

ESTJ

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 ESTJ?

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ESTJs belong to the **Sentinel** type group, along with ISTJs, ISFJs and ESFJs. They have an **E**xtraverted, **O**bservant, **T**hinking and **J**udging personality:

Extraverted – ESTJs 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.

Observant – ESTJs rely on their senses, are absorbed in practical matters and focus on what has happened as opposed to what might happen.

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

Judging – ESTJs are decisive, prefer clear rules, respect deadlines, are eager to commit and seek closure.

All Sentinels prefer facts to ideas and focus on achieving consensus.

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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 20th 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.

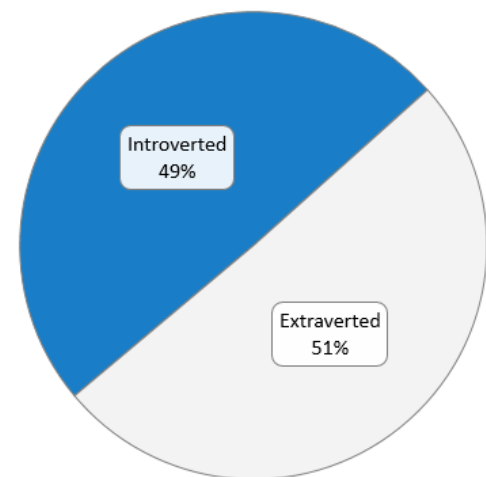
With our model, we've combined the best of both worlds. We use the acronym format introduced by Myers-Briggs due to its simplicity and convenience – however, we have redefined several Jungian traits and introduced an additional one, simplifying our model and bringing it closer to the latest developments, 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.

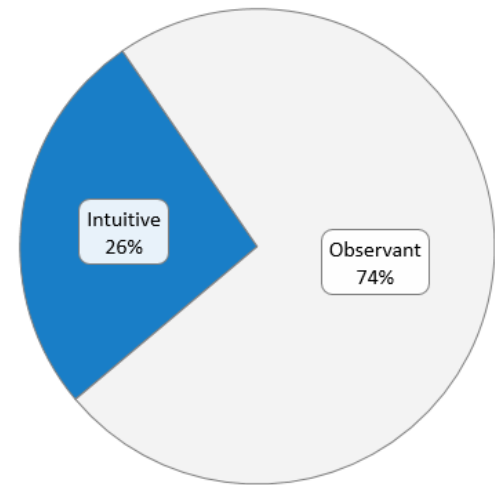


ESTJs are Extraverted – they tend to have good social skills and feel recharged after spending time in the company of other people. ESTJs enjoy taking command and issuing orders, often going ahead and

voicing their opinion even before it has fully formed in their own mind. 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.

ESTJs are Observant individuals – this is why they are so good at remembering various details, noticing discrepancies and keeping their feet on the ground. People with this personality type spend far more time observing concrete things around them than engaging in various internal discussions. ESTJs are not that concerned about what *might* happen or *why* it has happened – they focus on what *is* happening. ESTJs keep improving these skills throughout their lives, which makes them diligent and keen-eyed observers.

This is also one of the reasons why ESTJs rarely have difficulties finding a partner – as the majority of the population belong to one of the Observant types, many traits shared by people with this personality type, such as reliability, meticulousness and desire for security, are often seen as very attractive.

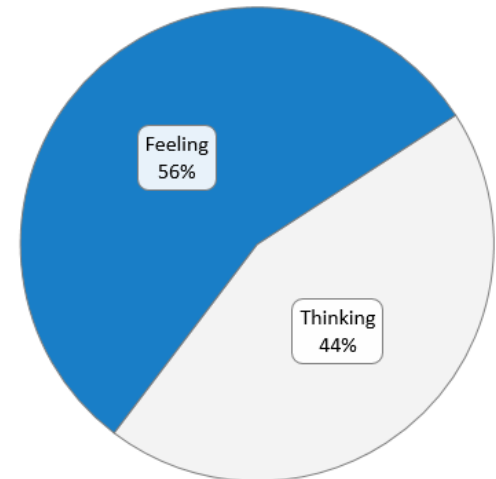
Of course, every stick has two ends. Introspection comes at a cost – by directing all their mental resources outwards, ESTJs inevitably have to discard the information that is being provided by their intuition. They are likely to have difficulties dealing with abstract, theoretical matters, or jumping from one idea to another – even finding it difficult to keep up with their classmates or colleagues when it comes to brainstorming the possibilities (but not assessing the facts).

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.



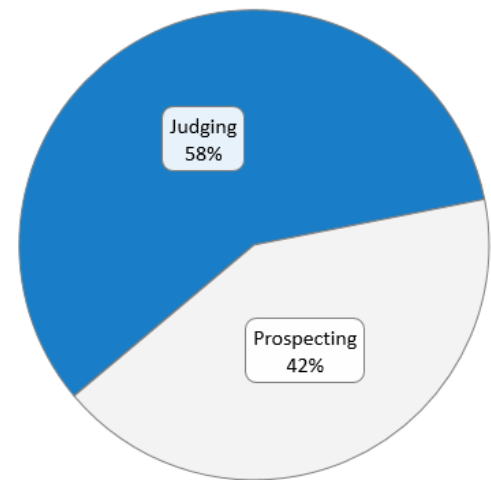
ESTJs belong to the Thinking group – they trust and prioritize logic, relying on rational arguments and doing everything they can to keep their true feelings and emotions deep below the surface. As already mentioned in the previous section, people with this personality type are renowned for their use of the “only the facts, please” filter regardless of the circumstances – an ESTJ will focus on what can be assessed, compared and verified, ignoring abstract, theoretical matters. Unfortunately, this trait may also push the ESTJ away from the majority of the population, making it difficult for them to empathize and connect with other people at the emotional level.

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.



ESTJs are Judging individuals – they are decisive, choose security over freedom to improvise, and usually find it difficult to cope with uncertainty. This is what makes them excellent administrators, both able and willing to dedicate time for managing complex operations. That being said, people with this personality type are more interested in how things works in practice instead of spending time developing grand plans like Analysts do. ESTJs are logisticians rather than strategists.

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.

