involves some discomfort and fear of change – and the only way for an ENTP to grow in this area is to open their mind to new things from time to time.

ENTP personalities may also have difficulties finding enough time for their partners, especially if they do not really enjoy intellectual discussions. Like all Analysts, ENTPs take pleasure in sharing their ideas, particularly with people close to them – and if their spouse is not really interested in that, the ENTP may get too engrossed in their projects while forgetting to spend time on communicating with their significant other. Furthermore, people with this personality type often have difficulties understanding their partner's feelings or expressing their own, which may compound the problem. ENTPs should try to moderate their rational and intellectual approach when it comes to romantic relationships, and pay more attention to the emotional side of things, no matter how difficult that is. ENTP personalities are usually charming and fun to be with, but their love for intellectual duels and tendency to suppress emotions can easily frustrate people who are more sensitive or more vulnerable to conflicts. ENTPs make excellent mindmates, but they need to consciously work on fulfilling their partner's emotional needs as well.

It is also important for an ENTP to improve their handling of emotions, as well as recognition of other people's feelings. People with this personality type are likely to feel very vulnerable when it comes to emotional bonding, even in a romantic relationship. Their mind is so used to solving logical and rational puzzles that it may get completely lost in situations where the ENTPs' logic is just an unnecessary distraction. This is likely to make the experience quite stressful for the ENTP. An ENTP is likely to even take a certain pride in being unemotional, seeing feelings as illogical and contrasting them with rational thoughts. However, emotions form a crucial part of everyone's personality and consequently it is imperative to recognize their importance. It is a myth that ENTPs do not have emotions – rather, the trait responsible for their expression and recognition is underdeveloped, giving way to rational thinking. This does not mean that ENTPs are, or should aspire to be, cold-hearted robots shunning all emotional contact. It is important to be aware of what type of communication is likely to be expected by the partner at a specific stage – and the ENTP should overcome their fear of the unknown, try to experiment and then learn from experience. A similar approach should be applied to other situations as well as ENTPs may often unknowingly hurt other people's feelings, especially earlier on in life.

ENTPs are nearly immune to conflict and criticism, but only when they see such comments as rational. They will be more than happy to listen to alternative views and change their opinion if the opponent proves them wrong (this is rare, but not impossible). The ENTP may even act as a devil's advocate themselves if something seems like an interesting idea. However, any argument the ENTP sees as irrational or coming from a person that they have not evaluated yet will likely be discarded straight away or, if the ENTP feels particularly charitable, ripped apart as illogical, statement by statement, fact by fact, and then handed back to the critic in pieces. As the ENTP mind is used to filtering out irrelevant information, it is applying the same approach to criticism as well – and this is not always the best option.

ENTPs should remember that every type has many weak spots and they are not an exception – as already mentioned, ENTPs tend to be quite perplexed when it comes to emotional matters and practical things such as fashion, sense of space, aesthetics etc. No matter how difficult it may be for an ENTP to accept this, but there are many types that are much better at these things, even though they may not have the analytical abilities of the ENTP. Consequently, their criticism may be entirely justified and valid. People with the ENTP personality type are likely to feel quite vulnerable when such matters form the basis of a



conflict with someone close to them – they should consciously try to learn from this experience and explore such territory instead of raising their rationality shields and trying to stay in the comfort zone every time this happens.

It is also very important for an ENTP to accept the idea that their intellectual capacity can and will be enhanced as a result of consciously seeking opportunities to connect with and listen to other people. The one thing that all ENTPs are afraid of is that something can compromise the integrity of their inner sanctum, that nucleus made of critical thinking, logic and knowledge. Of course, there needs to be an emotional distance between the ENTP and the environment – however, that sanctum is not at risk just because they spend some time listening to someone that lived in a different age, pursues a different dream or is not as experienced in the field of their interest. Confidence must not become a limiting factor and overshadow the curiosity – in the words of Socrates, “I know one thing, that I know nothing”.

Now that we have covered the main weaknesses of this personality type, let us move on to their strengths.

## How to Make Good Use of ENTP Traits?

Now that we have discussed the ENTP weaknesses, let us move on to their strengths. The most impressive trait of any ENTP is their ability to get completely immersed in the analysis of a certain idea and focus all their mental resources on a specific problem. Such abilities become even more expressed as the ENTP grows and develops. People with this personality type should also try to apply this approach outside the scientific field – ENTPs are already naturally strong in there, so there may be other areas where that attention is more needed, such as a romantic relationship, lifestyle habits etc. ENTPs often find it quite easy to become respected experts in their chosen field, but applying the same rules to other areas in life may prove to be far more difficult.

ENTP personalities do not really care how things have been done in the past. They know that there is always a better way, a more refined approach and a solution that no one has looked at yet. This ingenuity and entrepreneurial spirit makes them excellent system engineers, troubleshooters and idea generators – ENTPs are only interested in what works and nothing motivates them more than complex, challenging

problems. It does not really matter what career path the ENTP chooses as they can do very well in many areas – however, people with this personality type should try to make sure that their potential role is flexible enough to allow them to experiment and devise new ways to get things done. Alternatively, ENTPs should have several hobby projects to keep their mind occupied. Dull and predictable tasks are likely to make people with this personality type restless and irritable, at which point they may start working against the system just for the sake of it. The ENTP's mind needs to stay entertained and nothing excites it more than mental puzzles and challenges.

ENTP personalities should also recognize the true value of their communication skills. People with this personality type have a unique gift of being able to become wizards of science while retaining the ability to articulate complex ideas. This combination is invaluable in scientific fields, considering that many brilliant scientists face major problems when it comes to actually presenting their findings. In contrast, ENTPs are often able to both come up with a unique solution and captivate the audience during its presentation or crush the opponent in a debate. These traits can potentially make them very successful researchers or technological entrepreneurs and should be consciously developed. ENTPs would also be wise to present this as one of their strong points in job interviews and similar situations – people who are able to both handle the technological side of things and communicate with the non-technical audience are always highly sought after.

ENTPs also tend to be quite relaxed and have an easy approach to life, spiced up by a good sense of humor. This is a great thing, especially considering the fact that ENTPs' traits inevitably push them towards never-ending intellectual pursuits. An ENTP should always remember to relax and enjoy the simple pleasures in life, soaking in the experience – this is especially important in areas where they may not feel so comfortable in, such as romantic relationships or deep emotional conversations.

One of the most important things that ENTPs can do to encourage the growth and development of their personality is to give more room to their Intuitive trait. It is usually overshadowed by the ENTPs' Thinking trait and this may lead to several problems. The Thinking trait is only interested in facts that support the logical thought process – consequently, the rest are discarded as irrelevant. This may be a good approach in scientific research or analysis, but such a “filter” may cause significant problems for



the ENTP in situations where logical rules do not always apply. For instance, it would likely resist the notion that things such as emotions or love can be important as well. In contrast, the Intuitive trait can recognize all the possibilities and allow the individual to learn the value of, for example, emotional bonding – this area tends to be severely neglected by many ENTPs and consequently is one of the first things to address if they wish to grow and develop. It is impossible to understand and connect with other people if the information about their behavior is discarded as irrelevant or not fitting the ENTP's vision of the world.

ENTPs can be very determined and passionate if they truly care about something. However, they should make conscious efforts to keep their mind focused on one project instead of jumping from one topic to another. The ENTP mind is not meant for routine things or following steps A, B, C, D... - it will jump from A to D, then back to C, then think of a better way to handle B etc. It is important for an ENTP to keep this tendency in check in order to guarantee the project's success. As Thomas Edison once said, "Genius is one percent inspiration, ninety nine percent perspiration." No matter how intelligent an ENTP is, their mind needs to stay on track, especially if that phase of the process is relatively dull.

It is also likely that an ENTP will be able to understand and utilize principles or ideas that would normally be considered to be beyond their intellectual capacity or knowledge. This may come as a pleasant surprise to an ENTP and provide an opportunity for significant personal growth – however, the only way to do this is to recognize that there is much to learn and then go into the uncharted territory. Even though ENTPs tend to be confident in their knowledge, this naturally makes them reluctant to do things that might endanger that feeling – such as trying to learn something that is completely new to them. A growth-oriented ENTP should recognize this and overcome the powerlessness and frustration that often form part of the learning process. This will allow the ENTP to go above and beyond what other personality types can achieve.

It is also fair to say that as an ENTP, you will likely have better critical thinking skills than most people you meet. Ability to self-reflect and analyze your own motives, decisions and mistakes is a great strength, and you should utilize it often. This is especially important when it comes to personal development – making goals for yourself and managing your ego is an excellent recipe for personal growth. However,

it is just as important not to overthink things, especially where there is plenty of subjectivity involved. For instance, people's actions cannot always be explained with rational arguments, and this affects numerous other things in life. ENTPs often find it hard to accept this idea, but that is unavoidable in many situations. You will not be able to find objective answers to everything.

Finally, it is worth stressing that you need to be happy with yourself, not try to meet other people's expectations or work hard on developing traits that the society says are valuable but that go against who you are. As you are probably well aware, ENTPs (especially ENTP females) are rare, so it is completely understandable that many of the things the wider society seems to value – such as seeking materialistic rewards, socializing, following the well-travelled path of study-work-buy a house etc. – may seem forced and unnatural to you. The society, especially in the Western world, is dominated by Observant types (especially Sentinels), who usually get to set the rules of which traits are considered strengths and which ones are seen as weaknesses. However, this does not mean that you need to change who you are in order to be successful – recognize your weak points, but do not try to mold your personality to suit someone else's expectations.

## Your Dark Side

Each personality type has its dark side – it may emerge under extreme stress or fatigue, especially if the individual is frustrated by their real or perceived weaknesses. In those cases, their “evil twin” may manifest itself as the complete opposite of their personality, throwing the underdeveloped shadow traits into the light. Outwardly, it would seem as if the individual has suddenly decided to adopt a completely different approach to many things, including their career, romantic relationships, habits and so on. Inside, the individual is likely to feel confused and split between two completely different worldviews.

In some circumstances, such a change may not be sudden or short-lived – the individual may choose, either consciously or unconsciously, to behave in this way for a very long time if, for instance, they seek to fight their overly protective parents, restrictive environment, bad memories etc. Some examples of such behavior could be:

- an exemplary student leaving their parents' house and becoming a party animal in college;

- a sociable, friendly and sensitive guy purposefully isolating himself from the outside world and being obsessed by radical ideas after a senseless crime committed against his close friend;
- a quiet, conservative girl suffering from a bad break-up suddenly becoming far more liberal or embracing a completely different philosophy when it comes to choosing partners.

It is not impossible that the individual's social circle will encourage them as well, by complimenting the clearly visible changes, e.g. more spontaneity, sensitivity or willingness to take risks – this would also reassure the individual, maybe even leading them towards a conclusion that this is actually their “real” personality and their previous persona was just a repressed version of their “real” self.

ENTPs are not an exception to this rule. Your “evil twin” would be an unhealthy version of the ISFJ personality – it may push you towards things like emotional outbursts, caring deeply about your social status, engaging in pointless repetitive activities, going out of your way to help random people, drinking, gambling etc. This may even feel liberating at times – for instance, you may feel strangely energized by activities that engage your senses but not your mind, or risky decisions that pay off – but that state is likely to be short-lived, succeeded by feelings of emptiness and confusion.

In such circumstances, it is important to remember to stop and think hard about who you truly are and whether your behavior is a true reflection of your inner self, or only a temporary mirage created by your mind to serve some kind of purpose (e.g. to try something completely different). Do not think about what you *are* (an engineer, a nice guy or a brilliant student) – that is irrelevant. Rather, think about what you can *do*. Pick up a blank sheet of paper and a pen, sit down and try to think of your purpose in life, of something that you would really, really want to create, experience or achieve in 5, 10 or 20 years. Any random thought will do, just keep writing them all down. You will definitely know when you have hit the right one – it may even make you cry. That will be the definition and reflection of your true self.

Simply being familiar with the fact that each one of us has a dark side is a good thing – this will enable you to spot when that “switch” has happened, either within yourself or within someone close to you. Otherwise, you may be oblivious to what is going on and even think that it would be a good idea to shut down any doubts and simply “double up” on whatever you are doing, getting drawn deeper into the

never-ending spiral of cheating yourself. It is one thing to use and develop your weaker traits wisely – it is quite another to give in and let them lead the way completely unchallenged.

## Emotional Stability

Another important area related to ENTPs' personal growth is emotional stability. This is determined by the last trait that we discussed in the "ENTP Type Traits" section above (the "Identity" subsection) – you would have also seen your personal score after completing our personality test. There are two sides of the "Identity" scale:

- Assertive – people with the Assertive identity are emotionally stable, calm, relaxed and refuse to worry too much.
- Turbulent – people with the Turbulent identity are self-conscious, perfectionists, care about their image and tend to be success-driven.

Most individuals are close to the middle on this particular scale, although that depends on the social environment and sex of the individual. For instance, women tend to be further to the right side of the scale (i.e. more likely to have a Turbulent identity), although that varies from region to region – sex differences are negligible in Africa and Asia, but rather significant in the Western world.

If you are an Assertive ENTP, you are likely to be quite comfortable with your identity – you know what your strengths and weaknesses are, and do not hesitate to leverage them where possible. You may be relatively perfectionistic, but you do not go overboard with it, knowing that no one is perfect and no project is worth obsessing too much about. Similarly, you do not feel threatened by minor challenges, remaining calm and focused in stressful situations. All ENTPs tend to be good at controlling their emotions, but Assertive ENTPs go further, refusing to internalize them – this means that even deep down, they are not really affected by either negative or positive emotions. They rarely get stressed or excited, staying calm and composed at all times.

On the other hand, Assertive identity is not always a positive thing. A certain level of self-consciousness or occasional "emotional rollercoasters" can be quite useful, especially from the personal development perspective – for instance, Assertive ENTPs are likely to have a lower drive and potentially productivity,

due to lower sensitivity to negative outcomes. People with this variant of the ENTP personality also tend to be more forceful and self-confident, which can isolate them from other people – it is important to remember that ENTPs have a rather unique set of traits and skills, and these differences set them apart, even without taking Assertive identity into account.

In contrast, if you have a Turbulent identity, you are likely to be rather anxious about your performance and prone to worrying too much about the consequences of your actions. As an ENTP, you would still be rather confident in your abilities, knowing that you are a resourceful and knowledgeable individual – however, it is also likely that you would push yourself to the limit, internalizing all the stress and worry that would inevitably accompany your perfectionism. Deep down, you may also care about how other people perceive you (or how your ideal self would perceive you), even though you may do your best to not reveal that sensitive side of yours. This would lead to certain “emotional rollercoasters”, with you feeling at the top of the world when you see your plans coming nicely into fruition, and then plunging into the abyss when you are forced to face your weaknesses or when you feel lost or can no longer cope with the workload. Turbulent identity is inseparable from higher stress levels, which can also lead to health problems if left unaddressed.

Then again, there are certain advantages to having a Turbulent identity. For instance, it could be argued that because Turbulent ENTPs are more success-driven and self-conscious than their Assertive cousins, they can also potentially achieve better results and become more well-rounded individuals instead of feeling satisfied with where and who they are.

Regardless of whether you are an Assertive or a Turbulent ENTP, everything depends on your willingness and ability to address the challenges posed by your identity type. Each side has its own advantages and disadvantages, although generally you should try to stay close to the middle of this scale in order to achieve optimal results and grow as an individual. If you have an Assertive identity, learn to recognize the benefits of setting more difficult goals for yourself and occasionally giving it to your emotions – they are an inseparable part of our lives and Assertive ENTPs should not try to present themselves as highly intelligent yet completely unemotional. Similarly, if you have a Turbulent identity,

learn how not to internalize stress or negative emotions, and do not see yourself as a superhuman who must always aim for the best and never fail.

## *Romantic Relationships*

People with the ENTP personality type tend to be very spontaneous and they often seek dating partners who complement that trait – their ideal relationship includes looking for new things that both partners could experience together. This means that the ENTP's partner should have similar priorities and intellectual capacity – the ENTP will do their best to push the boundaries and traditions in any romantic relationship, even during the early dating phase (they often test their potential partners to see how open-minded and spontaneous they are). That being said, the unwavering enthusiasm of the ENTP is likely to be very beneficial in the relationship, both strengthening and deepening it.