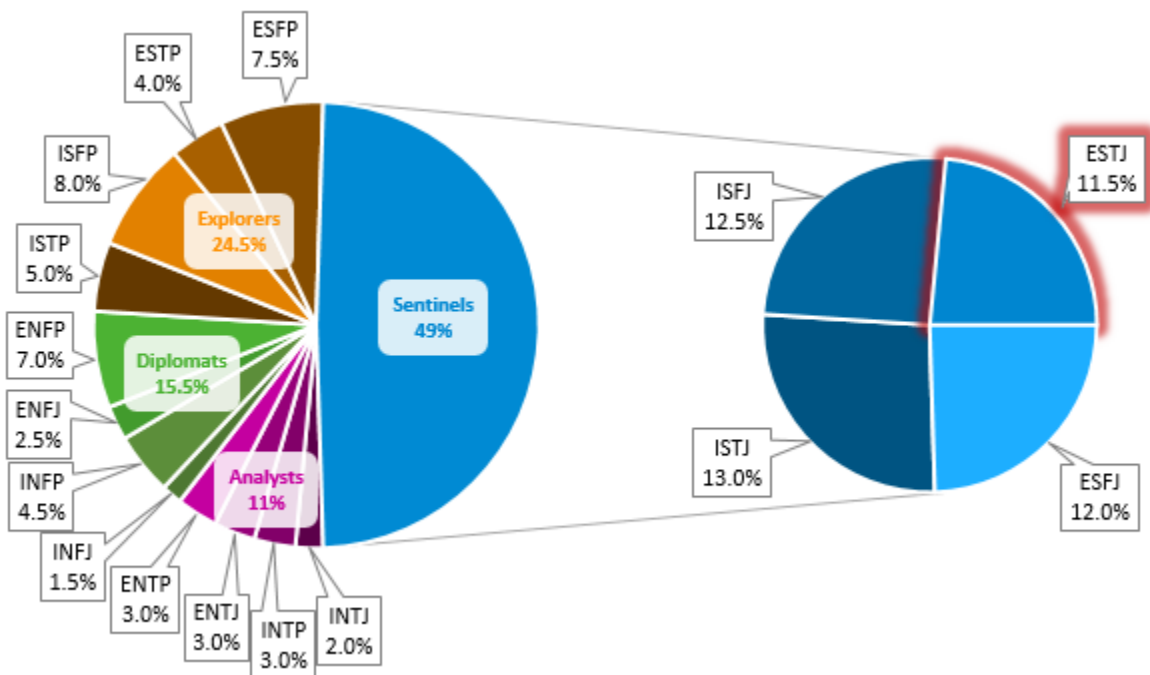
SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT (EXTRAVERTED AND TURBULENT [E___ (T)] TYPES)

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 ESTJ personality type is one of the most popular types. About 11.5% of Americans are believed to be ESTJs – averaging 12-13% among men and 8-9% 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.



Ask any ESTJ what values are most important and valuable for any society and it is more than likely that you will hear “order, tradition and stability”. Like other members of the Sentinel type group, people with the ESTJ personality type feel a strong need to belong to something – it can be a family, a community or some other social group. They like “organizing” other people and making ensure that they adhere to the traditions or rules put in place by an authority figure.

“Only the facts, please” are words often uttered by ESTJs – people with this personality type respect facts greatly and tend to accumulate a lot of information in their memory. They are honest and direct, living in the present and taking note of everything that is happening around them. ESTJ personalities tend to have a clear vision and understanding of what is acceptable and what is not – this usually makes ESTJs

excellent leaders and managers, even though their subordinates may sometimes complain about the resulting inflexibility. Unlike Intuitive types, ESTJs focus on concrete facts and data, which makes them excellent administrators and decision-makers in many different environments. Not surprisingly, ESTJs find it quite easy to develop and improve various action plans – they are able to make even the most complex project look like a walk in the park.

As extroverts, ESTJ personalities love connecting to other people and playing active roles in traditional, respected organizations. Family values are also very important to ESTJs and they do their best to nurture and defend them.

People with ESTJ personality type are very dedicated and responsible. An ESTJ will do everything they can to fulfill their duties and meet their promises. People with this personality type respect and promote a good work ethic, and strongly detest cheating or any attempts to cut corners, especially in the workplace. Positions of authority must be earned. Period. Due to all these traits, ESTJ personalities are excellent “model citizens”, guardians of the traditions and cornerstones of families and communities. They are very reliable and trustworthy, even though the inflexibility shared by all Sentinel types may sometimes hinder their efforts. ESTJs also have a very good sense of what is socially acceptable and always do their best to adhere to that ideal.

ESTJs are usually strong-willed and not afraid to voice and defend their opinions, even if they are facing a formidable opposition. If, for instance, one of their subordinates is incompetent or simply lazy, the ESTJ will not hesitate to show their wrath. ESTJ personalities will stick to their principles, even if everybody turns against them. ESTJs tend to be highly respected for their exceptional loyalty to their duty – their accuracy, patience and ability to concentrate make them ideal employees in many professions. Not surprisingly, people with this personality type gravitate towards traditional, hierarchical institutions – public service, law, military etc. ESTJs respect traditions and do their best to adhere to the existing rules and guidelines. In some cases, this trait can be so strong that the ESTJ will not break the rules even when the consequences for breaking them pale in comparison to what would happen if those rules were followed.

People with this personality type are nearly unstoppable if they believe that a specific idea is valuable and can be implemented – they will consider it their duty to establish and maintain a smooth operation. As soon as the new procedure proves its usefulness (i.e. it becomes apparent that the new approach actually works), ESTJs will put a lot of effort to enable its successful implementation, even at the expense of their own health. However, due to their straightforward approach, ESTJs may encounter difficulties when it becomes necessary to comprehend a competing theory or idea.

Finally, ESTJs enjoy being responsible for their actions and love the power that stems from this. They are usually jacks-of-all-trades and this can potentially lead to many significant achievements in diverse areas – ESTJs tend to be bright, logical and wise individuals, characterized by their desire to seek secure and stable life. People with this type are easily irritated by others' shortcomings – they see their own promises as sacred and cannot understand how someone could consciously fail to meet their obligations. This can be a significant disadvantage at times, as some people can abuse the ESTJ's strong sense of duty by overloading them with work.

ESTJs are not particularly good at listening to their own (and especially other people's) feelings. Consequently, they may face difficulties when it is necessary to understand other people's emotional needs. On the other hand, ESTJs rarely have any difficulties coping with emotionally charged situations – they can always keep a cool head and act rationally.

Some famous ESTJs:

- St. Peter, a disciple of Christ
- James Monroe, a former U.S. president
- Andrew Jackson, a former U.S. president
- William Henry Harrison, a former U.S. president
- Franklin Pierce, a former U.S. president
- Grover Cleveland, a former U.S. president
- Harry S. Truman, a former U.S. president
- Lyndon B. Johnson, a former U.S. president
- George W. Bush, a former U.S. president
- Carrie Nation
- Elliot Ness

- John D. Rockefeller
- Bette Davis
- Barbara Stanwyck

Strengths and Weaknesses

ESTJ personalities are often called Supervisors for a reason – they are one of the most reliable, stable and loyal types, always doing their best to ensure that all rules and procedures are followed, and that everybody knows what they are supposed to do. People with this personality type are tough yet cooperative, and they can also be tireless and assertive when it comes to defending the rules, values and traditions that are important to them. The



ESTJs' willingness to spend an enormous amount of time and effort making sure that everything is in order and everyone is following their duties makes them very reliable, responsible and loyal employees, friends and partners.

However, this comes at a price – ESTJs are often seen as too inflexible and demanding, and they may also have difficulties in situations where tact and kindness are more important than order and facts. ESTJs may also be unreasonably pessimistic sometimes, worrying that other people care too little about morals and traditions, and it is up to them to protect the society from decay. This section will discuss these issues and pinpoint their source, hopefully helping you to address the traits you are unhappy with. After all, one man's weakness is another man's strength – you will need to decide if and how you wish to pursue personal growth and development.

Strengths

- **Dedicated.** ESTJ personalities take their duties very seriously and do not abandon tasks just because they have become difficult or boring. ESTJs can also spend a lot of time and effort on causes that they care deeply about.
- **Enjoy creating order.** ESTJs strongly dislike chaos and do their best to define rules, structures and roles in the environment that they see as too chaotic. They also do not shy away from enforcing the existing regulations and have zero tolerance for rule breakers.

- **Excellent organizers.** ESTJ personalities know how to manage people and distribute tasks and responsibilities. They are excellent team leaders, especially from the administrative perspective.
- **Loyal, patient and reliable.** ESTJs value stability and security, and do their best to be responsible and reliable members of their company, community or family.
- **Strong-willed.** People with this personality type have strong beliefs and rarely give them up regardless of the opposition – more likely than not, they will defend their ideas and principles relentlessly.
- **Direct and honest.** ESTJs dislike reading between the lines and prefer simple and straightforward answers. They do not mince their words and prefer an inconvenient truth over a reassuring lie, being more interested in facts than ideas or opinions.
- **Jacks of all trades.** ESTJ personalities tend to be very observant and good with facts. They often know something about everything and that internal encyclopedia often proves to be very useful in challenging situations.
- **Very responsible.** A promise means everything to an ESTJ. They would rather work overtime and lose sleep than fail to deliver the result that someone else is expecting. ESTJ personalities also tend to be extremely loyal, putting their duties above everything else.

Weaknesses

- **Often too inflexible and stubborn.** ESTJs often focus so much on traditions and their own principles that they may hastily dismiss unconventional ideas or methods that might be more effective than the “old ways”.
- **Judgmental.** People with the ESTJ personality type tend to have strong convictions about what is right and socially acceptable, and do not tolerate any deviations. They are likely to comment on or criticize such behavior, believing that it is their duty to make things right. From the ESTJ’s perspective, facts are all that matters. If someone is unwilling to accept those facts or simply does not know them, the ESTJ may find it difficult to respect that individual, especially if they refuse to acknowledge that their opinion is wrong.

- **May have difficulties expressing their emotions.** ESTJs value facts and rationality, placing them above sensitivity and emotions. Consequently, they may have difficulties understanding other people's feelings and expressing their own.
- **Find it difficult to relax.** ESTJ personalities may focus too much on what is expected of them, forgetting to relax – or worrying what people might think of them if they do.
- **May focus too much on their social status.** ESTJs value their social status very highly, and seek to be respected by their friends, colleagues and relatives. Consequently, they may often pay too little attention to their own needs and wishes.
- **Uncomfortable with unconventional solutions.** People with this personality type prefer tried and tested solutions – they may be uncomfortable with sudden change or get stressed when there is a need to try something completely new.
- **Always by the book.** People with the ESTJ personality type like having a clear set of rules and guidelines – however, this often results in them being reluctant to bend those rules or try something new. As already mentioned above, ESTJs cannot stand chaos and may feel lost and vulnerable in an unfamiliar, unstructured environment.

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 ESTJs and other Sentinels. 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

ESTJs measure self-esteem by their reliability. They take their duties seriously. If you want a job done well, find yourself an ESTJ. They measure their self-worth by the efficient and thorough execution of tasks. If they say they're going to do something, they are going to go all out and do their best. Failing to do so can be a painful blow to their sense of self.

ESTJs base their worth on practical results. Because of this, they don't care so much about innovation or artistic expression. When there are such "bohemian" wild cards in play, you can't predict the results and that's what reliability is all about. For ESTJs sense of self-worth, visionary efforts are subordinate to the practical, the tried and the true, and kept promises.

A by-product of this motivator is loyalty. Loyalty is, by definition, an expression of reliability. You won't find anyone there for you more reliably than ESTJs. It's important to their sense of self that when they commit to something or someone, they invest themselves fully. They will stand as a reliable life-partner, friend, or employee.

When the quest for self-esteem goes out of balance: Reliable? What can go wrong? Can you be too reliable? Even the most positive motivators can go wrong if they become "overheated".

The French have a phrase "mise en place" which means "putting in place". When French chefs apply this idea, they have all the ingredients prepared, arranged and within reach. That way, when the cooking begins, everything is under control. There are no surprises to interrupt them as they prepare the dish. ESTJs like it when their world reflects a "mise en place" philosophy, and it serves them well. Unfortunately, the world is not like that. When ESTJs try to make the world in their image and attempt to guarantee reliable outcomes, it may drive them to act stubbornly and be rigid. They may go overboard as they try to force everything to be as they believe it "should" be.

Reliability depends on no surprises or no chaos. Unfortunately, much of what humans regard as growth occurs in the presence of risk, experimentation and embracing the unknown. Maturing and evolving can be a messy business whether it's a person or an organization that's growing. ESTJs don't typically like it

when things are messy. Their need for predictable outcomes can seriously hamper their development. It might also put them out of sync with a changing world.

Another substantial problem may occur when ESTJs try to cater to their sense of self-worth is overburdening themselves. If ESTJs insist on living their lives as “the most reliable person in the room”, they can become overloaded with responsibility. This can take a serious emotional or physical toll in time. It’s impossible for anyone to handle everything or and keep it all under control, even ESTJs. Because of this penchant for controlling the outcome, they often have trouble relaxing, and we know that stress is a killer.

Self-esteem rebalanced: ESTJs need to practice letting go on many levels and with many concerns. It’s more about attitude than it is about action.

One of the most effective ways to let go is to consider “what if” scenarios. What if you don’t strictly enforce this rule? What is the worst thing that can happen? Five years from now, how much will this matter? What if I said “no” rather than take on one more responsibility? What would the results of that be? Would it really not get done? What if I did deviate from the way I typically do things? What if I did it differently this time? What would be the worst thing that could happen if I put this off for a few days?