Even though romantic relationships and dating are inherently difficult for ENTPs, people with this personality type take them very seriously. The main problem that ENTPs are likely to face in this area is that they are not naturally sensitive or emotional individuals – consequently, understanding another person's feelings or expressing their own is not something that an ENTP is well equipped to do. ENTPs spend a large part of their lives in their heads and consequently what they see and understand intuitively can be much more advanced than a "bland" reality. As a result, someone with the ENTP personality may find it challenging to merge that fantasy and high requirements with reality. Unfortunately, their superior logic and imagination may actually hinder the ENTP when they start looking for a partner.

This is one of the main reasons why ENTPs are often branded as picky and snobbish by people who are used to getting attention primarily because of their looks or social status, or cannot understand how the ENTP could remain rational while looking for a partner. ENTPs tend to see dating as a way to find someone they could invest their time and effort in, someone that would understand and appreciate their ideas – most other types would find this very odd and unromantic. Furthermore, ENTP personalities sometimes come up with lists of intellectual and physical traits they would like their partners to have or



obtain, ticking boxes as the relationship progresses. Other Analysts do this more often (especially ENTJs and INTJs), but such an approach is quite popular among ENTPs as well. The problem is that those requirements may be quite unrealistic, bearing in mind that ENTPs often lack experience in this area – people with this personality type need to find the middle ground between having overly strict criteria and settling down with the first person who is interested in having a relationship with them.

Furthermore, ENTPs strongly dislike being at the center of emotionally-charged situations. As interpersonal conflicts are virtually inevitable even in happiest romantic relationships, ENTPs may find those situations quite frustrating and consequently try to avoid or ignore emotional conflicts in their relationship, especially during the dating phase. If there is no escape, the ENTP will try to find a solution, but likely rely on the analytical approach, which can be very different from what their partner (especially if they belong to one of the Feeling types) might expect. ENTP personalities should try to include this in their thought process, especially when it comes to dealing with conflicts in the earlier stages of the relationship. The ENTPs' tendency to always trust their knowledge and understanding can inadvertently hurt other people, as it is not always a good idea to look at conflict situations as logical puzzles, worthy of analysis.

These weaknesses aside, ENTP personalities tend to be very loyal and faithful partners. ENTPs are also unusually direct and honest, even if they have just started dating someone. People with this personality type always stick to their commitments and are actually quite easy to date and live with – they have simple daily needs and do not demand much from their partners. However, despite seeking simplicity in dating and romantic relationships, ENTPs do not lack passion or romantic feelings. On the contrary, people with the ENTP personality type tend to be extremely creative individuals whose vivid imagination allows them to always remain very enthusiastic and passionate in romantic relationships. Anyone dating an ENTP may be quite surprised by this sometimes. ENTPs' feelings run very deep and can be very powerful – but they will be expressed in a way that will be very different from the usual cuddling, kissing and saying "I love you" every couple of minutes. They may do that as well, but only because they have learned this is expected, not because they feel that way. Generally, ENTPs tend to be wonderful mates – loyal, honest and always eager to work on improving the relationship.



ENTPs constantly challenge both themselves and those around them, always looking for new ideas and ways to improve their understanding of the world. This is evident in their romantic relationships as well – even when they are still looking for a dating partner, ENTPs think about how they would be able to develop and grow together with that person.

Such a relentless pursuit of growth can be taxing, but it also strengthens the relationship considerably – ENTP personalities would keep trying to surprise their partners in a pleasant way, keep finding new aspects to improve, keep looking for innovative ways to connect with those close to them etc. Dating an ENTP or living with them is never boring – some personality types might get a bit tired after a while, but if they do not, the flame of their relationship will always burn brightly.

This trait is especially evident in intimate situations. ENTP personalities tend to be very curious and enthusiastic sexual partners, keen to seek exploration and development in this area. ENTPs are likely to encourage their partners to try new things and enjoy intimate situations without limiting themselves in any way. Such traits make ENTPs very attractive dating partners, once the relationship moves into that stage. However, it is unlikely that the ENTP will define intimacy in emotional terms – they tend to see sexual acts from the physical rather than spiritual perspective. People with this personality type, especially female ENTPs, need to feel that their mind is aroused just as much as their body in order to be fully stimulated – for ENTPs, lack of intelligence tends to be a big turn-off, even if it is a one-time thing.

ENTPs know how to direct their enormous enthusiasm and genuine desire to improve things into further refinement and development of the romantic relationship. However, ENTPs should take care not to overlook their partner's feelings and also avoid excessive immersion in new non-romantic ideas or opportunities. While that sincere excitement can certainly be very attractive, the never-ending stream of ideas pouring from the ENTP's mind would eventually frustrate even the most patient dating partner.

Preferred partners: INTJ and INFJ types, as their Introversion and Judging traits counterbalance ENTPs' Extraversion and Prospecting traits.

## Potential Pairings

Let us now take a look at all potential trait pairings – this will help you understand how those combinations work in romantic relationships. Each combination of traits brings different things into the relationship, sometimes positive and sometimes negative – knowing what to expect will definitely help you further down the road. However, please remember that each individual is unique, and what is true for one may not be true for another. Ultimately, you will be responsible for figuring out what exact role these traits play in your relationship.



### *An Introverted (I) Partner*

The best thing about being in a relationship with someone who does not share your first (Mind) trait is that you are going to balance each other out quite well. The Introverted partner will encourage you to slow down and take a moment to think before acting, to spend more time reflecting on things before jumping straight into the action. You, on the other hand, will draw your Introverted partner out from their shell, playing the role of the socializer in the relationship, encouraging your partner to establish new social links and taking care of any social obligations that you both might have.

These differences will also be beneficial when it comes to resolving conflicts in the relationship. However, it is crucial that both partners are mature and willing to listen to each other instead of sticking to their own guns and refusing to accept different viewpoints most of the time. If all goes well, both partners will be able to cover each other's strengths and weaknesses.

That being said, each stick has two ends and personality differences may also have a negative impact on the stability and health of the relationship. If one (or both) of the partners is not very mature, they may have difficulties understanding the other person's perspective. In such circumstances, the Extraverted individual may get frustrated by the fact that their Introverted partner is more private, or has poor social

skills. And vice versa, the Introverted individual may get annoyed by their partner's chattiness or need to socialize.

It is crucial that both individuals make conscious efforts to understand each other – in all likelihood, they will both think that their way of life is perfectly normal and it is the other person who is strange. For instance, the fact that we tend to surround ourselves with friends who are like us is not going to help either - this simply reinforces our positive perception of ourselves along with the idea that our traits are the right ones. The only way to get out of that bubble is to push the limits and try to see the world through another person's eyes. When an Introverted and an Extraverted individual form a relationship, they give each other an excellent opportunity to do just so.

Tips for you:

1. **Be patient.** Your potential partner may need a lot of time to open up to you.
2. **When dating, choose locations without much social pressure.** Your potential partner may feel uncomfortable with many other people around.
3. **Do not be overbearing.** Small talk is often a challenge for Introverted types, even though it is unavoidable in the dating phase. Do not be overbearing by trying to get your potential partner to talk extensively about themselves. At best, they will feel uncomfortable.
4. **Be tolerant.** Your partner is likely to have difficulties when it comes to socializing with other people or even yourself for an extensive amount of time. Remember that they get exhausted by social interaction, unlike you, who is recharged by it. There will be times when they will want to be alone – be understanding, give them space and do not ask them what is wrong. This has nothing to do with you – your Introverted partner simply needs some time alone to recharge.

Tips for your partner:

1. **Do not overcompensate.** Small talk is unavoidable in the dating phase, but you are unlikely to be good at it. Do not overcompensate by trying to appear chatty and sociable – let your partner take the lead. Otherwise, you will simply look insecure.
2. **Speak up.** Once you transition into a relationship, you will need to remind yourself to share your thoughts with your partner instead of sticking to your habit of keep everything to yourself.

3. **Do not get stuck in a bubble.** You will likely have difficulties when it comes to socializing with other people. Your partner will probably take care of this in social situations, but that does not mean that you should not make conscious efforts to bring something to the conversation. Do not get lazy.
4. **Be tolerant.** Your partner is likely to have difficulties when it comes to understanding why you need to spend time alone instead of talking to them. They might also worry that they have done something to offend you – as Extraverted types recharge while spending time with other people, your partner may not know that you need exactly the opposite. Take your time to explain how your mind works.

### *An Extraverted (E) Partner*

The best thing about being in a relationship with someone who belongs to an Extraverted type is that you both are likely to complement each other very nicely when it comes to socialization. As each partner is likely to have a large circle of friends and an active social life, there should be no tension in the relationship as far as social needs are concerned. You will meet each other's friends and make new connections, effectively combining both social circles without any major difficulties. Furthermore, your communication skills will prove to be very useful in social events - both partners will be able to hold their own and shine together as a couple.

You will also be in a good position when it comes to resolving problems in a relationship, although your conflict resolution style will depend largely on your other plans. Unlike Introverted types, who are used to reflecting in solitude and only then expressing their thoughts verbally, Extraverted types think while they speak – consequently, you are both likely to verbalize your discontent immediately instead of allowing it to take a more concrete shape in your minds.

This can be both a good and a bad thing - on one hand, you will likely resolve the conflict once and for all instead of letting the resentment simmer; on the other hand, it is sometimes necessary to keep your cool and reflect a bit.

There is also a danger of focusing too much on socialization and maintenance of social connections – as you both are probably used to spending a lot of time with your friends before the relationship, realigning

the priorities can be a challenging task. If one of the partners does not slow down and finds it difficult to step back from socializing and start paying more attention to their significant other, someone is going to get hurt sooner or later.

Tips for both individuals:

1. **Manage your time.** You are unlikely to have difficulties when it comes to socializing with other people. However, you also need to make conscious efforts to step back from engaging others and focus more on your partner.
2. **Handle your friends' expectations.** You are both likely to have many friends and they may be used to having your full attention. Both partners will inevitably have to cut back on time that is spent with friends, so it is best to manage those expectations early instead of trying to pretend that nothing has changed.
3. **Learn to listen.** As Extraverted individuals, you are most likely used to thinking while talking – however, you need to make conscious efforts to develop your listening skills as well. They will prove to be very useful in a relationship.
4. **Value privacy.** You may be used to sharing many details of your daily life with your friends and relatives - it may be necessary to change that habit when you are in a relationship.
5. **Know how to focus.** You may have difficulties spending time alone or focusing on something for an extended period of time. Learn to refrain from the temptation to chat when you both need to concentrate (e.g. while studying).

### *An Intuitive (N) Partner*

As Intuitives, you are both likely to prefer introspection over observation – that is, you will spend more time exploring the world of ideas as opposed to keeping your feet on the ground. A relationship between two Intuitives is an amazing thing to observe – both partners are usually able to establish a connection that allows them to understand each other without words. The combination of intuition, introspection and imagination is likely to be a great driving force in your relationship.

Intuitives are relatively rare (only 15-25%), so the fact that you managed to find another Intuitive is impressive in itself. Usually, the connection between such partners is instantaneous, making them feel

as if someone finally understands them. This is often a welcome break from all the comments about their tendency to have their heads in the clouds or to miss things that other personality types consider obvious. It is quite unlikely that two Intuitives will run out of things to talk about – this is a great advantage both in the dating phase and later on in the relationship.

Unfortunately, this is just one side of the coin. It is very important to be able to communicate with each other effectively, but it is often the practical matters that cause problems in Intuitive-Intuitive relationships. As both partners are going to favor abstract issues, ideas and future plans, one of them will inevitably have to take the lead and handle the concrete things, such as shopping, cooking, maintenance, money management etc. Intuitives tend not to be good at these matters and this may cause tension in the relationship.

Another problem that you are likely to face is your tendency to distract each other. Intuitives often get lost in their world of ideas and possibilities, drifting from one concept to another – and while this is a wonderful trait when it comes to creativity and innovation, it can also cause significant problems in the relationship. It is important to take time to enjoy the present and the simple things in life – otherwise both partners may feel overwhelmed and tired all the time. Keep your eyes on the stars, but also remember to keep your feet on the ground.

Tips for both individuals:

1. **Deal with practical tasks.** Neither partner is likely to enjoy (or be good at) handling routine, daily tasks – however, it is important to deal with them on time, avoiding the buildup of problems.
2. **Do things that engage your creativity.** You both will find it easier to deal with ideas than practical things, so do not try to mimic the behavior of other people and push your partner (or yourself) to participate in activities that require good use of all five senses. This is especially important in the dating phase.
3. **Be realistic.** As Intuitives, you will both have plenty of ideas that may or may not be realistic. Do not overcommit yourselves.
4. **Enjoy the present.** You are both likely to spend a lot of time thinking about the future. Find a way to enjoy the present as well – time flows quickly.

5. **Share your ideas.** Imagination is one of your greatest assets – use it. Your partner will likely be able to see some things from a different perspective, while at the same time staying on the same wavelength as you.

### *An Observant (S) Partner*

This is one of the most challenging, yet potentially most rewarding combinations. These traits determine how we see the world, how we think, how we communicate – and this is just scratching the surface. In some relationships, the schism between Intuitive and Observant traits is too great to bridge, and both partners may spend a lot of time thinking what they are doing wrong, why their significant other seems to misunderstand them all the time and why they just do not listen. In other cases, both individuals are able to acknowledge their differences and turn them into strengths, thus neutralizing each other's weaknesses.

Actually, the main difference between Intuitive and Observant traits is quite easy to define. The Intuitive partner will focus on abstract things – ideas, introspection, possibilities, dreams, connections between events etc. Intuitives are *imaginaries* who spend more time thinking about the future than the present. The Observant partner, on the other hand, will prioritize concrete things – objects, senses, observation, facts, daily matters etc. Observant types are *doers* who focus on the present moment rather than the future.

Not surprisingly, this affects everything else, from observational abilities to communication styles. It is absolutely crucial that you both take time to understand how the other person thinks and processes things – all other traits fade in comparison. It is also worth noting that Observant personality types dominate the society and this often leads to Intuitives' traits being dismissed as impractical or unrealistic – the Observant partner should avoid labeling their partner as “odd” or getting frustrated because “this is not what most people do”. Respect the differences.

If all goes well, however, you are likely to have a very rewarding relationship. The Intuitive partner will be able to inspire their significant other and come up with a myriad of interesting ideas, always keeping the relationship fresh and interesting. The Observant partner will be able to ensure that those ideas are grounded in reality, as well as handle practical matters that the Intuitive may forget. As always,



communication is key in such relationships – there will be plenty of misunderstandings, especially at the very beginning, but they are unlikely to cause lasting damage if both partners are open-minded and willing to compromise.

#### Tips for you:

1. **Be patient.** Your Observant partner is likely to have difficulties understanding some of your ideas.
2. **Improve your observation skills.** Your imagination is a great asset, but it is not going to help when, for example, you have to remember your partner's favorite perfume or where you put the car keys.
3. **Keep your feet on the ground.** Intuitives often overestimate their abilities, enthusiastically embracing new and exciting ideas without thinking about the actual implementation.
4. **Remember to enjoy the present.** You are likely to spend way too much time thinking about the future. Find a way to enjoy the present as well – time flows quickly. Your Observant partner will certainly be able to help you with this.

#### Tips for your partner:

1. **Be patient.** Your Intuitive partner is likely to have difficulties handling practical tasks or noticing things.
2. **Improve your introspection skills.** You are likely to be practical and realistic, but it is also often necessary to spend some time reflecting on things. Forget the practical world and let yourself dream every once in a while.
3. **Be imaginative.** Observant types often focus too much on routines or physical things. Embrace your imagination and do not be afraid of exploring ideas without knowing whether they are actually practical or implementable.
4. **Remember to think about the future.** You are likely to focus either on the past or the present – find some time to think about the future as well, no matter how scary this may be. This does not mean that you should make complex long-term plans – simply imagine and explore possibilities



in your mind. Your Intuitive partner is probably doing this all the time – you need to meet each other halfway.