There is little danger for ESTJs if they should choose to lighten up just a bit. Entertaining the above scenarios will most likely not be the cause of them slacking off in any serious way. It’s just not in the ESTJ nature. However, challenging inflexible thoughts could be a useful tool. The exercise might allow ESTJs to refocus and gain a more reasonable definition of what it means to be reliable should things become overwhelming.

Self-Respect

ESTJs respect themselves when they feel like they’re doing something good. Their need to respect themselves will drive them to contribute in positive ways. They like themselves most when they take care of others. This might involve helping or taking care of someone directly. Or it might be a more indirect expression of caring for people, like running an office or organization efficiently or keeping a household running smoothly. ESTJs respect themselves when they make people’s lives’ easier. It’s

wonderful to have ESTJs in your life. They'll have your back and try to take care of you even when you don't ask for it.

When the quest for self-respect goes out of balance: When ESTJs overcompensate and become too busy doing good for others, they are in danger of their own needs not being met. Achieving sainthood may have its attractions, but living a balanced and full life is usually not one of them. If trying to meet everyone else's needs becomes overheated, ESTJs may lose sight of their own. This might work fine for a time. However, it's possible that they will look back from the future with regret because they didn't show as much concern for their own well-being as they did for others. Self-neglect can be responsible for mental or physical health difficulties. ESTJs would do well to be vigilant about taking care of themselves.

Self-respect rebalanced: If the altruistic tendencies of ESTJs become overheated, it may be time to evoke the "Flight Attendant Rule". If you listen to the preflight instructions, you'll notice the flight attendant offering a special instruction to passengers with children. If the oxygen mask falls from the ceiling, they tell the adult he should don his own mask first before helping the child. The obvious reason is if the adult passes out, he is of little use to anyone. The adult taking care of himself first is important to the child's well-being.

ESTJs would do well to consider the Flight Attendant Rule, especially if they feel their lives are out of balance. If they don't take care of themselves – if they burn out because they are taking care of others while neglecting themselves - they can become useless and unable to be very helpful in time. Like the adult with the oxygen mask, ESTJs may want to focus on taking care of themselves first. That way they can stay mentally and physically healthy enough to continue the good work which, in turn, maintains their self-respect.

Self-Confidence

ESTJs gain self-confidence through a sense of respectability. ESTJs may never show off or ask for recognition, but they do like others to pay positive attention to their contributions. If someone recognizes their work, they feel proud and grateful. The presence of such appreciation creates the energy that pulls them confidently forward.

When you offer praise to ESTJs for the diligent and good work they do, they may respond to you humbly and even dismissively. However, you can bet the recognition is energizing them.

When the quest for self-confidence goes out of balance: The problem with any validation that comes from others is that it's not always readily available. And if you ask for it, how sincere is that? If your self-confidence depends on a sense of others appreciating what you do, then what happens when there is no discernible trace of it?

For ESTJs, they may begin to doubt themselves and lose the energy that motivates them. If ESTJs start to sense a lack of appreciation, they may suddenly come across as needy in their attempt to compensate. It may not be overt. They may even try to gain recognition through various passive-aggressive means. Such action could throw off any goodwill they've earned through their good works. Think of Marie Barone, the mother character in "Everybody Loves Raymond". When she feels she's not getting enough attention for her cooking, housekeeping and other formidable caretaking skills, she makes pointed comments hoping the Barone family will notice her "sacrifices". She uses guilt. She sometimes puts others down in order to provide a contrast that creates a comparison that puts her in a more favorable light. These passive-aggressive tactics are all designed to help her receive more appreciation. Instead, as these tactics always will, they end up creating resentment.

Self-confidence rebalanced: Should things get out-of-balance and they begin to feel underappreciated, ESTJs might do well to act counter-intuitively. It may be helpful for them to take some time to be alone and away from others who they look to for an expression of gratitude. This is a real step outside of their comfort zone, since so much about their identity depends on doing for others. Such an exercise may feel impractical to them. But since stepping out of there comfort zone is where growth happens, it could produce extremely practical results.

Then, by themselves, they might take a simple self-inventory of all the good that they do. Taking a break to refocus on what is truly important may mute any need they have to obtain the praise of others. Psychology tells us that well-developed internal motivation is more reliable and more powerful than that which is external. A time away could provide an opportunity to restore a sense of motivation from within and may have a re-energizing effect.

As a bonus, the time alone to take an inventory may also help ESTJs realize others probably appreciate them, even when it doesn't appear to be. People forget to say, "Thank you" when they become used to something being done for them. In considering all ESTJs do, the inventories may help them have a sense that they must be appreciated.

ESTJs and Emotions

We would also like to spend some time covering the area that most ESTJs are likely to find very problematic – handling of feelings and emotions.

Most ESTJ personalities pride themselves in remaining rational and logical at all times, seeing most emotional displays as a sign of weakness and irrationality. As people with this personality type also tend to be very honest and straightforward, it is no surprise that they are often seen as insensitive. Some ESTJs may go even further, claiming that they have no feelings or emotions at all, and that anyone who does is weak and irrational.

Ironically, ESTJs can be just as emotional, if not more so, than any other personality type. Everything depends on how we define and handle emotions – for instance, there is a world of difference between breaking down in public and simply being thoughtful or amused. For most ESTJs, public displays of emotion are outside of their comfort zone and consequently they will do their best to restrain themselves. However, this does not mean that ESTJs have no feelings – rather, they tend to be good at channeling their emotions and using logic to keep them in check.

One of the reasons behind the cold exterior is that people with the ESTJ personality type tend to be very proud of their knowledge and abilities – revealing emotions or even acknowledging that they exist may be a frightening prospect, especially if the ESTJ in question is relatively young and secretly not as confident as they would like to be. In such cases, the ESTJ will shield themselves with coldness and logic, allowing their Thinking trait to act like a protective big brother to the weaker, less developed Feeling trait.

Second, logic and rationality play a dominant role in the ESTJ decision-making process – feelings usually only come into play when their Thinking trait cannot come up with a rational solution to a difficult problem. To give an example, if an ESTJ is upset, they will not need to tell everyone around them that they are upset – on the contrary, they will focus on identifying why they are upset and then coming up with a logical solution to their problems. Alternatively, they will channel that energy into something productive.

That being said, emotions will always influence the decisions that the ESTJ is making, at least to some extent – it is impossible to separate the two, even though most people with the ESTJ personality type try hard to make decisions and solve problems without involving their feelings. How we process is also how we feel, and how we feel is also how we process – this applies to ESTJs as well. However, people with this personality type find it quite easy to deal with those emotions internally, without exposing them to the outside world, and this is why they may radiate that aura of logic and detachment.

So, to summarize – ESTJ personalities can be very sensitive and have very deep feelings. Even though these emotions will be shielded from the public view by the Thinking trait and will (usually) not be the deciding factor in the ESTJ decision-making process, this does not mean that ESTJs should be seen as, or should aspire to be, super-efficient administrators living by the mantra that emotions are for the weak. This is not the case and is not going to happen.

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 ESTJs?

ESTJs are known for their love of order, structures and facts. Their assertiveness and logical thinking make them very efficient supervisors and administrators – on the other hand, such a combination of traits inevitably forces them to make hard choices and potentially filter out ideas that contradict their convictions. This is the reason why ESTJs tend to be less flexible compared to other personality types – this is their safeguard mechanism. Unfortunately, it is nearly impossible to grow without any growing pains and this applies to personal development as well. In order to develop as individuals, ESTJs must lower their shields from time to time, letting fresh and untested information through. They need to go beyond



their comfort zone, beyond their established rules and procedures and beyond what they already know – people with this personality type tend to be very good at finding time to improve themselves, but it is important to explore the areas that are perhaps less interesting or more challenging. This does not necessarily mean that an ESTJ must force himself or herself to enjoy theoretical topics or abstract ideas – however, they should do their best to keep an open mind and not get too critical when it comes to new things or ideas.

ESTJs are also prone to seeing their responsibilities as sacred and untouchable – once an ESTJ has been assigned a task, they will do everything they can to meet another person's expectations (and even more importantly, live up to their own ideal). Likewise, they will expect other people to do no less when it comes to their own duties – regardless of the environment. Such an approach is not a problem per se – however, it can cause significant health, relationship and professional problems for an ESTJ if they are not careful. People with this personality type are not naturally empathic or highly sensitive, and they can

easily miss emotional cues – for instance, if the ESTJ's partner is feeling unhappy and the ESTJ does not notice that, their insistence on the fulfillment of duties can lead to a lot of drama and tension. ESTJs need to remember that duties and rules are not the only things that matter in life, and that the world is not going to collapse if something is left unsupervised for a while. It is important to keep that need to help and direct in check, learning to step back and enjoy the show instead of trying to run it all the time.

ESTJs need to know that they have performed their duty well and they can also be very competitive – this can easily lead to a situation where, for example, the ESTJ stubbornly declines their colleagues' offers of assistance, refusing to change their approach or share the workload. This may eventually cause major problems for the ESTJ in the workplace, especially if the methods and procedures they are sticking to are less effective than those proposed by their colleagues or subordinates – inflexibility is seen as a major weakness in today's corporate environment. ESTJs trust and respect authority, but it is also important to remember that authority does not always equal being right – it is important to listen to different opinions and respect different views.

ESTJs also need to pay more attention to their emotional intelligence. People with this personality type tend to be sociable, friendly and easy to get to know, but they may have difficulties expressing their feelings and may even be seen as cold and rule-bound. ESTJs are no-nonsense people, always keeping their feet on the ground – this is a great trait when it comes to administering, supervising and issuing orders, however, it is also important to learn to respond to the emotions of others, especially outside the professional environment.

As already mentioned, ESTJs are also very confident in their knowledge. This is usually a very attractive trait which makes it easier to charm a potential partner or get ahead on the career ladder. However, an ESTJ should make sure that such confidence does not come across as arrogance or condescension – this is a sure way to alienate other people. Although ESTJs tend to be cooperative, their instinct in such situations is often to assume that those individuals are less intelligent or rational and therefore should be informed of the facts. This attitude may prevent personal growth and development, severely limiting the ESTJ's prospects. A mature and wise ESTJ can achieve truly amazing things, but only if they recognize that their abilities and knowledge are not limitless.

It is also very important for an ESTJ to accept the idea that their knowledge can and will be enhanced as a result of consciously seeking opportunities to connect with and listen to other people, even to those who focus more on emotions than on logic and facts. The one thing that all ESTJs are afraid of is that something can destabilize the set of rules, procedures and traditions that they have surrounded themselves with. Of course, there needs to be an emotional distance between the ESTJ and the environment – however, the ESTJ 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”.

Finally, ESTJs should watch out for the build-up of inner tension and frustration. Despite being seemingly independent and strong-willed, ESTJs need to know that they are respected and their work is appreciated. The problem is that sometimes people around them get so used to the order and stability that the ESTJ surrounds them with, that they forget to actually thank the ESTJ for all their hard work. There are few things more frustrating to people with this personality type than the feeling that others are taking their services for granted without even saying thanks. This frustration may eventually burst out, surprising those around the ESTJ. People with the ESTJ type tend to be incredibly hard working, but not everyone is able (or willing) to recognize their efforts.

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 ESTJ Traits?

The most impressive trait of all ESTJs is that they are very determined and willing to do whatever is necessary to achieve their goals. They will work hard and not shy away from routine tasks. ESTJs' integrity and respect for rules also have no limits – this personality type is definitely one of the pillars of our society. Consequently, ESTJs are usually seen as highly trustworthy and responsible people, who can get the job done. This is highly likely to help them achieve success in careers that are generally seen as traditional and hierarchical – public service, military, medicine, education etc. ESTJs thrive in the environment that is built on rules and structures. This is their element. That being said, an ESTJ should

also try to challenge themselves and seek personal growth and development wherever possible – it is way too easy to get used to simply following the rules and not thinking beyond them. ESTJs can be much more than this, but they must put in the effort to become more balanced.

In order to succeed and use their gifts in the best way, ESTJs need to focus on their strongest suit – logistical skills, as opposed to diplomatic, tactical or strategic skills. This is the area ESTJs feel most at home in – and unlike many other types, they are likely to see logistical and administrative tasks as fun and enjoyable. People with this personality type dislike change and prefer evolution rather than revolution, paying more attention and respect to traditions rather than perpetual changes. The stability of society rests upon the shoulders of ESTJs and this is the strength they should focus on – making sure that everything and everyone does what they are supposed to do. The ESTJs' reliability and logistical intellect are invaluable in many situations and they should not be reluctant to pat themselves on the back for a job well done – people with this personality type may not be as spontaneous or artistic as others, but their contribution is vital to the success of many projects.

Thanks to their assertiveness and administrative skills, ESTJs have little to no difficulties issuing orders – and other people often find themselves obeying without a second thought. This is both a boon and a problem – on one hand, leadership traits usually allow ESTJs to advance quickly in their careers; on the other hand, they also put a lot of weight on the ESTJ's shoulders as their colleagues, spouses and children get used to looking up to them for guidance and support. ESTJs should embrace these strengths and not be afraid to command and supervise – this will be easier than it might seem – however, they should also remember that with great power comes great responsibility. There is no need to sacrifice yourself and feel eternally tired – more often than not, other people will do just fine even if you are not there to watch their every step.