### *A Thinking (T) Partner*

A Thinker-Thinker relationship is usually free from dramas and emotional arguments – there will be disagreements, but they will be more reminiscent of calm, factual discussions than emotional storms. This does not necessarily mean that your disagreements will always be easier to overcome compared to the arguments between a Thinker and a Feeler, or between two Feelers – you will simply argue at a different level.

It is also important to point out that the dominance of the Thinking trait does not mean that the individual is unemotional. Both Thinkers and Feelers are capable of deep feelings – however, Thinkers tend to hide those feelings from the outside world. They want to stay in control, to not lose their heads regardless of the circumstances – and this is what creates that aura of indifference. Do not assume that your partner is completely calm and happy just because they are not showing their emotions.

This takes us to one of the main challenges in Thinker-Thinker relationships – expression of feelings. In all likelihood, you are both used to keeping your emotions inside, protecting your inner core from outside interference. This usually works very well in the professional environment, but romantic relationships come with a different set of requirements. There will be times when you will have to support your partner emotionally, express your feelings for him or her, or simply encourage them.

These things may not come naturally to you and it is very likely that you will feel quite vulnerable in such situations – however, it is important that both partners make conscious efforts to open up from time to time, showing what they truly feel.



Tips for both individuals:

1. **Do not be afraid to share your feelings.** You do not have to pretend that you are a highly rational robot in order for your partner to respect you. Expressing your feelings is perfectly OK.
2. **Be open-minded.** As Thinkers, you may find it difficult to tolerate a point of view that does not correspond to the facts you know. Accept the fact that your partner may have a different opinion.
3. **Be careful with criticism.** As Thinkers, you are likely to be quite resistant to criticism, but that does not mean that you should be dishing it out every time your partner makes a minor mistake. Just because there was little emotional reaction does not mean that your comments did not hurt.
4. **Know how to relax.** There is no need to contain yourself when you are having fun with your partner – learn to stop worrying about whether something makes sense.

### *A Feeling (F) Partner*

A Thinker-Feeler relationship can be extremely rewarding as both individuals will be able to teach each other how to look at things from an entirely different perspective. However, it is crucial that both you and your partner understand and respect your differences – there is nearly always some unjustified criticism coming from both sides. The Thinker complains that their partner is too emotional or irrational, and the Feeler responds by saying that the Thinker is cold and heartless. Such criticism becomes even more damaging when the Thinker is a woman and the Feeler is a man, with various social expectations coming into play as well.

The dominance of the Thinking trait does not mean that the individual is unemotional. Both Thinkers and Feelers are capable of deep feelings – however, Thinkers tend to hide those feelings from the outside world. They want to stay in control, to not lose their heads regardless of the circumstances – and this is what creates that aura of indifference.

Likewise, the dominance of the Feeling trait does not mean that the individual is irrational – they are simply using a different set of criteria, putting harmony and sensitivity above cold, hard facts. Feelers tend to show their feelings quite clearly, as opposed to containing them as Thinkers do – however, their decision process is still perfectly rational.

Both these perspectives are perfectly valid and this is one of the most important lessons you will have to learn in your relationship. If both partners are tolerant and open-minded, a Thinker-Feeler relationship can be very inspiring and successful, with the Thinker making fact-based decisions and the Feeler bringing in warmth and harmony into the relationship.

Tips for you:

1. **Be tolerant.** Remember that your partner may not value the facts as much as you do – they are likely to prioritize harmony, values and morals.
2. **Observe.** Your partner is likely to be good at gauging other people's emotional state and they may expect the same from you – try to learn how to read the cues. Yes, it can be frustrating to hear "I am fine" when something is obviously wrong, but bear in mind that this is simply a mismatch of expectations. You are used to dealing with data, they are used to dealing with emotions.
3. **Be careful with criticism.** Feelers tend to be very vulnerable to criticism – be careful when you are pointing something out and try to do this in a calm, non-confrontational manner.
4. **Know how to relax.** There is no need to contain yourself when you are having fun with your partner – learn to stop worrying about whether something makes sense.

Tips for your partner:

1. **Be tolerant.** Remember that your partner may be more interested in facts than in what other people feel – they are likely to focus on finding a rational solution.
2. **Stay calm.** Try not to take criticism personally – in some cases, your partner will simply be criticizing an idea or assessing a situation as opposed to pointing out your flaws.
3. **Observe.** Do not assume that your partner is completely calm and happy just because they are not showing their emotions.
4. **Be patient.** In all likelihood, your partner will not be as good as you are at gauging other people's emotional state – consequently, there will be times when they will completely misunderstand your emotions or get frustrated by not being able to deduce what you want to say. Thinkers are used to dealing with data, not emotions.

### *A Judging (J) Partner*

Judging individuals enjoy planning and committing to things as opposed to keeping their options open. You, on the other hand, like to keep your options open, always looking for alternatives and opportunities. A relationship between a Judging individual and a Prospecting individual may often be rocky and challenging, but there is a lot of potential as well if both partners are willing to take time to explore and understand each other's differences.

The main difficulty is going to be the fact that you will likely hold diametrically opposite views when it comes to planning and execution of those plans. The Judging partner will try to come up with an agenda and then stick to it until the end. In contrast, you may refuse to lay out all the possibilities and probabilities, making things up as you go along – and then maybe even abandoning the project once the most interesting task has been completed. Not surprisingly, both partners can easily frustrate each other if these traits are not addressed or understood.

However, there are two sides to every story and relationships between Judging and Prospecting individuals are not an exception. Judging types can be relatively inflexible and this often brings tension into the relationship - which can then be defused by the easygoing ENTP. Likewise, ENTPs can be indecisive or even somewhat lazy, only focusing on the fun tasks and ignoring the rest – this can be counterbalanced by the driven and dutiful Judging partner. As long as both partners refrain from name-calling and are willing to compromise, these differences can be turned into major strengths, covering each partner's respective weaknesses.

In order to achieve this, you will have to make conscious efforts to meet each other halfway. The Judging partner should not be afraid to experiment or simply be more spontaneous every once in a while, even if that means changing their habits or long-held views. Similarly, you should resist the urge to always seek something new and exciting, even when it is very difficult to stick to the plan or manage all the chores. In all likelihood, each partner will be willing to help their significant other with things that they find challenging, but it is unreasonable to expect them to do this every single time. There needs to be a balance between your partner's stability and your spontaneity, and you will both have to decide where that balance is in your relationship.

Tips for your partner:

1. **Communicate.** Your partner's indecisiveness or relaxed attitude will often frustrate you. Do not resort to name-calling and try to understand what drives them and how you can both support each other. Remember that your partner may not be as interested in plans and schedules as you are - they are used to keeping their options open.
2. **Be open-minded.** As a Judging individual, you may find it challenging to accept the fact that there may be more than one right answer to a problem. Try not to be stubborn and argumentative in cases where your partner disagrees with you.
3. **Experiment.** Your tendency to plan and prepare may make things difficult when there is a need to experiment or try something new. Learn to let go and act spontaneously from time to time.
4. **Do not exhaust yourself.** Your desire to get things done can bring a lot of stress into your own life and into the relationship. Learn to step back and relax - the world is not going to collapse if you miss a self-imposed deadline.

Tips for you:

1. **Communicate.** Your partner's inflexibility or desire to have everything planned out will often frustrate you. Do not resort to name-calling and try to understand what drives them and how you can both support each other. Remember that your partner is used to putting their plans and schedules above play and rest - they may find it quite difficult to step back and relax.
2. **Focus.** As a Prospecting individual, you probably enjoy trying out new things and often wonder whether the grass is greener on the other side. Learn to stick to your tasks and do not let your mind drift away when there is a job to be done.
3. **Watch your environment.** You will likely have a much higher tolerance for disorder compared to your Judging partner. Do not ignore your housekeeping duties.
4. **Do not be picky.** Prospecting individuals tend to balk at doing routine, menial tasks, often wandering off in search of something more exciting. Not all work is fun, but you should make conscious efforts to do your fair share of household duties.

### *A Prospecting (P) Partner*

As you both prefer Prospecting to Judging when it comes to tactics, you will rarely get stressed or have difficulties finding time for fun. Your playfulness and ability to spot opportunities will ensure that the relationship is never boring and you both have interesting things to do.

On the other hand, there are two sides to every story and relationships between Prospecting individuals are not an exception. Spontaneity and improvisation inevitably come with a degree of instability and this can cause tension in the relationship. For instance, Prospecting individuals are likely to balk at planning or doing routine, menial tasks, often finding it difficult to focus and wandering off in search of something more exciting - and since you both share the Prospecting trait, there may be no one to pick those tasks up.

Some Prospecting individuals can also be indecisive or even somewhat lazy, only focusing on things they find interesting and ignoring the rest - if this cannot be counterbalanced by their significant other, the practical side of the relationship can quickly become problematic. Furthermore, there are times in every relationship when it is necessary to plan for the future and stick to those plans, regardless of how challenging that is – such situations may cause stress for Prospecting individuals as well. You both will probably find examples in your lives that illustrate such traits.

That being said, recognizing the problem is already half of the solution - if you are both willing to make conscious efforts to recognize and address your weaknesses, then there is no reason why your relationship could not be as stable as a relationship where one or both of the partners belong to a Judging type. Most importantly, you need to learn how to keep your energy trait (Intuitive or Observant) in check by using your nature trait (Thinking or Feeling) – when necessary, the latter should stop the former from wandering off and engaging in activities that satisfy your thirst for ideas (Intuitive trait) or your senses (Observant trait). This should be the primary focus of your growth as a couple.

Tips for both individuals:

1. **Communicate.** Your partner's indecisiveness or relaxed attitude will often frustrate you - and vice versa. Do not resort to name-calling and try to figure out how you can both support each other.
2. **Focus.** As Prospecting individuals, you probably enjoy trying out new things and often wonder whether the grass is greener on the other side. Learn to stick to your tasks and do not let your mind to drift away when there is a job to be done.
3. **Watch your environment.** You both are likely to have a high tolerance for disorder, but that does not mean you should ignore your housekeeping duties. Split the tasks and do not postpone them until the very last minute.
4. **Do not be picky.** Prospecting individuals tend to balk at doing routine, menial tasks, often wandering off in search of something more exciting. Not all work is fun, but sometimes it is necessary to get things done regardless of how boring they are.
5. **Learn to plan.** There will be times when you will have to think about the future and plan for it. That does not necessarily mean that you will have to stop looking for opportunities or be unable to keep your options open - however, it is important to find time to sit down together and discuss the direction in which the relationship is going.

### *Assertive or Turbulent?*

The format of this subsection will differ from that of the others, simply because we see the final trait as a variant of the personality rather than an integral part of the actual personality type. However, the importance of this trait should not be understated – it determines how confident we are in our abilities and decisions, which certainly affects our behavior in romantic relationships.

Assertive individuals tend to be emotionally stable, calm and relaxed – they do not easily get upset or excited, keeping their emotions in the proverbial middle of the scale. Their calm temper allows them to sort out any disagreements without much stress as opposed to being rattled even by the most insignificant of issues. Furthermore, individuals with this personality trait tend to be quite optimistic and content about their achievements and life in general. That said, this relaxed attitude can also encourage Assertive individuals to not worry too much about goals or self-improvement in their relationships, with



their self-confidence overshadowing any signs that might make someone else question whether more work needs to be done.

In contrast, Turbulent individuals tend to be much more self-conscious and more reactive to stress. They are prone to experiencing “emotional roller coasters”, e.g. feeling at the top of the world in the morning and being overrun by negative thoughts in the evening. Turbulent types also tend to be more success-driven and perfectionistic than Assertive ones, often worrying way too much about their performance, image or future. On the other hand, this desire to do their best and never-ending quest for improvement often help these individuals achieve impressive heights in their career or pleasantly surprise their other half, simply because they really care about whether they are being good enough.

At first sight, it may seem that the Assertive trait is preferable – after all, what is not to like about being self-confident and relaxed? However, somewhat ironically, being resistant to stress and pressure may not always be a good thing. Despite being more prone to emotional swings and worrying, Turbulent individuals are also likely to be more reflective and organized, often pushing themselves harder than necessary. However, it is exactly that “must do better” attitude that makes them put in more effort into the relationship. Depending on other traits, Assertive individuals may also be more likely to take risks – where a Turbulent person may hesitate and weigh their options, an Assertive one may trust themselves just a little too much and make a mistake.

Ultimately, though, everything boils down to each partner’s willingness to recognize and address both the individual weaknesses inherent in each trait, and the potential ways their respective traits may complement or clash with each other. It is also important to remember that many things depend on how strongly expressed the trait is – the higher the score, the starker the characteristics are likely to be.

Let’s now briefly discuss three potential combinations.

### **If both partners are Assertive**

This is probably the most straightforward combination. You are likely to be confident, relaxed optimists, quite happy with your relationship and where it is going. If you are both Extraverted and Assertive, you are also likely to be more satisfied with life in general. You may rarely experience strong positive



emotions, but you will not have many negative ones either. You will also probably feel quite relaxed about your work or your social status, instead trusting yourself and paying more attention to what you want, not what others say you should do.

On the other hand, you need to beware of the tendency to assume that everything is OK and not be perturbed by occasional issues in your relationship – by doing this, you can miss crucial signs that something is going in the wrong direction or that you may potentially face bigger issues further down the road. Too much confidence can be just as bad as too little confidence. Even if everything seems great and there is nothing that can upset you, finding some time for reflection and thinking about improvement can be a very healthy exercise.

### **If one partner is Assertive and another is Turbulent**

As with all other traits, if partners are on opposite sides of the scale, there is a lot of potential for both mutual personal growth and various misunderstandings. With the Assertive partner being the decisive, calm and level-headed half, and the Turbulent partner being the cautious, sensitive and self-conscious one, it is easy to see that they can both help and hurt each other.

In such relationships, it is important to understand each other's strengths and weaknesses instead of assuming that there is something wrong with another person's attitude.

The Assertive individual should recognize that their Turbulent partner is much more emotionally reactive and vulnerable to stressful situations. They may be more pessimistic, anxious and shy – however, the Turbulent trait also pushes such individuals to reflect on their decisions and try to improve themselves and their relationships as much as possible. As a side effect, Turbulent individuals are also likely to be more organized, driven and motivated. If they are able to master their emotions and use them as a driving force instead of simply giving in to the mood swings, this trait can actually be quite beneficial in a romantic relationship.

Similarly, the Turbulent individual should understand that their partner's calmness and relaxed attitude do not mean that they unsupportive or not that interested in working on relationship. Being less likely to feel nervous in challenging situations, Assertive individuals may seem somewhat detached or

disinterested, especially from the perspective of someone who is Turbulent – however, it is precisely that emotional stability that should be utilized where possible. While it is true that Assertive individuals may sometimes be too self-confident and not care much about achieving best possible results where a good outcome is enough, this level-headedness can also be invaluable in emotionally charged or unpredictable situations.

With this in mind, both partners should work on covering each other's weaknesses with their respective strengths instead of focusing on their differences and trying to "fix" them. For instance, the Assertive individual could act as an emotional bedrock for their much more sensitive partner, showing that there is always a bright side, reassuring their other half that the matter at hand may not be worth stressing about, and encouraging them to put their perfectionism aside and take a bolder, riskier step every now and then. Similarly, the Turbulent individual could bring more organization and goals into the couple's life, with their hard work and success-driven attitude pushing both partners to grow and develop instead of being content with where they are. The presence of the Turbulent trait may also act as a safeguard against decisions whose potential consequences may be underestimated by the Assertive partner, who may not care too much about choosing the best possible option or worry about how their actions may be perceived by others.

### **If both partners are Turbulent**

This combination is likely to be the most tempestuous of all, with both partners leaning towards the emotional and anxious side of the scale. While the couple will probably experience very strong positive emotions, they will be accompanied by negative feelings – and it is in those moments that both partners have to remember to take a couple of deep breaths and refocus their thoughts and emotions. Otherwise there is a risk that they will end up fuelling each other's anxiety, with minor frustrations boiling over and becoming a full-blown crisis. Turbulent individuals are vulnerable to stress and they may need to make a conscious effort to find mutually acceptable ways to fight it and relax instead of stressing each other out even further.