ESTJ personalities should also recognize their need to belong. It could be anything – a community club, an organization with a strong corporate culture, their own family, or a circle of friends. The only thing that matters is that the ESTJ feels safe and secure, and sees himself or herself as a loyal, valuable member of their chosen group. Sense of community is very important for ESTJs, no matter how big that community is – this is one of their anchors in life, even though finding the right group can be a challenge.

After all, ESTJs are probably the best guardians and protectors of the social order – but they need to know who or what they are supposed to protect. People with this personality type will always seek this sense of belonging, sometimes consciously and sometimes unconsciously – recognizing this inborn need can make their life much easier.

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.

ESTJs are not an exception to this rule. Your “evil twin” would be an unhealthy version of the INFP personality – it may push you towards things like emotional outbursts, blindly following random

idealistic goals, choosing a completely unstructured lifestyle, withdrawing from social interaction etc. This may even feel liberating at times – for instance, you may feel strangely energized by living without any plans or rules, or by taking 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 ESTJs’ personal growth is emotional stability. This is determined by the last trait that we discussed in the “ESTJ 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 ESTJ, 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 ESTJs tend to be rather firm when it comes to principles and traditions that are important to them, but Assertive ESTJs go further, feeling confident about their convictions regardless of the opposition. Furthermore, Assertive individuals are unlikely to internalize emotions, instead choosing to express them freely – this means that even deep down, they are not really affected by either negative or positive feelings. 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 ESTJs are likely to have a lower drive and potentially productivity, due to lower sensitivity to negative outcomes. People with this variant of the ESTJ personality also tend to be more forceful and self-confident, which can isolate them from other people – it is important to remember that ESTJs 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 ESTJ, you would still be rather confident in your principles, knowing that you are hardworking, responsible and trustworthy – 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 ideas become reality, 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 ESTJs 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 ESTJ, 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 ESTJs should not try to present themselves as shining beacons of duty and devotion, who cannot be affected by mood swings or social expectations. 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

Few things are as straightforward and stable as ESTJ relationships. People with this personality type tend to be very reliable and this is reflected in their love life as well – once the ESTJ decides to commit, they will try very hard to make the relationship work. It is unlikely that they will be spontaneous or unpredictable and may even be seen as boring by some other personality types. However, ESTJs tend to have a lot of energy and enthusiasm, which translate into unexpected surprises and interesting activities – for example, dating an ESTJ is likely to be quite exciting as they will easily come up with fun things to do.



ESTJ personalities are very trustworthy and committed partners, able and willing to do everything in their power to ensure that the relationship is strong and stable. However, ESTJs also tend to have strong principles and their determination can often turn into stubbornness, with the ESTJ believing that they are always right. Such an attitude is very dangerous in a romantic relationship, especially during the dating phase, when both individuals are still discovering each other. A strong self-confidence can be very attractive, but it is also equally likely that the ESTJ partner will feel threatened or at least annoyed by it.

People with the ESTJ personality type are great at protecting their loved ones and defending their interests. This trait is common among Sentinels and it is likely to manifest both during the dating phase and later in the relationship. Most personality types are likely to be grateful for such a “shield” – however, the ESTJ should also make sure that they do not come across as arrogant or condescending. Standing up for your partner is one thing; telling them what to do or not to do is quite another.

ESTJs are very likely to encourage their partners to participate in various social events and activities, seeing them as fun and exciting. However, ESTJ personalities are far less spontaneous compared to other ES types and they will probably stick to places, activities and people they are familiar with – e.g. family events, nights out with colleagues, community groups etc.

When it comes to sexuality, ESTJs are likely to prioritize the physical side of intimacy rather than approach it from the spiritual or highly emotional perspective. ESTJ personalities tend to be very energetic, especially where their duties are concerned – this also applies to the sexual side of their relationships. The ESTJ is unlikely to be expressive verbally, but their sensuality will more than compensate for that. That being said, people with this personality type prefer clear structures and traditions, and are likely to seek some degree of predictability in their sexual activities as well.

No one dating an ESTJ or being in a long-term relationship with them should expect too many touchy-feely moments as feelings and emotions are definitely not their strongest suit. This may cause some difficulties if their partner belongs to one of the Feeling types – the ESTJ may find it quite tricky to understand the language of emotions. Ironically, ESTJs also tend to have a very strong need to feel appreciated and respected by their partners, even though this need is more rational than emotional – i.e. the ESTJ would rather hear that their partner appreciates their advice and support than have their partner express this indirectly by affection, increased attention etc. This usually has a significant impact on the ESTJ's self-confidence, but no ESTJ would openly acknowledge that. Anyone dating a person belonging to this personality type or being in a relationship with them should be aware of this peculiar trait.

ESTJ personalities are hard workers, and this covers their relationships as well – they will do their best to fulfill their duties and keep the relationship functional and stable. ESTJs can easily take care of daily tasks and they also tend to pay a lot of attention to their weaknesses as a partner (e.g. when it comes to emotional support, something that ESTJs often find challenging), as soon as they realize that their partner needs this.

That being said, ESTJs tend to believe that their approach is always right, especially when they are faced with criticism. ESTJs should remember that “winning” the debate might often cause them to lose much more outside of it, especially when it comes to a romantic relationship and even more so when that relationship is still in the dating phase. Some ESTJs also make the mistake of trying to get their partner to comply with the traditions and rules that are dear to the ESTJ's heart. While such endeavors do succeed sometimes, more often than not they do not achieve anything, causing frustration and tension instead.

We are who we are, and trying to get another person to adapt their personality type to suit your preferences is a fruitless exercise.

Generally, ESTJ personalities are very direct and honest with their partners. They find it easy to express their satisfaction when everything is going smoothly and their dating or long-term partner is meeting all their needs. And vice versa, if something threatens the relationship, the ESTJ will try to deal with the issue by approaching it directly rather than attempting to sweep it under the carpet. Their approach is likely to be highly rational and unemotional, even if the actual issue is quite sensitive – many other personality types will appreciate the level-headedness and calm of the ESTJ.

Talking of emotions, it is safe to say that they are likely to cause some of the most significant difficulties in ESTJ relationships. Despite being very social, ESTJs are not too good at deciphering the feelings of other people and can often be quite inattentive when it comes to sensing how their dating or a long-term partner feels. This is especially important in conflict situations – for instance, Feeling types tend to be extremely vulnerable to conflicts and the rational approach preferred by most ESTJs is likely to frustrate them even further.

ESTJs are not naturally emotional and there is nothing wrong with that – however, people with this personality type should not dismiss emotions as pointless and irrational. Different does not mean wrong and being sensitive is often far more important than being right. Learning to recognize and appreciate emotions would go a long way towards making the ESTJ's personality more well-rounded and less prone to “I am always right” and similar sentiments.