That said, the Turbulent trait can also work in the couple's favor, if both partners are able to recognize and address its accompanying weaknesses. Being reflective and self-conscious, they will likely find time

to think about both the present and the future, readjusting the course as they go instead of blindly trusting themselves. While this may lead to plenty of soul-searching conversations around the dinner table, focusing on all the stressors in their life, the perfectionism and sensitivity shared by Turbulent partners will also encourage them to address those issues and try to find good solutions instead of writing them off as irrelevant and going on with their lives. Nearly any weakness can be turned into a strength, and this is one of such examples.

## *Friendships*

Loyalty. Support. Emotions. These are not what ENTPs look for in their friendships. The last thing people with this personality type want to hear is “you’re right”, not unless they have absolutely earned the distinction in a heated round of intellectual debate. If they’re wrong, ENTPs want to be told so, and they want every detail of the faults in their logic to be laid bare, partly in their quest for (oftentimes arbitrary) truth, and partly just so they have to work to defend that logic with counterpoint and parry.



It’s easy for ENTPs to test compatibility with potential friends – they just need to test “combatability”. Quick-witted, most of their expressions are in the form of arguments and gleefully heated discussions. They can spend an entire evening debating an idea they may not even believe in. The epitome of ENTPs’ friendships is when someone can hold their ground in these arbitrary debates with rational arguments.

None of this is ever taken personally, no matter how heated things get or how striking the discord. Much as an athlete competes for the physical exertion and the spirit of competition itself, ENTPs debate for the sake intellectual stimulation and for the debate itself. Even in overwhelming victory or crushing defeat, it’s never about dominance, only inspiration to try harder next time.

They know how to relax and have fun too, of course. But “fun” to ENTPs – a drink and a discussion about the causes of, and solutions to, the European Debt Crisis – can be described as “an evening from hell” by many Observant and Feeling types. But for the most part, ENTPs are genial and enthusiastic, and pretty much any situation that allows for conversation and a little wordplay is an enjoyable outing.

ENTPs are remarkably good at communicating with friends and acquaintances of other personality types, too. Their tendency to argue as effectively as possible means that ENTPs are accustomed to

communicating in other people's language and frame of reference, and this translates well into normal conversation. Where they do have difficulty relating to others is in emotional expression.

Inclined to suppress their own emotions, when ENTPs are faced with a friend who, figuratively or literally, needs a shoulder to cry on, they have no clue how to handle the situation. They are perfectly happy to offer a series of rational, reasonable solutions to the problem at hand, but they are not known for their sensitivity or outward affection, no matter how intuitively they understand another's position.

Worse is when ENTPs try to turn these emotional situations into something they prefer: a debate. Given how remarkably good ENTPs are at debating both sides of a point, they are remarkably bad at putting themselves in someone else's shoes from an emotional standpoint. They should avoid at all costs the temptation to turn a discussion about the causes of a friend's recent breakup into intellectual fodder.

So long as no one takes things too personally, anyone who isn't afraid to discuss new ideas – and have them shredded into so much confetti – is likely to find stimulating and thought-provoking friends in ENTPs. It's not a compatibility that clicks with everyone, but ENTPs don't really care about being liked by everyone anyways. As long as they get to alternate between being the sounding board and the megaphone, ENTPs and their friends are bound to enjoy each other's company for a long, long time.

Of course, different people offer different experiences. It's a big world out there, and while they may enjoy intellectual discussions more than most, it's because they're so intrigued by different perspectives that check their assumptions and force them to think about things from new angles.

ENTPs are a little different, and an arduous childhood has likely colored certain types badly in their memories. But time crumbles all things, and old hurts should be forgotten. So how does this assertive and, perhaps, slightly arrogant personality type head down the rabbit hole to the world of day-to-day things and experiences? How do they relate to someone who gushes with feelings and sympathy, or who prefers an "unrocked" boat, or who holds firmly traditional perspectives and beliefs?

ENTPs are known for pulling many ideas together into viable arguments. But if they only surround themselves with like-minded individuals, they risk tunnel vision and limited perspective. Diversity is key to the wit ENTPs prize, and we hope that with this guide, ENTPs can strengthen those less-developed

sides and gain understanding as they learn to identify with those who shut down in the face of criticism, or who want to share feelings without analyzing them. We also hope to help ENTPs to develop more meaningful relationships with those friends who already share their own traits and qualities.

## Analyst Friends

Other Analysts are a natural fit for ENTPs, who share their passion for new ideas, riddles, and solutions. The friendship is defined by intellectual curiosity, rather than emotional support, and that's just how they like it. ENTPs enjoy that the friendships are a bit like looking into a mirror, and while this may sound vain, ENTPs are an uncommon type. They may grow accustomed to thinking of most social situations as playing a game on easy, with people yielding and falling over just as they start to press. Encountering another Analyst is likely to be an invigorating breath of fresh air.

That fresh air comes in handy, as these friends are unlikely to run out of things to talk about. From the moment they head out the door, ENTPs' minds buzz with ideas, and few others are able to keep pace. Analysts love bouncing ideas back and forth, and ENTPs gleefully dissect piece by piece the intellectual fodder other Analysts are all too happy to provide. There is even likely to be a spirit of competition as they challenge each other to establish stronger foundations and rationalizations for their thoughts.

These discussions are unlikely to revolve around people, feelings, or immediate plans. Instead, they are more esoteric topics focusing on systems, strategies, and analyses. In fact, ENTPs are unlikely to place much emphasis at all on understanding the origins of a friend's social status or their emotional state – the past shouldn't define the future, and emotions shouldn't dictate an answer. Having Analyst friends lets them pursue that mode of thought more or less uninhibited.

Their reliance on debate can create rifts though. ENTPs' self-esteem is bound to their clever retorts and solutions to problems, and they pursue that satisfaction relentlessly. Some Analysts consider their ideas to be projections of themselves with surprising sentimentality. If analyses morph into criticisms of the person who delivered the idea, INTPs especially can be hurt. ENTJs and INTJs, meanwhile, expect action to be taken when a conclusion is reached – while ENTPs tend to think that arriving at the conclusion was the action, a source of some frustration.

ENTPs do need to work on being more constructive in their arguments (“Here’s what could make that work”) rather than plain critical (“You’re a fool and here’s why”), and to recognize that for many, discussion is only a prelude to action. Analysts may not care about emotional support per se, but ENTPs have a penchant for thoughtlessly brutal honesty. If they go further and use personal critiques as a way of “winning” debates, it can end poorly. Their friends should also make an effort to be a little less sensitive to critique and to accommodate a somewhat more flighty intellect.

When emotionally charged situations do occur, not just between friends but with things like breakups and deaths in the family, ENTPs enjoy having a friend who is able to help them rationalize the situation, or to simply leave them alone about it. This has its drawbacks and can leave important things unsaid, but ENTPs don’t appreciate profuse apologies, pity, and hugs, and this is something they need not worry about from a fellow Analyst.

If they can avoid burnout from their constant debates by picking their battles a little more carefully, ENTPs and Analysts can have tremendously stimulating and productive friendships. However, ideas and actions are two different things, and that productivity depends on the ability of them and their friends to translate intellectual curiosity into a course of action – a perennial challenge for ENTPs.

## Diplomat Friends

Much like Analysts, Diplomat friends are full of fresh ideas to explore. ENTPs love to point out what would work best in terms of dispassionate efficiency, if everyone would just do it their way. Diplomats explore ways to get everyone on the same page, working together for the common good. If these two friends unite their strengths, taking rational ideas and showing how they can create a more idyllic reality, they can be a force to be reckoned with, especially in the workplace. If only it were so easy.

ENTPs’ friendships with Diplomats aren’t as natural as with Analysts. These friendships are a much more delicate bond, and “delicate” isn’t ENTPs’ strength. Both can recognize in each other the ability to see beyond face value, into a deeper, more complex machine, and both want answers. The issue is that Diplomats see this as something cooperative, ESTPs as something competitive, and the Feeling/Thinking conflict is a fundamental difference.



They'll be fascinated by each other's insightful perspectives, but ENTPs' assertiveness can have all but the sturdiest Diplomats heading for calmer seas. ENTPs have little desire to speak in terms of feelings, something Diplomats crave. ENTPs' tendency to play Devil's advocate can come across as inauthentic, and their view of emotions as weak cop-outs is likely to make them appear cold, bitter, or even cynical – a capital offence (to the extent that they believe in such a thing) to idealistic and empathic Diplomats.

Likewise Diplomats' far-reaching altruism may strike ENTPs as unrealistic, even laughable – “You can't honestly believe all that, can you?” ENTPs' thought process is almost designed to bypass the human equation to find the sturdiest points – Diplomats believe that humans are the equation.

All that being said though, most of their conflicts can be avoided if they maintain a heightened perspective. ENTPs can learn that there's more to a discussion than logical correctness – ideas can fit into a genuine moral framework as well. Blended properly, they can make a formidable combination. Diplomats, especially INFPs, can certainly appreciate the clever wordplay ENTPs bring. More sensitive and more principled Diplomats can become stronger people by learning to adapt to more critical environments, and they can all benefit by bolstering their moral arguments with sound logic. ENTP friendships are not for the faint of heart though, and ultimately it may all just be a little much.

## Sentinel Friends

Friendships with Sentinels are defined by a slowly developing appreciation for their mutual differences. ENTPs have significant shortcomings in steadiness and reliability, often forgetting their statements and agreements because, on further consideration, they've just come to disagree with them. Sentinels, governed by tradition and reliability under any circumstances, stick to their projects with grit and determination, seeing them through to the end, no matter what.

ESTJs and ISTJs in particular are results-driven, seeking out what works, and are likely to appreciate the way ENTPs seem to stumble across viable solutions in the middle of some rant or other. But it takes time and mutual experience for these types to develop a good rapport – these are friendships born of circumstance, as coworkers or through a mutual friend, over years. Most likely it happens suddenly. One day things come to a head, they get in a real argument, and then mutual understanding just clicks.



With ISFJs and ESFJs, things are less complementary. Simply put, they don't like to be argued with, and that alone is often a deal-breaker on both sides. Firm, principled, and resolutely in favor of the least disruptive course of action, it's all but impossible for them to handle ENTPs' constant arguments about how everything is wrong and should be changed.

ENTPs can learn a lot from them, if they have the patience. If there's a shortcoming ENTPs are most famous for, it is their flippancy towards others' opinions. Sentinels have an inherent respect for established opinions though, and while that may not always be the most effective attitude, there's certainly value in choosing your battles wisely. There's also something to be said for the level of loyalty these types apply to their social relationships, something ENTPs could certainly stand to work on.

Sentinels can see ENTPs as pointlessly disruptive, even unstable, an intolerable flaw for a group defined by loyalty and dependability. ENTPs can view Sentinels' unwillingness to even back up their opinions with proper explanations as simply baffling. The ENTP – Sentinel friendship can be a very rewarding one if they both recognize and appreciate each other's differences and play off each other's strengths. If they don't, these friendships just burn out.

## Explorer Friends

The ENTP – Explorer friendship is likely to be a lot of fun. Explorers are defined by the moment and its pleasures, are known for being unpredictable, for losing themselves in the here-and-now. This opportunity to simply have fun and be excited is exactly what ENTPs need when they need a break (it happens). Explorer friends help to pull them from their words and out into that big, beautiful world.

Likewise, it certainly does Explorers some good to deliberate a bit over consequences and to be more thorough in their thought processes, and that's the real beauty of this friendship. ENTPs have big, complicated ideas, but it's a struggle to actually put them into action. They need someone in their life who is all about that action, and ISTPs, and ESTPs especially, fit the bill. These friends are likely to be able to meet each other halfway on many, many adventures.

But like Sentinels, Explorers are a group divided. Thinking Explorers, more impartial and emotionally resilient, impress ENTPs with their technical skill and adventurous spirit. They stand up to questions

well enough, because their reasoning is so clean there's hardly a loose thread to pull. It should be noted though, that ISTPs are not at all interested in long conversations that don't result in doing something. Nevertheless, they appreciate ENTPs' fresh ideas, and ENTPs like people who get interesting things done, and there's a lot of that to like.

On the other hand, the Feeling Explorers, ISFP and ESFP, are some of the most sensitive types there are. Their modus operandi is aesthetics and the senses, getting caught up in the moment and experiencing the drama of living life with other people, moving on before the dust even settles – all of it guided by their emotions. When ENTPs get that debate bug, asking “how”, “why”, and “what if”, it breaks the spell, and nothing is more frustrating. Some ENTPs have said that a debate isn't over until someone cries – they're likely to find that they achieve this rather quickly here.

To make things work, ENTPs need to learn to recognize when things are fun for everyone, and when things are fun for just them. They tend to like pushing for reactions, and Explorers are definitely reactive. If they know each other well, and accept each other for who they are, they'll find ways to have a great time – ENTPs enjoy a night on the town as much as anyone – but they must learn to respect their friends' limits and call off the dogs, however light-hearted their intent.

## *Parenthood*

One might think that the blustery and flighty nature of ENTPs would make parenting a particular challenge for them, and in many ways, they'd be right. However, one thing people with the ENTP personality type love more than just about anything is a good challenge, a problem to fix, even if it comes to addressing their own weaknesses. ENTPs take their roles as parents seriously, and they are bound



to be affected profoundly by this development in their lives – if anyone is able to take an outside influence, like their children, and use that influence to address their own faults, they are.

Their distaste for rules and regulations is evident, and they are likely to give their young children the freedom necessary to explore on their own. Independence is one of ENTPs' greatest needs, and they think that no person is complete without an independent mind. This personality type creates relaxed, unorthodox environments for their children, founded on enthusiasm and the joy of discovery through the development of reason – not heavily structured settings designed merely to be safe.

As their children grow and develop, they are encouraged to think independently and voice objections, opinions and alternatives. But unlike Diplomat parents, who encourage their children to express their thoughts in terms of feelings and emotional needs, ENTPs teach their children to approach these options from a position of impartiality and logic, to state what is more effective rather than what would make them feel good. As in other relationships, this emotional inaccessibility is where ENTPs struggle.

As their children grow into adolescence and learn to balance healthy emotional expression against pure logic in their concerns, ENTP parents may find themselves exasperated. While always up for a good debate on just about any subject, they often need their partners' help in managing their children's outbursts of feeling. ENTPs are more permissive than most, but even they have their limits and rules when it comes to vocal conflict.

Luckily, ENTPs recognize what's at stake: they want their children to grow into smart, independent, honest adults. To convey these values, they know that they need, as in any other debate, to communicate in terms that are accessible to all sides. If that means learning how to use the tools of emotional expression and appeals, and in so doing becoming more emotionally expressive in real, personal terms as well, so be it.

Of course parenting isn't so simple that it can be summed up in a few paragraphs. There's no such thing as a default "child" as far as personality is concerned – they are separate, growing, and whole individuals, with their own wants and needs, and their own personality types to guide the kinds of information and interactions that are most valuable to them.

ENTPs, by the time they become parents, have had years to sort out what works for them. They prize self-determination and logical discourse above just about all else. They value (or require) intelligence and emotional resilience in others. They believe that the logical solution is the right one, and often have trouble distinguishing between lending another perspective when it's called for, and opening up each and every decision to debate – even when their children are full-grown adults.

If they by chance end up raising a child who shares the Analyst type group, they have a head start in sharing these values with their children. But what happens when their children are from other, less compatible type groups? What happens if their children don't enjoy dissecting ideas, or healthy debate? What happens if their children are change-averse and strongly emotional, behaving in ways that seem utterly irrational (but are in fact perfectly natural)?

ENTPs' strengths lie in intellectual expressions, not practicality or emotion. They focus on encouraging development of the rational mind, and sideline sensitivity as a weakness. We hope that with these suggestions, ENTPs can strengthen that less-developed side of theirs and learn to adapt to children who shut down in the face of criticism, or who actually crave structure and time alone to contemplate. We also hope to help ENTP parents to develop more meaningful relationships with those children who share their own traits and qualities.

## Analyst Children

The benefits of ENTPs' having Analyst children are pretty easy to see. Because they share the Intuitive trait, they take in, or rather infer and create, information in much the same way. Because they share the Thinking trait, they also make decisions based on that information in much the same way. This makes communication between ENTP parents and their Analyst children much more straightforward.

It also means that they enjoy many of the same activities, such as debate and analysis. ENTPs are dynamic and idea-driven, not steady and hands-on. It can be quite a relief to know that their children, especially fellow ENTPs, would rather talk about plans for the future or head to a technology convention than to dig in the garden or paint quietly. INTP and INTJ children challenge their parents' need for more social interaction, but at least with activities that both find genuinely interesting.

However, the drawbacks are the same as in any relationship with poor diversity. Without differing perspectives, no one is encouraged to develop their weaknesses to become better-rounded individuals. ENTPs expect growth, but they focus on the things they value: intelligence and clearly communicated ideas. Emotional expression, appreciation for beauty, and day-to-day practical skill all suffer. Explaining the consequences of intellectual laziness is easy enough, but explaining how to relate to a friend who is upset, or simply making sure the dishes are cleaned each night, is another matter.

Taking time to smell the roses and practical lessons aside, mental and emotional health is probably the most vital consideration. Analyst children struggle to understand their own emotional needs, and ENTPs have poorly developed tools for encouraging such healthy expressions. This makes things easier in the short term, but if their children grow up emotionally stunted, even the best case scenario is that they just don't know how to relax and have fun. The worst case scenario is that they grow to be insensitive, uncompromising individuals who dominate those around them, as ENTPs themselves can sometimes be.

It sometimes makes sense to do what's efficient over what's more fun, or to do what's necessary, even if it hurts someone's feelings. But when these behaviors become an ingrained habit, they breed unhappiness and dissatisfaction in ways that can ruin those relationships that are most rewarding. It's

important for ENTP parents to realize the importance of their own emotional needs, and to ensure that their children, no matter how stoic or logical they appear to be, realize theirs.

## Diplomat Children

ENTPs share much common ground with their Diplomat children. Both are imaginative and inspired by the many intricate connections between ideas and people. They enjoy creative games and long discussions about what can be done with the connections they see, but are clumsy and neglectful with day-to-day practical tasks. They also have a way of meeting each other halfway between what is effective and what is just, appreciating principles like honesty, integrity, and fairness, which need be explained only once.

But ENTPs can be stunningly insensitive in their communication – if there are euphemisms, they are used sarcastically, not to let others down easy. They need to understand that when they say, in so many words, that they're disappointed because their children lied, that it's not seen by Diplomats as just a logical assessment of what works and what doesn't. The Diplomat mind sees it much more deeply, as a far-reaching breach in the bond of trust they share, realized too late.

Diplomats are sensitive, and when criticisms come from loved ones, especially with the gravity of a parent, it can be a staggering blow. They are imaginative, easily reading into emotions and extrapolating interpretations – if their parents aren't careful, especially with more Turbulent children, a single remark can create a sense of lasting failure, not just in one action, but as a person. Making a habit of such remarks, as ENTPs can sometimes do, can damage these relationships permanently.

ENTP parents must take exceptional care, especially with criticisms, to also express love. Even with more benign advice, they need to understand that not every problem demands a list of possible solutions. When their children go through a breakup, it is not helpful to point out the underlying pattern of behavior that leads to these problems, nor is it helpful to debate how things must look from the perspective of the other person. Sometimes, things just need to hurt for a while, whatever the cause, and Diplomat children need warmth and sensitivity, not an assessment.

Luckily for everyone involved, Judging Diplomats can usually make their needs known clearly enough, and Prospecting types are tolerant and understanding individuals. ENTPs who've made at least some effort at self-awareness can learn to curb their combative tendencies in favor of a more sensitive approach to get the best results. Both types have a powerful desire to learn and improve, and both have much to teach each other, making this relationship one of the most rewarding.

## Sentinel Children

As parents, regardless of what personality type their children may be, ENTPs have a clear expectation that their children grow up to be rational, independent, successful people. Sentinel children are usually eager to meet expectations, creating a bit of a paradox – they achieve that independence through obedience and respect. Sentinels strive to live up to the standards of their role models, and there's no one more natural to imitate than their own parents.

In the early years, this model works well. ENTPs are happy to suggest stimulating activities like day camps and library story times, and their children, especially ESTJs and ESFJs, appreciate that such activities are available, and that their parents enjoy their enjoyment. As they grow and activities become more intensive though, ENTPs begin to err by pushing for an ever-more-broad range of experiences, while their children, especially ISTJs and ISFJs, try to focus on a few important things and people.

Sentinels, especially Feeling types, try to keep up with what they think their parents want, rather than what they personally enjoy (or can handle). Whether clubs or college majors, the question is always "What will Mom and Dad think?" ENTPs' favorite pastimes, and their quantity, are hard for Sentinels to keep pace with. They can collapse under the pressure, wrecking their self-esteem. It's important for ENTPs to let their children stabilize around a chosen activity, rather than question each decision and create self-doubt.

ENTPs are perfectly capable of this – their skill with helping to identify the most effective routes and then backing off so the details can be managed is well-suited to Sentinels' approach of goal-oriented focus and achievement. The problem for ENTPs, much like their children's own struggle, is that what Sentinels enjoy, especially the Introverts, are often ENTPs' weaknesses. Keeping their heads down with

quiet, practical activities just isn't how ENTPs operate, and they struggle to see such things as the right path forward.

Sentinels need day-to-day reliability, clear direction, and steady authority, so ENTPs have their work cut out. They need to exercise emotional sensitivity when it's called for, and learn to communicate supportively on one practical task at a time, keeping their counterpoints and ideas for the next project to themselves. Their children, however much they look up to their parents, also serve as role models themselves. ENTPs have a lot to learn from their children's strength of character, focus, and ability to organize and coordinate things and people in very practical ways – and who can argue with the results?

## Explorer Children

If there's one thing ENTPs enjoy, it's breaking up the old crust with new ideas. Lucky for them, Explorers share this passion for disruption, though their approach is far more tangible. Explorers strive for mastery and personal skill, with tools and activities for ISTPs and ESTPs and beauty and people for ISFPs and ESFPs, even at a young age.

ENTPs have no trouble brainstorming new things and ideas for their young children to explore, and love helping them discover everything such activities have to offer. It usually doesn't take long to get a feel for what they're passionate about either – when something strikes a chord, they can hardly be pulled away. Understanding why it is that their children have an interest in fashionable clothes or jumping off of roofs is another matter.

As they get older, Explorers appreciate a sense of independence and really don't require, or want, their parents to keep offering up ways to stave off boredom, which ENTPs can struggle with. Discussion, debate, and considering alternate methods in advance – ENTPs' primary means of discovery – are the lowest consideration of Explorers, who just want to do. They are very creative individuals, and highly independent, and as likely as not to simply ignore their parents' constructive suggestions in favor of coloring the walls with another impromptu expressionist mural.

Explorers are so spontaneous and their interests so fleeting that even ENTPs have trouble keeping up. Yesterday's enjoyment is no guarantee of today's, and waiting from one day to the next can spoil things



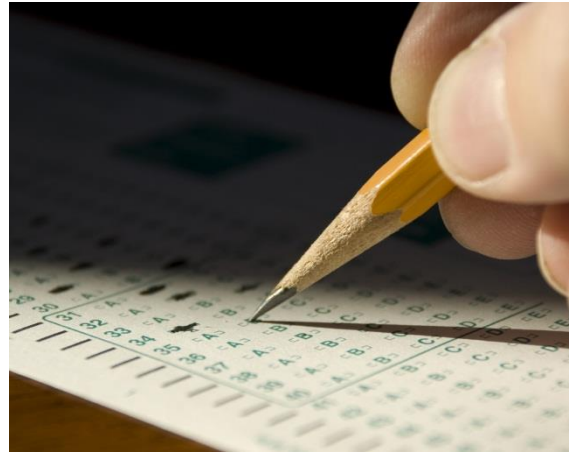
entirely. This “I want it now” attitude works well enough with the freely available thoughts and discussions that ENTPs enjoy, but can be frustrating for parents who see little value in accumulating physical things, what they see as petty, shiny novelties. If Explorers’ demands meet too many brusque counter-arguments, especially towards more sensitive Feeling types, things can fall apart quickly.

This combination of potential sensitivity and acting without thinking about the long-term consequences is by far the biggest frustration for ENTP parents. Explorers’ impulsive self-indulgence and strong distaste for restrictions, even in the form of a reasonable debate, makes discussing the best path forward extremely difficult.

At the same time though, Explorers hardly want for passion. ENTPs’ constant stream of ideas can help them to find focus, not by harping on a single objective, but by providing so many potentially good options to pursue that their children are bound to take an interest in at least one. Which ideas are taken and which are left behind hardly matters to ENTPs, as they still have the end result that they keep their children just out of trouble, and otherwise able to leave their mark in their own unique way.

## *Academic Path*

Some people spend nearly one third of their lives studying. Some choose to enter the workforce earlier and don't spend as much time in classes or libraries. Regardless, most people spend at least some of their important formative years in school. No matter how long you remain in the academic world, your time there is important. These years not only could set one on a specific career path, but the school experience can also affect self-esteem and other aspects of psychology well into the future – in both positive and negative ways.



Knowing the challenges an ENTP faces in the academic world can go a long way in helping them make the best use of their time and experience. To help ENTPs get positive results from any academic path they follow, let's explore some guidelines based on their traits.

## How ENTPs Learn

Young ENTPs may respond to questions with the first thought that pops into their heads. It's not that they are sure of their answer. They tend to brainstorm out loud. They will update this impression later as they sort out the information a little more thoroughly, but it can be off-putting to others. Too quick of a response can be trying for a teacher interested in teaching students analytical skills in a methodical progression. However, that's all external. Inside ENTPs will not be so quickly satisfied until they have turned the material over and over in their minds, subjected it to their intuition, and corroborated it with evidence. Unlike their initial quick response, this can take a while.

Sometimes when ENTPs talk about their thoughts, the details can seem random and disjointed to the casual listener. Given time, ENTPs will eventually come to a coherent conclusion – or six. ENTPs may end with several answers to the same question from an onslaught of varied ideas. While not having a singular conclusion may be frustrating for some, it speaks to ENTPs' open-mindedness and the ability to approach a problem from many different angles. The educational programs would do well to try to

harness this creativity. Instead, it can try the patience of teachers and peers, and even leave ENTPs feeling a little uncomfortable when someone forces them to draw a single conclusion. With so many choices, how do you know which one is the best? Self-doubt can trouble ENTPs in the classroom, especially in college, because of this. From the ENTP perspective, this difficulty comes from their deep need to get it right.

ENTPs love ideas and are quick to grasp the possibilities within an idea. They like assignments and goals to be clearly defined and measurable when they learn. They love working as part of team, and they will usually end up being the leaders during such endeavors. They are true collaborators. In fact, they dislike any solitary work like reading and writing.

ENTPs will approach learning with gusto if they suspect the next most profound idea is hiding somewhere in the curriculum. They are kind of intellectual thrill-chasers. Teachers love their sometimes bold and original thinking. Boredom comes quickly to ENTPs. They ask searching questions in an attempt to avoid being bored. Avoiding boredom is one of their chief classroom activities.

For ENTPs to learn according to their full potential, the teacher, the topic and the classroom methods need to free them to run around in their mental playgrounds. This is not to say that they don't like a strong framework and need a sense of clear purpose. However, once the direction is set, they need to be allowed to figure out how to get to goal their own way. Trying to pin them down and restrict the way they organize their thoughts is counterproductive. Their imaginations and creativity need room to explore.

ENTPs love a problem that needs solving. Many have said that Analysts see the world as a big chessboard, and their only goal is to become chess masters. For ENTPs, the operative word is "master" as they try to control as much as they can around them. They like rules and frameworks that hold things in place. They like to plan and prefer a clear idea of where they are going when they sit down to learn something. ENTPs are not quite as interested in purely intellectual pursuits as much as other Analysts. They need to connect to something that they can use. Instructors appeal to ENTPs when they couch their lesson in the context of goals and challenges.

## ENTPs in High School

**In the classroom:** ENTPs, especially Turbulent ones, can be quite perfectionistic and will do whatever it takes to embrace high standards – which are usually of their own creation rather than from external demands. They will dedicate a great amount of time and effort to solve a complex problem or unravel a mystery. As far as earning good grades, this comes naturally to ENTPs – although they may falter if the goals and purpose of a curriculum seem too vague or trivial. But even when they falter, with their intelligence and their raw drive, they will, nonetheless, pull through and receive good grades even in those subjects. Their curiosity will put them well above the ordinary student when it comes to the energy they apply to studying.

Developmentally speaking, conceptualization - seeing beyond the concrete - will still be a novel tool for ENTPs entering high school. Like a new toy, abstract thoughts will feel invigorating to young ENTPs. They will begin to enjoy a fuller experience as their intuition blossoms even more during their adolescence and early adulthood.

ENTPs have broader interests than other Analysts. When they choose their courses, science, technology and possibly the arts will attract ENTPs. However, this type is likely to find grist for their intellectual mill almost anywhere. Their attraction to a course will be based on the challenges, the novelty, and the ability to interact with other. Still the most puzzles will be in the sciences courses and there will be a definite pull in that direction for ENTPs.

ENTPs may need to take care not to show impatience with their classmates who will generally take longer to learn what ENTPs will see immediately. But their peers may not be able to keep up and ENTPs may become impatient. This can cause friction and tension in a group setting in the classroom. As with most Analysts, the feelings of others, while they may be important enough, will not take precedent over meeting a goal or accomplishing a task. ENTPs may need to develop empathy or at least adopt behaviors that suggest empathy in order not to be offensive. ENTPs can be quite social, but they tend to connect with peers on an intellectual basis rather than an emotional one.

ENTPs may not apply much work to certain subjects when they see how easily things come to them. They may take it for granted that they will do well and not put as much effort into acing tests and papers

especially if the subject doesn't excite them. ENTPs will not necessarily see this neglect as "being lazy" or not attending to their work. They would have a lot of trouble dealing with such a self-concept anyway. But the bigger picture always takes priority and the need for a clear, relevant reason will always be more important than work that feels routine, unfocused or not challenging.

**Outside the classroom:** If you've been to high school, you don't have to watch a single one of the thousands of films about teenage angst to know that there's more to high school than just classes. Most would agree that there are as many lessons in a school's yards and hallways as there are in the classroom. So, let's take a moment to consider high school as a place where some important social lessons unfold.



ENTP high school students will attract friends and do well socially. Other students will gravitate toward them because they appear as though they know what they're doing. During high school, when confidence may not be at its highest among young students, this aura of competency can be attractive and add to an ENTP's charisma.

ENTPs feel more comfortable in academic, science or technical extracurricular groups. Any group that highlights brainpower and leadership skills will attract ENTPs. Student government, drama club, the debate team... anything that challenges them and presents an interesting mental exercise would be something they might join. ENTPs, with their combination of strong will and social skills, will be natural student leaders regardless of the activity. They often run for student government and will probably keep their influence in a lion share of the student life in high school. This will feed their sense of purpose and their need for control. Sometimes they may even push their young peers too hard when they are in a leadership role or simply as part of a team.

## Work or College?

While there are many other reasons for deciding whether to go college than personality types, they can have a role in the equation. Not long ago, most thought of college or university as the quickest path to success and security. Now some of the same people are vigorously arguing against higher education for everyone having seen college dropouts succeed on a grand scale in our technological age. Steve Jobs and Bill Gates are the two most famous examples. College is just one possible path to discovering one's niche. So, what might the ENTP consider when thinking about college?