Preferred partners: ISFP and ISTP types as their Introversion and Prospecting traits counterbalance ESTJs' Extraversion and Judging 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 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 Introverted and Extraverted individuals 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.
1. **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

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 the 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 energy styles 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 individuals 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 labelling 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 your partner:

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 you:

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 individuals 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.

An Observant (S) Partner

As Observant individuals, you are both likely to prefer relying on your senses over introspection – that is, you will spend more time keeping your feet on the ground as opposed to exploring the world of ideas.

A relationship between two Observant types is usually very straightforward, practical and fun – both partners are usually able to handle practical tasks very well, focusing exclusively on real and tangible things. The combination of pragmatism, down-to-earth attitude and “let’s just do it” approach is likely to be a great driving force in your relationship.

Observant types form the majority of the population (75-85%) and many traditions and social norms revolve around your traits as well. Consequently, you are unlikely to have difficulties understanding each other or finding things to do. All Observant individuals enjoy things that they can see, touch and feel - therefore, activities that excite you will probably be attractive to your partner as well and you will not need to worry about being misunderstood. 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. Your pragmatism and observation skills will be very useful in everyday life, but you may have difficulties when it comes to imagination and reflection. This does not mean that Observant types are unimaginative – quite the contrary, they are often brilliant artists. However, that tendency to rely on the real world and ignore all things abstract can often lead to too much of routine or overstimulation of senses (e.g. by only focusing on material things). There will be times when it will be necessary to brainstorm about the future or reflect on things, disagreements or events – you are both likely to have difficulties in this area and addressing this should be one of your priorities.

Another problem that you are likely to face is your relative inflexibility. Observant types tend to be quite protective of their habits and may feel uncomfortable in situations that require innovative thinking and quick, imaginative solutions. It is important to take time to forget the habits and let yourselves dream and fantasize every once in a while - keep your feet on the ground, but your eyes on the stars.

Tips for both individuals:

1. **Improve your introspection skills.** You are both likely to be practical and realistic, but it is also often necessary to spend some time reflecting on things. Forget the practical world and embrace your imagination from time to time.

2. **Be imaginative.** Observant individuals often focus too much on routines or physical things. Do not be afraid of exploring ideas without knowing whether they are actually practical or implementable.
3. **Remember to think about the future.** You are both 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.
4. **Do things that engage your senses.** You both will find it easier to deal with practical things than ideas, so look for activities that require good use of all five senses (e.g. sports, hiking, dancing etc.). This is especially important in the dating phase.
1. **Be careful with criticism.** As Observant individuals, you will both have your feet firmly on the ground, but that also means that you are likely to have disagreements over how to deal with practical things, each having your own opinion. Stay calm and compromise.

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 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

Judgers enjoy planning and committing to things as opposed to keeping their options open. As you both share this trait, it is unlikely that you will have difficulties making up your minds and sticking to specific goals or plans. This will contribute greatly to the stability of your relationship, with both partners always staying on track and focusing on what has to be done.

As Judgers, you are also likely to be dedicated and patient partners, putting your duties above pleasure. You will both work hard on the relationship and have no difficulties making up your minds, especially when it comes to future plans.

On the other hand, there are two sides to every story and Judger-Judger relationships are not an exception. Planning and scheduling inevitably come with a degree of inflexibility and this can cause tension in the relationship. For instance, Judgers are likely to defend their opinions quite fiercely, unwilling to give up and accept a different point of view. Not surprisingly, two Judgers may often clash with each other, with their need for closure demanding a clear solution and a clear path forward.

There is another problem that you may face. You are both likely to find it difficult to change your habits or long-held views – this is a good trait when it comes to duties and commitments, but it can also prevent you from keeping your eyes open for better alternatives. Consequently, you may never know what opportunities you have missed. This covers many things, ranging from hobbies to holiday plans – shaking things up can bring a lot of variety and novelty into the relationship. Do not be afraid to experiment or simply be more spontaneous every once in a while.

Unlike Prospectors (P), who are generally more relaxed about their duties and deadlines, Judges are also likely to get stressed when things do not go according to their plans. Watch out for these tendencies and learn to step away from that strict work ethic in your relationship when a situation demands. This does not mean that you have to stop making plans or start living completely in the present – rather, there needs to be a balance between stability and spontaneity, and you will both have to decide where that balance is in your relationship.

Tips for both individuals:

1. **Be open-minded.** As Judges, 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 you both have different opinions.
2. **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.
3. **Do not exhaust yourselves.** Your desire to get things done can bring a lot of stress into your own lives and into the relationship. Learn to step back and relax – the world is not going to collapse if you miss a self-imposed deadline.
4. **Find time for each other.** Do not get so caught up in plans, tasks and order that you lose sight of what is really important. There is nothing wrong about being playful and simply having fun instead of doing yet another task. All work and no play is not the way to go in a relationship.

A Prospecting (P) Partner

In contrast to Judges, Prospectors like to keep their options open, always looking for alternatives and opportunities. A relationship between a Judge and a Prospector 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 Judge will try to come up with an agenda and then stick to it until the end. The Prospector will refuse to lay out all the possibilities and probabilities, making things up as they 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 Judger-Prospector relationships are not an exception. Judgers' planning and scheduling inevitably come with a degree of inflexibility and this can bring tension into the relationship – which can then be defused by the easygoing Prospector. Likewise, Prospectors 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 Judger. 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, the Prospecting partner 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 Judger's stability and Prospector's spontaneity, and you will both have to decide where that balance is in your relationship.

Tips for you:

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 Judger, 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 your partner:

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 Prospector, 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.** Prospectors 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.

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

ESTJs are strong, traditional friends who appreciate loyalty and shared values. Friendships with the ESTJ personality type are often defined by their mutual activities and routines, by external factors, more so than the sense of intellectual or mystical compatibility that many Analysts and Diplomats share among themselves. But this in no way diminishes the relationships – ESTJs' friendships of dependability and mutual interest can be powerful connections that endure life's changes with immutable constancy.



Among their established friends, ESTJs show themselves to be outgoing and enthusiastic, always more than happy to bring others along for some healthy sport and outdoor activity. ESTJs sometimes get a little overbearing in their push for participation, but it's just because they want everyone to have a good time. ESTJs' friends are never short on invites to social activities and events, from tickets to a local ball game, to a weekend camping trip, to Sunday BBQ.

ESTJs seek strong friendships founded on trust and loyalty (though loyalty to family does come first). Active and with quick minds, people with the ESTJ personality type can't ever be accused of not doing enough to fend off a little boredom. While ESTJs may not always be the life of the party, they know how to play their part in making sure their friends have a good time.