Two questions that ENTPs should ask when deciding whether to hit the books or enter the workforce:

- *Will a degree be necessary in the work you want to aim for?* Considering their interests, ENTPs may want to earn credentials whether in the form of a license or a degree. Being a scientist, economist, political scientist, lawyer, professor or academic researcher obviously needs some training. The careers they choose often need a diploma.
- *Will you be able to gain something intangible and yet valuable from going to college?* For many there is more to a higher education than just getting a job. It's a life passage and opportunity to grow and take steps toward becoming an independent young adult. There is wide opportunity at college to explore the systems, theories and models that ENTPs are so fond of. The guidance and the dedicated time available at college can be helpful for young Analysts who are discovering their places in the world.

## When ENTPs go to College

ENTPs who choose to go to a college or university will feel at home almost immediately. No matter what high school experience they had, ENTPs have a real opportunity to shine when they go to college. And unlike most high schools, the right colleges can give ENTPs a larger opportunity to free and exercise their powerful and creative intellects. There are also plenty of opportunities to flex their leadership muscles as well.

College is a time for ENTPs to begin to consider and exploit their strengths and talents in a real way. They may find kindred spirits who they can play off in the classroom and in study groups. They may

even become dismayed when they find similar personality types in the room at the same time. Other Analysts may come to the same place for the same reason, unlike high school where students are primarily assigned to schools according to their address. Suddenly, the ENTPs may not be the only Analyst in the pond, nor the smartest kid in class. This could create some resentment and a competitive environment that could be new territory for ENTPs. Other Analysts may compete for the same leadership positions.

ENTPs must choose their subjects carefully or suffer from misery until they rectify the situation. Subjects that might attract ENTPs in college include: science (any kind), technology (any kind), economics, political science, law, business analysis, education, and anthropology just to name a handful. ENTPs will do well with anything they try and will have a broad enough interest in anything that challenges them and feels novel. However, a major that demands they arrange complex and tangled facts into something that makes sense will appeal most to them.

One area of difficulty for ENTPs in colleges is the need to go to those courses none of us want to – the foundational, prerequisite courses. ENTPs are especially prone to become bored easily and fundamental courses that feel arbitrary and routine can be torture for this type. Most ENTPs will “test out” of these, making them unnecessary. And they probably make their lives easier by doing so if they have the opportunity. However, into every college career a little mundane must fall. Some needed courses will be too elementary for ENTPs and lack the challenge they need. They may find them dull – or worse – irrelevant. However, learning to cope with this may also be a good disciplinary practice for ENTPs and other Analysts. It won’t be the last time they run into necessary tasks that feel meaningless and boring. While they would rather spend their time in their intellectual ivory towers, in the real productive world, the mundane constantly invades our lives. College can help the aware ENTP gain a degree of tolerance for such details and prepare them to approach the adult world in a more practical manner.

Like most young people, the ENTP will delight in the social autonomy that going away to college offers. For most students, this is the first significant taste of life apart from their families and their families’ rules. Some even choose their universities based on its distance from the family home. It’s no different for the



ENTPs who are as interested in coming into their own. However, the hard-core “party life” will probably hold little attraction for ENTPs. ENTPs take life too seriously to consider that lifestyle as viable.

However, they may take an excursion into the party life if stress from their hard work and their perfectionism becomes overwhelming. ENTPs, especially Turbulent ones, can be perfectionists and that causes them to be hard on themselves. If they start creating too much pressure in their lives, they may react by going in the opposite direction of their normally hardworking selves. Parties, alcohol, drugs and casual sex are not out of the question with such a reaction. However, a party will be a strange and untamed place for them. Initially, this may even excite ENTP’s search for novelty, but in a short time, it will become obvious that it’s all too superficial and meaningless for them. More likely than not, such adventures will be no more than short-lived phases for the ENTP.

## *Career and Professional Development*

Let us begin with one of the most prominent personality traits shared by all ENTPs – their love for theoretical methods and ideas. Best ENTP careers turn this unique trait into a major strength, as very few other personality types enjoy theories as much as ENTPs do. For this particular reason, ENTPs are excellent career scientists (especially in highly theoretical fields such as physics or chemistry), mathematicians, technical writers or system analysts. ENTPs thrive in fields where they can combine their imagination, social aptitude, open-mindedness and



strategic thinking skills. They are usually fascinated by research, pattern-seeking, hypotheses, possibilities and options. More often than not, ENTPs also have many grand dreams and ambitions, which drive and inspire them throughout their careers.

Next, ENTPs enjoy finding and analyzing underlying principles and ideas. Many typical career paths allow ENTPs to utilize this trait – and if it comes with seemingly impossible challenges or unusual practical applications, that is likely to make the ENTP really happy. For instance, ENTPs can be great corporate strategists, business analysts, video game designers, programmers or engineers (this career is particularly suitable for ENTPs due to their love for theory). Regardless of the area they are working in, ENTPs are system designers at heart. Nothing fascinates them more than engineering models, be they physical or intellectual – ENTPs see the environment as something that can be shaped and modeled according to their ideas. People with this personality type are highly analytical, focused and intelligent, able to surpass many other personality types in terms of organizational skills and precise thinking. ENTPs are often called Inventors for a reason – their ingenuity, confidence and reasoning skills give them a distinct advantage over other personality types when it comes to intellectual pursuits.

ENTPs also enjoy difficult challenges and strongly detest routine, doing whatever they can to avoid or automate mind-numbing tasks. It is difficult to imagine an ENTP willingly choosing a strictly administrative or teamwork-focused role.

ENTPs tend to be very independent (even somewhat eccentric), hold themselves to very high standards and generally dislike managing other people or being managed, especially later in their career. These traits are rarely seen as attractive in modern corporate world and ENTPs should avoid mentioning them in a job interview – however, if their manager proves to be insightful and open-minded enough, the ENTP will be a never tiring generator of brilliant and unique ideas. Some of the best ENTP careers making good use of these traits may focus on legal, freelance consulting or forensic or laboratory research routes.

Unfortunately, despite being versatile and highly intelligent, ENTPs are likely to face many difficulties in their careers if they choose the wrong path. People with this personality type are rare and their somewhat eccentric nature does not help either – consequently, they usually have difficulties finding inspiring role models or getting good advice when it comes to career planning. Jobs that are perfectly suitable for 80%+ of the population would likely frustrate and exhaust most ENTPs very quickly. So, how do you choose the right path?

## Getting on the Career Ladder

The best thing about being an ENTP is that people with this personality type tend to be extremely versatile and have excellent people skills. Jacks-of-all-trades, geeks, nitpickers, walking encyclopedias – ENTPs would have heard these compliments many times throughout their lives. Actually, most other personality types would not even see these sayings as compliments to begin with. Like other Analysts, ENTPs are unstoppable when they get a chance to combine their knowledge with their imagination – but getting such an opportunity can be a challenge.

Whatever their hobbies or aspirations, ENTPs do best in technological and scientific fields. It does not really matter whether a particular ENTP wants or is able to get into a purely technological field – sometimes their chosen profession has no direct links with technology. What matters is the ENTP's

ability to exploit and utilize the available technological and scientific tools in a way that not only excites imagination and gives them a chance to apply their knowledge, but also increases the efficiency of the entire system.

ENTPs should embrace these strengths in the job-hunting stage as well. People with this personality type are likely to do quite well when it comes to networking and socializing – often the primary means of getting the first job. This is not by any means mandatory and many ENTPs will do just fine without an extensive social network – however, such connections are definitely helpful. People with this personality type should do their best to get involved in as many projects as they can while they are still studying – this will give them plenty of opportunities to showcase their skills and potentially secure the support of fellow students and supervisors, which is likely to prove to be crucial when it comes to finding the first job. Furthermore, leadership skills are highly sought after and it is always useful to have some leadership experience under your belt, regardless of the scope and nature of the previous projects.

The good news is that Analysts know how to plan and ENTPs with their organizational skills are quite well positioned in this respect. And this is what they should focus on – thinking about what they want to achieve in life and then working backwards, developing several possible action plans. Finding out what the first steps could be, mapping out the potential channels, crafting the introductory e-mail and presenting the arguments – these things come naturally to ENTPs and they should not hesitate to focus on such strengths. Not many people have the willpower or imagination necessary to come up with a highly targeted approach – however, one good e-mail sent to the right person is often much better than 100+ random applications. That being said, ENTPs often find it quite difficult to remain focused when the task at hand is relatively mundane – people with this personality type need to make conscious efforts to find time for designing their approach.

Of course, you need to be able to present your skills in the right way in order to distinguish yourself among other candidates. As an ENTP, you probably find many things interesting, maybe even seeing them as hobbies. Utilize this – think about what hobbies could be attractive in a specific field and then find a way to turn those ideas into real-life projects. There are plenty of opportunities out there – you can participate in competitions or volunteer projects, build an online presence (e.g. a small blog), write a

couple of articles and try to get them published in the print media etc. It does not really matter what you do, as long as it is something you can put on your CV – not only this will make you a more attractive and versatile candidate, but will also give you a lot of breathing space in the interview. Answering a question like “describe the situation where you used your problem-solving skills” is much, much easier when you have got 5+ projects listed on your CV. Be imaginative – your skills are not worth much if you are the only person who knows about them.

You may also need to brush up your presentation skills. If you have an interview coming up, great – but do not make a mistake of thinking that your technical knowledge and enthusiasm will put you above everybody else. No matter how cliché that sounds, you need to be aware of the most common interview techniques and questions so that you are not caught off-guard by something like “what is your biggest weakness?” – answering “perfectionism” or “I work too hard” is not going to result in bonus points, quite the contrary. Try to highlight your achievements and knowledge, but also be prepared to get many template questions, especially in early stages. In some cases, the recruiter will not know much about the role and will simply be going through a checklist – expect that and do not let your confidence cloud your judgment when it comes to preparation. ENTPs tend to be very good candidates and their sheer self-confidence alone often puts them head and shoulders above the rest of the candidates, but there may be times when they will find it difficult to get that message across and may consequently lose out to less qualified but better prepared candidates.

Thanks to their intellect and imagination, ENTPs rarely have major difficulties when it comes to landing their first job. However, it is also important to always keep everything in perspective. People with this personality type often say that they studied hard in school, with their eyes fixed on getting a position in a specific field – but then regretted missing a chance to develop personal relationships that could have helped them a lot during their school years. Having a social support network, no matter how small, would be of great help in many difficult situations.

You should also never forget to listen to yourself, especially when deciding what would be a good career choice. ENTPs are good at self-reflection, but this trait is often clouded by other factors, such as outside influences and financial rewards. In the end, you are the only one who knows what is going to make you

truly happy. This does not mean that you should have unrealistic expectations at the start of your career – entry-level jobs are rarely interesting or satisfying – but it is your responsibility to find the right career path. Do not choose a profession just because it pays well or is seen as prestigious. Other personality types may get away with it, but as an ENTP, you will always know that you are in the wrong place and that feeling will not be quelled by materialistic or social arguments.

## Professional Development

Let us take a look at what makes ENTPs good at what they are doing, and then move on to discussing what traits are behind most of their problems.

ENTPs often say that the best thing about their job, whatever it may be, is using creativity to find and solve problems related to various systemic issues. In other words, people with this personality type tend to be less interested in why entry #319 in the accounting journal contains incorrect information; they ask why the system is not good enough to pick this up automatically. ENTPs are the ultimate inventors and organizers, and this is not some kind of a feel-good overstatement. Some personality types (Diplomats) are great at being empathic, which wins them many friends in the workplace. Others (Explorers) excel at living in the present moment, being unbeatable in rapidly changing situations. And some (Sentinels) are bastions of stability and care, putting authority and rules above everything else – the safe keepers of balance books and procedure documents. However, none of these types come close to Analysts, and ENTPs in particular, when it becomes necessary to devise a system, to bring many moving parts together, and manage the giant chessboard of opportunities, threats and goals. ENTPs' abstract and rational thinking skills are unmatched in those situations. Your mind is both your greatest gift and your greatest curse – if the environment is right, you will quickly be noticed and appreciated; if it is not, you will get frustrated by all the inefficiencies that you would like to fix and all the problems that you would like to solve. ENTPs tend to have many transferable skills, so do not be hesitant to promote them and look for greener pastures if a specific role is not a good match for you and it is not a life-or-death situation (it rarely is).

ENTPs are also good at absorbing new knowledge, especially of technical nature. You are probably already aware of this particular trait, as it becomes clearly visible at school, especially in the later years.

Try to use every opportunity you get to learn and experiment with something new, if possible. For instance, many organizations offer various training programs or subscriptions to professional magazines – there is always something else that you can learn. Use that mind of yours the best you can – even if a particular piece of information does not offer any immediate benefits, it is very likely it will prove useful at some point. You never know when someone will come in and ask if there is a person in the office who has an idea how a certain computer program works or how they should approach a specific project. Life is full of opportunities and ENTPs have a major advantage over other personality types when it comes to retaining and categorizing knowledge in their memory. Remember that regardless of what you are doing, you are constantly gaining experience and perspective – and that knowledge is not going to disappear.

Tangentially, it is also worth mentioning that this particular strength can be very useful when it comes to educational qualifications. Regardless of whether you are employed or not at a given time, you may want to consider exploring fields and subjects loosely connected to your main specialization. There are plenty of areas that reward ENTPs' strategic thinking and ability to design and work with systems, whatever they may be – keeping your eyes open can sometimes yield great results. Few ENTPs can say that they are always satisfied with their roles, so if you are not among the lucky few, trying out a new subject can easily open new horizons and boost your self-confidence as well. You do not necessarily have to get formal qualifications – nowadays, studying independently is easier than ever. Your mind will always be hungry for new knowledge, so why not keep it occupied with meaningful studies as opposed to something that has no lasting value.

If you have an opportunity, you should also try finding a hobby that you could potentially turn into a source of income later on – this approach is quite common among ENTPs, especially those in well-paid but not very intellectually challenging positions. The actual earnings do not really matter that much in the beginning – what matters is the chance to do something that truly excites and inspires you, without the constraints of the employer-employee relationship. If you create value – and it is hard not to, if you are truly enjoying what you are doing – other people will quickly notice it and reward you accordingly. This would also tick another very important checkbox in the ENTP's happiness checklist – the desire for independence. It could be anything – a website about your favorite computer game, a local neighborhood



initiative, a small consulting company etc. Some ENTPs want to change the world in some way; others focus on local or personal matters. The main principle is that you should try to do what you truly enjoy, while retaining the safety net of the regular employment – and who knows, maybe your idea will be the next “big thing”. If you are also in a position where you can divert some financial resources to your hobby, then all the better. ENTPs tend to be bold and insightful entrepreneurs, as well as excellent strategists, so you should not have any difficulties managing this parallel “career”.

Remember when we mentioned that your mind is both a gift and a curse at the same time? Here is another thing to consider, building upon the ideas discussed in the previous paragraph – you are bound to overthink things and get bogged down on trying to determine which path is best for you. Try to find time to think and reflect, but do not obsess over details – ironically, ENTPs are usually at their best when they are truly relaxed and confident in their skills. If there is one thing you take away from this section, let it be this – it does not really matter which path you are going to take, if there is something about it that you know will keep you going. That path will always be the right one. As an ENTP, you are highly likely to be more knowledgeable and resourceful than the majority of the population – you will be fine. Even if you do not know something, your Intuitive trait will allow you to improvise and your Thinking trait will keep you on the rational path. Think about what you truly are and what you want to achieve in life – and be confident that your skills and knowledge will take you far. Consider self-employment as an example – there are many failed businessmen, but try asking any one of them if they have ever regretted trying. You will be surprised.

In all likelihood, you will only be satisfied with your career path if you feel confident that it gives you enough intellectual stimulation. ENTPs are relatively relaxed when it comes to setting goals for themselves, but their thirst for knowledge, regardless of its nature, is unquenchable. Consequently, following a career path that is not really challenging or interesting for you is likely to make you restless and frustrated. Unlike some other personality types, ENTPs never actually satisfy their curiosity, always looking for new puzzles and refusing to accept unsatisfying answers. Ultimately, everything depends on how flexible your chosen organization is – there are few career paths that are unsuitable for ENTPs, but there are plenty of roles that your primary skills will be underutilized. So explore, learn and try to find a way to use your strategic thinking skills in that specific field – and do not ever think that the gnawing

feeling that you are in the wrong place will pass, if all rational arguments point to the fact that a particular role is unsuitable for you. Neither money nor stability will satisfy you in such a case. ENTPs aspire to be wizards – of science, of technology, of nature – seeking to understand and control the unknown and the mysterious. Stability, sensuality or empathy are not their domains.

There are two more things worth mentioning in this section. The first is that ENTPs do not fare well in situations where they need to do unfamiliar work under time pressures. People with this personality type are spontaneous, decisive and able to keep a cool head in critical situations, but they feel far more comfortable when they have enough time to assess the situation and make an informed decision. ENTPs have an excellent set of coping skills lurking beneath the surface, but being in the “emergency mode” can exhaust them very quickly. Unlike Explorers, Analysts in general are more suited to be planners than frontline executors.

## Communication between Types

It’s useful to have something in common when you begin to talk with someone. It can make the rest of the conversation much more productive if you start with a resounding “yes” rather than stubborn “no”. This section will cover four possible pairings of type groups, including brief overviews of potential synergies and obstacles, as well as some tips that may help you navigate these tricky waters.



### *Analysts – Analysts*

#### *COMMON GROUND*

Obviously, two Analysts will find themselves “speaking the same language”. They will both make rational arguments and remain in the theoretical. While facts must play a role when they talk to each other, those will be secondary to the larger ideas.

As puzzle-solvers, Analysts will likely explore systems and concepts, engaging in “what if” discussions with each other. They will share their tendency to improve any system or enterprise they come across. Two with the Analyst’s perspective can be a perfect match for bouncing ideas off each other or brainstorming. Two original thinkers, in collaboration and when they agree, can be a powerful thing. More than likely, brainstorming among Analysts will be a series of discussions over a long period of time as each will want time to ponder the different facets of an idea.

If they also share the Turbulent trait, both parties will value perfectionism and will insist on it with each other. While this can seem demanding to many, two Analysts will agree that excellence is a worthy goal. (However, they may not agree on how to define “perfect”.)

Two Analysts might quickly agree when there are any inconsistencies in a business or venture. They are both likely to notice the flaws of either a company or its leadership and may form a casual alliance around such matters. While Analysts are impatient with others who make emotional or ideological arguments, this is much less likely to happen between two Analysts. They will share the same contempt for “soft” rationalizations.

Conversations between the two will probably be lofty as small talk would interest neither of them. In fact, they may find each other a relief from the tedium they experience at the water cooler with other types. They will both show an interest in work that has a strong purpose and relevance and are prone to be visionaries. Analysts are likely to connect on this level.

#### *POTENTIAL PROBLEMS*

One of the biggest potential problems you may find when you have two Analysts communicating may be competition. Analysts are rare enough that they may not be used to another Analyst in the room, especially one that shares their specific interest. In high school, they were likely unique in their classrooms. University was a shock when they found themselves with other like-minded Analysts. When they enter a career, the competition with any other Analysts could be full on, especially for those drawn to leadership positions. While not prone to drama in an emotional sense, they are stubborn enough to cause workplace turmoil nonetheless. Competition could lead to demanding one’s way.

Analysts are open-minded and easily accept ideas from others as long as they feel those expressing the ideas are competent. However, should they sense incompetence, they can be harsh in their assessment of, not only an idea, but also the person sharing the idea. They often show scorn when people make mistakes or display flawed logic. Analyst character Sheldon Cooper from “The Big Bang Theory” is an often mentioned archetype for this attitude. And just like his Analyst friends on the program are not immune to his judgmental inclinations, neither are other Analysts in the workplace immune to similar harsh criticism. If they miss a beat, their fellow Analysts will call them on it and perhaps not in the most pleasant manner. While maybe not a dominant feature, Analysts have feelings as well.

Two Analysts can also find themselves in a quagmire of genius if they produce too many great ideas while brainstorming together. They may become trapped in their own cleverness. At some point, they may need to pull in a Sentinel or an Explorer to start weeding out what they can carry out and to harness the brainstorming frenzy. (Mentors have taught writers for years to “Murder their darlings” meaning get rid of the lines and ideas that are favorites but don’t lend to the story. Analysts, at times, may need to kill their darling ideas for the practical good of a business.) Analysts can be stubborn if they sell themselves on their own concepts. Two or more together may be nearly unmovable.

#### *TIPS FOR COMMUNICATING*

- You can be comfortable asking the “why” questions and sharing your own observations with another Analyst.
- Give other Analysts space to process material on their own. Don’t be quick to insist on a conclusion to material the other Analyst has not had time to mull over.
- Be aware of any competitive urges that may get in the way of honest and full communication.
- Just because they are also Analysts doesn’t mean they agree with you or that their assessment will always be perfect. Be prepared to display some patience and allow them to prove (or fail to prove) their points in their own time and in their own way.
- Enjoy the productive debate. Most Analysts like intellectual sparring and what better partner than another Analyst? Other types may be too sensitive or set in their opinions. Regard other Analysts as opportunities. They probably are looking for the same. Most Analysts love a challenge to their ideas. Just be careful not to waste too much time at work on the theoretical jousting.

- The Introverted types within the Analyst group may need some encouragement to share ideas even with other Analysts. Encourage them to do so while not demanding it.

### *Analysts – Diplomats*

#### *COMMON GROUND*

Diplomats and Analysts both like to work with ideas. Their imaginations manipulate ideas into models. They differ in that Diplomats create ideal designs for a perfect society (or the perfect workforce) and Analysts create ideal schemes for a perfect system. Simply put, Analysts show interest in things while Diplomats show interest in people. While their targets are different, if they can recognize and accept the other's focus while being able to freely share their own contributions to an organization, they may get along well.

Neither Analysts nor Diplomats like many details, both preferring to deal with the “big picture” instead. Both can absorb knowledge almost subconsciously like sponges and then incorporate it into a larger constellation of intuitive understanding. They are both imaginative and creative as they connect the dots, often in deep ways. This likeness of styles and love for the more abstract should give them plenty of common ground and opportunities to combine their talents.

#### *HOW THEY COMPLEMENT ONE ANOTHER*

Diplomats live in a world of values and empathy. Analysts are more comfortable with systems and puzzles. Diplomats add to the Analysts' offerings by bringing humanity to their systems. An Analyst working even with a human system like, for example, psychoanalysis will likely allow efficiency to trump empathy every time. A Diplomat can typically provide “soul” to any system that Analysts devise or innovate.

On the other hand, an organization which is only about love, peace and harmony can get a little mushy around the edges. Rational analysis of an organization is an important ingredient needed for it to grow and prosper. This is where Analysts contribute.

### *POTENTIAL PROBLEMS*

While Analysts and Diplomats can certainly use their different focus in complementary ways, this same focus can create points of contention. An Analyst may be critical of a Diplomat's point of view and consider it too soft while a Diplomat may regard an Analyst point of view as without concern for higher values.

As an illustration, let's suppose we have a Diplomat and Analyst trying to decide about an action in a wildlife organization. An Analyst might consider thinning the wildebeest population through hunting as a solution to overpopulation. Overpopulation of any one species will create havoc in an ecosystem. A Diplomat, on the other hand, may value all life as sacred and be reluctant to release hunters on the wildebeest population. The conflict is obvious. But is either wrong? While you want to preserve balance in a wildlife community, you don't necessarily want to be inhumane about it.

Analysts and Diplomats working together will probably spend a significant amount of time debating these different approaches (usually in less dramatic ways) in the workplace. An Analyst manager might argue that it would be more efficient to replace the receptionist at the front desk with a touch screen computer. Computers are cheaper than a continuing salaried employee and can do essentially the same job. A Diplomat manager in the same office will wonder about the welfare of the current receptionist and the lack of human warmth involved in greeting a visitor with a machine. One would highlight the time and money saved while the other would bemoan the sterile approach and the disregard for the employee. It may take some negotiating to resolve such a difference. However, it's hard to say that either perspective is invalid.

Analysts can be brusque and impatient with people who don't see things their way. (Diplomats can feel frustrated and disappointed for the same reason.) The Diplomats' aversion to conflict may cause them to disengage if Analysts come on too strong and if they appear too condescending. However, they might not let it go if they see the Analysts' attitude as an "injustice". If both are aware of these sensitivities, it can go a long way to maintaining harmony in the workplace.

### *TIPS FOR COMMUNICATING*

#### **Advice for Analysts concerning Diplomats:**

- If you want a heartfelt response, ask Diplomats questions that combine with both “who” and “why” inquiries.
- Try to discover what values are important to the Diplomat. When you discover this, you’ll discover what motivates them and that can be helpful in communicating with them.
- Be aware that Diplomats can be acutely sensitive to criticism or harsh words. This can shut them down, at least temporarily.
- Try to compliment or show appreciation, at least occasionally, to Diplomats with whom you work. They respond well to positive regard.

#### **Advice for Diplomats concerning Analysts:**

- If you want a heartfelt response, ask Analysts questions that begin with “why”. Be willing to explore their view of your organization and what they think it will take to make it run well.
- If you find that you are having trouble communicating with Analysts, don’t be afraid to ask them why they think that’s the case. They most likely won’t be offended and will probably take some time to dissect the interpersonal dynamic between the two of you and will get back to you. It may give you clues as to how to approach them in the future.
- As intelligent as Analysts often are, they are also notorious for lacking emotional intelligence. Be aware of this and try not to take any unfriendly responses or comments too seriously or personally.

### *Analysts – Sentinels*

#### *COMMON GROUND*

While they can be complementary (see below), Sentinels and Analysts have few things in common. If there’s anything at all, perhaps it’s their shared need for efficiency. Analysts work with systems trying to get them to run smoothly. Sentinels do the same with more practical matters.



### *HOW THEY COMPLEMENT ONE ANOTHER*

Sentinels bring order to an organization and see to perform practical tasks. Analysts gain knowledge and assemble the building blocks a system in their minds and on paper. Each plays a different role when they have a job that suits them in an organization. Analysts are visionaries while Sentinels efficiently attend to business in the here and now. Analysts often ask “what if” and “why” while Sentinels are more likely to ask “how” and expect a tangible answer.

So how do these two different types work with each other and communicate successfully? Analysts sincerely need someone to carry out their vision. They are masters at manipulating ideas but need someone else around to turn their ideas into something practical. Sentinels are great at getting things done. In many ways, that’s a perfect match. A good fictional model might be the visionary CEO with the practical administrative assistant. Think Tony Stark (Robert Downey, Jr.) and Pepper Potts (Gwyneth Paltrow) as comic book caricatures of this in the Iron Man movies. While he busies himself designing his technologies, she keeps Stark Industries running. (From such examples, one might easily think the Sentinel is always subordinate to the visionary Analyst. However, if you consider an Analyst in a research position with a Sentinel boss, you have the opposite power relationship. Yet they complement each other’s roles just the same.)

By clearly understanding and accepting one another’s role and communicating from their positions of strength, each type can become invaluable to the other. Analysts and Sentinels can create a mutually useful and productive partnership in the workplace.

### *POTENTIAL PROBLEMS*

There’s an old saying: “Nobody likes change except a wet baby.” Whole industries have grown up around “change management”. But it’s not true that “nobody likes change.” Intuitive types like Analysts and Diplomats love change. They always look for ideas that improve things. On some level, these types crave it as it represents growth and possibilities to them.

On the other hand, Sentinels focus more on doing the right thing according to proven standards and traditions. With Sentinels, making the status quo work is a priority. Analysts have little regard for the

status quo, especially if it gets in the way of improving a system. Sentinels may insist on doing it the “right” way according to how it’s always been done. Meanwhile, Analysts may insist on doing it a “better” way regardless of how it’s always been done.

The universal conflict between those trying to preserve a system and those trying to change it is perhaps as old as man himself. It is an area that can be difficult in the workplace. This can play out as passive-aggressive resistance or discounting the importance of one another’s contributions to an organization. These two diverse approaches may need careful communication, reassurances and much understanding.

Analysts’ social style can lack warmth and consideration for the emotional needs of others. Sentinels are nurturers and preservers who can be warm with their co-workers. While, they can be rigidly efficient to the point of being controlling sometimes, they keep the welfare of others in mind and they can be extremely loyal. Sentinels would do well not to take an Analyst’s criticisms too personally whether it’s directed at themselves or others. Analyst would do well to understand that Sentinels may react badly to harsh comments and off-the-cuff negative comments. Since they are so invested in things running well, Sentinels sometimes take criticism of an organization or others on as their own.

#### *TIPS FOR COMMUNICATING*

##### **Advice for Analysts concerning Sentinels:**

- Make an effort to show appreciation for what Sentinels do. They will not necessarily seek gratitude from others for what they do, but they become energized when they get it.
- Talk to Sentinels about any changes to a system. Understand that their first impulse is to preserve the status quo. Change may feel like something is out of control for them.
- Avoid unproductive criticism of others when speaking with Sentinels.
- Talk about practical tasks rather than theories if you want to connect with a Sentinel.

##### **Advice for Sentinels concerning Analysts:**

- Understand that Analyst co-workers benefit from your attention to detail even if they don’t always recognize or seem to appreciate it.
- Try not to take any criticism or harsh comments from an Analyst to heart.

- Don't load Analysts down with too many details that aren't necessary. They may show little interest, and they may not even respond to such information.

### *Analysts – Explorers*

#### *COMMON GROUND*

For the Explorers and Analysts, they both like to search for answers. Their style and scope of doing so is different (discussed below). However, if they recognize that they are both looking for a “better and more efficient way” it can make any discussion more productive. If they can grasp that and can tolerate their different approaches, they may find that their motives are alike enough. Bonding by using the things we have in common while learning the value of our differences can go a long way in a business relationship.

#### *HOW THEY COMPLEMENT ONE ANOTHER*

While Analysts want to play with ideas and systems, Explorers would rather solve problems in a hands-on fashion. While Analyst may not always see their ideas to the end, it can be hard to get Explorers to wait long enough to check with others before they carry out theirs. Explorers work with the here and now and the practical while Analysts work with overarching systems that are more conceptual than tangible. If you want a real problem solved, there is nobody better than the Explorer. If you want to know how to understand a system, deconstruct it or rebuild it on paper, there is nobody better than the Analyst.

When Analysts and Explorers work together, they need to understand that they are each part of a two-step process. Explorers can put together the pieces needed to make the Analysts' models work. Analysts are notoriously weak at implementation where the Explorers are strong. However, Explorers sometimes don't pay enough attention to the big picture as they focus on the details. This can put them out of sync with the vision of an organization's management and perhaps into some hot water. As long as each realizes they both have good things to stir into the same pot, Explorers and Analysts can create a powerful working relationship.

Consider Apollo 13, the movie and a real life event that brought us the iconic phrase “Houston, we have a problem”, as a metaphor. After a mechanical mishap, three U.S. astronauts were in danger of not making it back to Earth alive in their crippled space capsule. The Analysts can be compared to ground

control in Houston who calculated all the numbers and worked out a trajectory. They created a system to get the astronauts home.

However, the Explorers / astronauts were the problem solvers. They did the hands-on work and figured out the details that brought about the swing around the moon which eventually got the capsule home. Communication between ground control and the astronauts was vital to the success of the rescue. Okay, it's not a perfect metaphor. Is there such a thing? Nonetheless, hopefully it demonstrates how the different functions and styles can work together to fulfill the same goal.

### *POTENTIAL PROBLEMS*

An Analyst may become annoyed at the Explorers' focus on details while the Explorer may feel that the Analysts' ideas are too vague and impractical. It can be tempting for Explorers to dismiss Analysts as having their heads in the clouds and not understanding the practical side of anything. On the other hand, Analysts may return the judgment by declaring that Explorers are reckless, have no vision and think too narrowly about things. When either or both refuses to see the value of the other's style, communication is likely to shut down.

Analysts can be condescending if they don't feel someone can play skillfully in their playground of lofty notions and complex systems. They may wrongly react to the Explorers' focus on detail and simply write them off as uninspired. Meanwhile, the Explorers are just as likely to be ignoring the Analysts' "nonsense" as they go ahead and complete their revered solutions. The result is that they aren't talking to each other and that's a pitfall that co-workers should avoid.

### *TIPS FOR COMMUNICATING*

#### **Advice for Analysts concerning Explorers:**

- Explorers become bored with topics that are too abstract and theoretical. Don't spend too much time there when speaking with them. Share a quick overview of your ideas and add the facts you know. Then give them the space they need to create a workable implementation. They might surprise you and bring your ideas to life in exciting ways.

- Genius comes in many forms. Keep in mind Explorers often have a different kind of intelligence that relies on details and mastery. While it may be tedious to you, vital results often hinge on their attention to the finer points. Be patient and don't try to force them to work in ways that are foreign to them. Respect their style and allow it to work.
- Approach Explorers with "how" questions if you want a heartfelt response.

#### **Advice for Explorers concerning Analysts:**

- Analysts become bored with too many details. They don't need to line up all the facts like you do. Talk to them about how you think your ideas will affect the larger organization or system. Ask them to give you feedback from that perspective. Such a vantage point can save you from going in a wrong direction – one that you might not even be aware you're going in. The "long-range view" can be your blind spot, and Analysts can help you with that.
- Don't be too quick to dismiss the Analysts and their theories. They want an efficient outcome just like you. Try to find common ground here even if the point of doing so isn't immediately clear. You might be surprised how helpful it can be in the long run.
- Approach Analysts with "why" questions if you want a heartfelt response.

## Career Progression

You got that job, settled in and have been an exemplary employee ever since. What now? How can ENTPs progress in their careers and what difficulties are they likely to have?

Answers to these questions depend heavily on the field that the ENTP is in. Some people with this personality type tend to do well in managerial roles, executing well-crafted, intricate plans and managing dozens of subordinates – others are perfectly happy being self-contained subject matter experts. This means that ENTPs should have no difficulties utilizing the well-established career progression paths, especially in large organizations, where they have plenty of opportunities to utilize their leadership and strategic thinking skills. Multi-national corporations are naturally better at this, so if you are able to get a job there, it is likely that you will be able to secure promotions relatively easily. However, this relies on you being able to manage projects that are more than just straight forward implementations of pre-

defined processes – ENTPs excel in situations where they actually get a chance to improvise and select the resources they need. If that is not an option, you may not be able to showcase the true extent of your abilities.

However, it is also often possible to progress in a field where achievements are measured by the number of people reporting to you. ENTPs, like other Analysts, are very good when it comes to mapping out and organizing processes and systems, and it is nearly inevitable that someone with this personality type will come up with ideas and suggestions aimed at improving the efficiency of the business model. Furthermore, their natural curiosity (some might call it nosiness) leads to ENTPs having fingers in many pies and indirectly influencing activities not related to their specific role.

This is one way of being recognized and promoted – as the ENTP gets a better understanding of how the company operates, they can grow their responsibilities without overburdening themselves. This would increase their job security and future prospects as well. However, getting appropriate financial rewards can be a challenge in such situations – many managers are understandably reluctant to grant (or try to justify) a raise without any additional managerial responsibilities, not even talking about situations where raising the ENTP's salary would mean that it would reach or surpass the salary of the manager themselves.

It is also important to remember that a better position does not necessarily come with more freedom. If anything, it can mean more red tape and more supervision. ENTPs excel in roles where they are able to design systems and come up with solutions that help them increase the efficiency and value of some kind of output. Ironically, getting promoted can often hinder rather than ease such efforts – sometimes, you may be better off staying in the same role for longer, using the time to learn something new and then looking for a better paid job at a different company. Depending on the company, corporate jockeying may not be fruitful for ENTPs.

However, there may be times when getting a promotion is simply unrealistic, either because of the organizational culture that sees little value in the skills that the ENTP can offer, or simply because of the lack of room for growth. Here are some ideas of what ENTPs could do – changing the employer is an obvious option, but is it the only one?

## Alternative Options

However radical this may seem, you do not need to be employed to live comfortably. We live in the age of possibilities and selling your time to a corporation is not the only way to generate income. ENTPs are imaginative, bold individuals, and their ability to make connections between seemingly unrelated things and ideas can be very valuable. So why not try putting some of those ideas into practice and turning them into your own business?

Many people find the notion of self-employment quite scary – however, the times when someone could spend 20+ years working at the same company and not worrying about the future are over. Job security and guaranteed prospects are a thing of the past, with the exception of several fields such as military or medicine. Consequently, working for yourself may actually be a more secure and viable option, which also comes with a range of other benefits such as ability to plan your time, see tangible results of your work and, obviously, be your own boss. ENTPs value freedom and independence, and being self-employed would give them an excellent opportunity to enjoy these things.

Furthermore, self-employment solves one of the major hurdles that ENTPs are likely to encounter in the corporate environment – resistance by individuals who are more concerned about security or stability than efficiency and the end goals. As a self-employed individual, you are free to choose which tasks you want to perform and which ones you want to delegate or outsource – no more following orders, doing tedious administrative work or dealing with people who are unable or unwilling to improve. Self-employment offers many major benefits to ENTPs, especially in today's global and always-connected environment, and people with this personality type are highly likely to be successful in this area. For instance, you could manage multiple teams of outsourced contractors, all working together in pursuit of a specific business strategy that you have devised.

However, there is no point in trying to start a business without a good idea. This is where the ENTPs' ability to come up with unusual connections starts to shine. Anyone could think of a product that could be shipped from the East and sold in the West – but it takes a very imaginative mind to come up with an idea, product or solution that could grow into an innovative business venture. After all, there is a reason why Google and Facebook were developed by geeks in their basements and dorm rooms rather than



engineers working 9-5 at multinational companies. Think of an interesting way to fulfill an existing need (or create one) and do not be afraid to experiment. ENTPs can be excellent entrepreneurs, having both the imagination necessary to develop a good business model, and the willpower to keep going in difficult times.

## Suitable Careers

Let's look at some specific jobs that ENTPs may find fit them the best. We do not try to offer a full list of professions. That would be impossible and the list would grow daily. We offer a sampling of jobs that are consistent with ENTP personality traits with added explanations of why they are. Use this to create guidelines when thinking about your own career goals.

For those of you already employed, this may serve as a confirmation or an explanation for why you might be happy or unhappy where you are. We do not presume this to be a firm prescription of what you must do to be successful or happy. Rather, we hope it will provide you with some insight as you make your personal decisions.

### Engineering and Design

Engineering and design are broad categories for disciplines that use science, math, design techniques and ingenuity to create a machine, a structure or a system. They not only create new products, but they remove flaws from old products.

ENTPs are most identified with this kind of work. They are more "idea" people and will most likely pass their ideas on to others for implementation. But in the theoretical realm, there is nothing more satisfying for them than dreaming up ways to influence the environment or manipulate a system. Some jobs that might appeal them include:

- Computer programmer
- Engineering of any type
- Architect
- Inventor

- Urban or environmental planner
- Urban planner
- Software or system design
- Video game designer

### **Research / Science**

ENTPs are passionate in their need to discover how everything works. Not only do they love the discovery, but they are fond of the patterns that often reveal themselves in research. They will take the initiative to explore that which no one has explored before or find a different approach to old research. ENTP researchers and scientists admire others with similar drive and abilities and can collaborate if they feel they are dealing with equals.

ENTPs will encourage their discoveries be used for practical applications and may become involved some on that side of things. Their research will likely extend beyond the simply finding the answer to embracing how it will affect the future. Some of the jobs in this category include:

- Academic researcher / professor
- Physical scientist
- Life scientist
- Astronomer
- Medical researcher
- Physicist
- Psychological research
- Chemist

### **Medicine**

In the medical field, ENTPs make thorough diagnosticians and practitioners. Their Intuitive and Thinking traits allow ENTP physicians to quickly assess a constellation of symptoms and to draw an accurate diagnosis. The choosing of an effective treatment will get the same approach. They may also be

inclined to try innovative measures when possible should the traditional treatments fail. Any of the following fields are full of potential medical puzzles to solve and would be satisfying to ENTPs who are inclined to enter medicine.

- Psychiatrist
- Pathologist
- Neurologist
- Pharmacologist
- Cardiologist

### Strategy

It's no accident that we call those with the ENTP personality type Analysts. ENTPs explore systems by mentally taking them apart, learning all they contain and then rebuilding them in a more useful way, adding and subtracting to and from them as necessary. Calling this section "Strategy" is cheating a little bit. All ENTPs do is strategic in some fashion, but not all strategic jobs neatly fit into categories. So this section serves as a catch-all.

What do these jobs have in common? They all have the potential for having problems that need solving and a need for developing strategies. With their entrepreneurial spirit, ENTPs are capable of coming up with extremely effective and innovative solutions. Some jobs where these skills may come in handy include:

- Business or corporate strategy
- Marketing
- Management consultant
- Project management
- Military officer
- Educational consultant
- Investment analyst
- Lawyer

- Anything involving analysis and forecasting
- Security and intelligence
- Political strategist

## What Would Make a Job Unsuitable for an ENTP?

In modern society, we not only spend a great deal of time at work, but we also tend to allow our work to give us meaning. We need to be careful not to get stuck in a situation that doesn't suit us unless we risk all manner of difficulties. Here are some characteristics of the type of jobs that may not be suitable for ENTPs.

### **Restrictive Environment**

ENTPs like to experiment and explore new ideas. If the structure and the rules of the workplace are too rigid, they will more than likely feel stifled and unfulfilled. People with this personality type are passionate puzzle-solvers and are not happy when restrictions keep them from exercising passion. They may not even be able to function at their highest capacity in such an environment.

Too many standards and too much oversight will make ENTPs' focus too narrow for the way they process information and gain insights. They need room to "play" mentally. To function at their fullest, ENTPs need independence, not supervision. They may also reject feeling locked into a career path that seems to be "pre-set". They are typically happy just doing the work they are passionate about. Office politics and bureaucratic matters annoy ENTPs.

### **Work That Is Too Dependent on Too Much Social Interaction**

Not being highly social beings, ENTPs will probably not respond well to any job that requires a large amount of social interaction. This is a rather unique trait for an Extravert, but ENTPs do tend to be rather reserved, especially in situations that do not revolve around their interests. People with this personality type tend to do fine with co-workers and clients if the conversation is about their work, but they have little tolerance for much else and just don't understand small talk. They have no use for networking or office politics.

Also, where there is social interaction, there is eventually emotion and drama. Such displays of feelings will cause discomfort for ENTPs and they may even lose their bearings temporarily not knowing how to respond. They will probably not enjoy a business dinner or social events which can be an important meeting place in some industries.

### **Work That Requires Empathy**

ENTPs would most likely not do well as, for example, a hospice worker. Feelings and emotions are not their strong suit. While they love to interact with others, it tends to be on a more intellectual level. A strong appeal to feelings, whether in a life or an argument, will simply turn-off ENTPs. On top of that, they often misread the emotional cues of others. While people with this personality type feel like anyone else and even have a degree of empathy, they are not comfortable dealing with emotions – particularly in the workplace. A job that demands a high level of empathy would likely be frustrating for them.

### **Work That Extends Beyond the Theoretical**

ENTPs will come up with the ideas and insights, but if the expectations are that they implement them, this personality type may not be interested in following through. Generally, ENTPs play the role of the brains, but it's helpful if someone else plays the hands and the feet – preferably someone who is a Sentinel or an Explorer.

## **Workplace Habits**

Most of us will spend a huge percentage of our life at work. This is why we believe that discussing how different personality types behave in the workplace is important. What drives them or makes them miserable? How can you create a mutually beneficial and productive relationship with a specific personality type? How should you handle conflicts with them?

### *ENTP Colleagues*

- Very argumentative
- Excellent brainstormers
- Have a good sense of humor

- Attract new friendships quite easily
- Honest, direct and objective
- Usually very knowledgeable
- May be insensitive and condescending
- Insightful and unbiased
- Reluctant to mingle and chat, but enjoy discussing new theoretical ideas with co-workers they consider equal to themselves
- Very uncomfortable with expressing emotions or being around people who are expressing them
- Enjoy solving riddles and noticing patterns

#### *ENTP Managers*

- Able to accurately and objectively assess conflicting arguments
- Very good at holding ground in a rational debate, which usually makes them fearsome advocates for their teams
- Enjoy coming up with innovative ways to deal with challenges, but dislike managing the actual implementation
- Do not care much about being liked – would rather be respected and seen as smart
- Open-minded and flexible
- May jump from project to project, looking for challenges and excitement
- Have very high standards, especially for themselves
- Dislike explaining their ideas and expect subordinates to be as insightful as they are
- Open to suggestions, as long as they are logical
- Loathe schmoozing and strongly resist all forms of emotional manipulation

#### *ENTP Subordinates*

- Comfortable challenging their manager's ideas
- Curious and able to learn new methods very quickly
- Strongly dislike restrictive rules and guidelines
- Prefer tackling complex challenges over dealing with simple routine tasks

- Do not mind being criticized, as long as all arguments are rational
- May have difficulties with practical or monotonous tasks
- Very innovative, original and resourceful, but demand a lot of freedom in return
- Do not care much about being liked and are less concerned about job security compared to other personality types
- Need to be accompanied by an “implementer” (preferably someone with an S personality type) who could put their ideas into practice, but this may take time and clever management

## What Do Other ENTPs Say?

It is one thing to read the description of your type – it is quite another to get tips and advice from fellow ENTPs. This is what other ENTPs say about their chosen career paths:

*“I am self-employed. It is my dream job, as I have got freedom to take breaks, take a day off etc. if I find something else interesting or just find the chores too monotonous.”*

*“I am a financial advisor. It allows me to constantly meet and interact with people. I persuade them to implement my ideas. I also use my problem solving skills. Every day is a little different which I truly enjoy.”*

*“I am a librarian and dean of a university library. Librarianship is my dream job because it benefits others and is ever changing. I enjoy management because I can create change and implement solutions.”*

*“Construction. It is a great job for its open spaces, constant change and challenges. It requires thinking on your feet and there are always opportunities for career development and pay rises.”*

*“I am an architect and I love it. This job allows me to always think of new solutions to problems, always have a new project to allay any boredom, allows interaction with people, is intellectually stimulating, and exercises the argumentative side (with clients/consultants/builders/even the boss!).”*

*“I am an archaeologist. This is definitely my dream job. I have wanted to be an Archaeologist since I was 9 years old.”*



*"I am a microbiologist, working in a lab. I love this aspect of science because it has more general rules than other scientific branches. Micro-organisms are living so there are always a few that will not conform to the usual rules."*

*"I am a psychologist. Private practice. This is mostly my dream job although I am moving more into consultancy and analysis which draw more on my strengths."*

*"I am a general manager for 8 hotels in London. I love designing the hotels of the future because I believe I have enough knowledge and imagination to develop the best guest experience."*

*"I manage a fraud investigation team for a debt purchasing company. I love all the projects my boss asks me to be involved in, designing and mapping out processes, solving complex queries and working out what has happened in a fraud case using limited info which I usually piece together extremely quickly to get a picture of the situation. I have a vast amount of knowledge and like being able to support my team and department- they joke that I know everything!"*

*"I am in sales, working as an account manager. I love this job. I do it in the office with my own time management and a flexible set of rules. I just go with no supervision needed."*

*"I am a research methodologist and survey manager. I design studies and implement them. I focus primarily on integration of new technologies and innovative methods into study and data capture design. I also am the editor and regular contributor to a blog that discusses new technologies and social research."*

*"My path has been as a business development manager, working with growth projects and small businesses. I have been focusing on green and renewable energy projects recently because I enjoy influencing projects and people for the greater good. I currently run my own consulting firm allowing me the freedom to set my own schedule, although that does not translate into much money currently. My dream job would be allowing me to work outside and grow a company focusing on non-profit teaching, fundraising and helping other people develop their potential."*

As you can see, ENTPs can be found in a variety of jobs, ranging from architecture to fraud investigation. It is not the role itself that matters, but the ENTP's ability to use their imagination and efficiency-oriented strategic thinking skills. There are fields that are more ENTP-friendly than others (e.g. science,

technology or engineering), but people with this personality type can carve out their niche anywhere, if circumstances are right and they are willing to put in the effort.

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