The way ESTJs establish and maintain their friendships does limit the pool though, as they tend to seek out people who are similar to themselves, who share their respect for traditions and institutions. ESTJ personalities are naturally stubborn, and it can be hard for them to find enough common ground with people who constantly disagree with their principles and beliefs to really form those ties of friendship.

ESTJs' challenge in friendship isn't about finding fun things to do or people to do them with, but in finding diversity in their friends and activities. For all their community participation, ESTJs struggle

immensely in even fully listening to differing opinions, let alone befriending people who consistently express alternate viewpoints. Whether about local political issues or the validity of a more emotional, idealistic disposition than they think is reasonable, ESTJs should make an effort to truly understand these alternate viewpoints. Simply put, it's healthy for ESTJs to have some loyal opposition.

Exposing themselves to new ideas among acquaintances who think differently can do no harm – either people with the ESTJ personality type discover better ways and a stronger foundation, or they gain all the more confidence in their beliefs for having successfully defended them. Just as ESTJs may think those loners who spend their lives in their basements playing video games need to get out more, ESTJs themselves need to make sure they get out of their own bubbles of unchallenged opinions and beliefs.

That exposure is exactly what we discuss here. It's a big world out there, and if there's one thing ESTJs appreciate, it's a more complete and organized approach to that world. They may be more skeptical than most, but they also can't help but be intrigued by a different approach that proves itself effective. Much like these profiles, no one tool, person or viewpoint is universal, but they can all be useful and enjoyable. Let's discuss further how each personality type group fits into that framework, the challenges they face, and the benefits they gain through better understanding.

Analyst Friends

Friendships with Analysts revolve around a battle of rational wits. ESTJs are the ultimate practical thinkers, keeping their projects and friends clean, logical, and functional. They see clearly how to get from A to B to C to D. But they often question why they need to get to D at all, when A gets the job done just fine. Analysts are practical in theory, with a passion for efficiency and effectiveness, but they tend to see steps A and D, and hope that B and C will become clearer with time.

While Analysts' hypothetical postulations can annoy, ESTJs often see themselves as mentors as much as friends, and actually have quite a bit of fun. ESTJs force their friends to compose their insights more clearly and connect the dots, and Analysts have a good time pitting their ideas against ESTJs' formidable logic – and they may even convince them that getting to D was worthwhile after all. These types are likely to enjoy chess and other games of strategy. Analysts are often brilliant, but much of that relies on

long, complex strategies or drawing reactions from their opposition and exploiting the revelations. ESTJs are patient, revealing little and making sound decisions unburdened by assumptions that don't hold up.

It's a little harder with less patient or more sensitive Analysts, though. Rather than considering them insightful, ESTJs consider them to be impractical and naïve. They may even feel pity, thinking they try too hard to impress, and look the fool for it. Analysts can see ESTJs as simply hiding a lack of imagination behind a veil of logical skepticism. If either opinion gets out – and neither is well-known for tact – things can break down pretty quickly. But things that should be said should be said, and if they can keep things phrased as impartial observations, they settle with a better sense of understanding and move on.

If they can balance their contrasting traits, it's certainly a rewarding friendship. Analysts are best known for being good with the future, not the present, and spending time with ESTJs can help them to see the little steps through in ways that make sense. For their part, Analysts are often impressed by and even envious of the energy and focus that ESTJs are able to maintain moment to moment, day to day, even year to year. That kind of strength of character isn't something they see often, and they respect it.

Ultimately the growth of the friendship is made or broken by one of Analysts' greatest flaws: their cavalier attitude towards actually maintaining their friendships. This is unacceptable to ESTJs, who all but define the quality of these relationships by their involvement and constancy. With a mutual interest to hold them together though, these types should hit it off nicely.

Diplomat Friends

ESTJ – Diplomat friendships don't happen quickly. With ESTJs' opposite type among them – sensitive, dreamy, and idealistic INFPs – there's a lot of potential conflict. All Diplomats share that idealistic quality, and approach life with fluidity, understanding and passion. ESTJs, by contrast, are bulwarks. They take a traditional approach to their social lives, with organized activities revolving around classic themes like hikes or watching the ballgame. Sitting down for an hours-long discussion about what tomorrow may bring is not really their idea of a good time.

But if there's a shortcoming to ESTJs, it's exactly that lack of reaching inspiration. Like Analysts, Diplomats' jumping from the first step to the last with little consideration for what happens between can

be impractical. But without that desire to imagine what just might be possible, we're left without the goals to plan those concrete steps towards. ESTJs look forward to a certain extent, so they can establish a career or buy a house, but they can miss out on the beauty around them, the culture and whimsy that Diplomats are so in tune with.

ESTJs "pshaw" at their peril. By having a Diplomat friend, they not only open themselves up to amazing experiences that seemed "pointless" at a glance, but to more practical benefits as well. ESTJs struggle with emotional empathy. Learning to enjoy themselves with such heartfelt people, they have an opportunity to better understand others. They pride themselves on their rational thought, but if ESTJs disregard emotional involvement, they disregard reality – and that's not rational at all.

For their part, it's a great opportunity for ESTJs to adopt their role as mentor-friends here more than anywhere. If Diplomats ever want to do the things they say they do, they need that practical support and realism. It also doesn't hurt for Diplomats to see that Proust isn't the only way to have a good time, and to really engage that colorful world from their dreams.

Sentinel Friends

Other Sentinels are a good fit for ESTJs, who share their appreciation for dependability and practicality. The friendship is defined by day-to-day activities, rather than ambition or purely theoretical curiosity. ESTJs enjoy that the friendships are uncomplicated and clearly established. This may not sound exciting, but Sentinels know too well the flake and the fair-weather friend. Knowing that someone has stood by them through thick and thin for years, and will continue to do so, is no small consideration.

A healthy group is usually best for ESTJs. They're unlikely to be overwhelmed by too many voices, though they're more likely to stand back and observe than most Extraverts. One-on-one, they'll happily sit down for a chat over coffee or chess, but no matter how long they've been friends, there is a little nagging worry that they'll run out of things to talk about. It's often much more enjoyable to go out and do something together, watch a sports match or go to the zoo, where the attraction gives them opportunities to frame new lines of discussion if they need to.

Regardless of how many people there are, these discussions are likely to revolve around practical things that can actually be done, whether planning hikes or get-togethers, or more serious things like viable courses of study or careers. They aren't big on esoteric idealism – “talk for the sake of talk”. In fact, ESTJs are often annoyed when distant things like global politics dominate a discussion. Having Sentinel friends lets them pursue their preferred course unimpeded.

Their need to keep things rational can create rifts though. ESTJs define their self-esteem in large part by the clarity of their thought and their ability to follow through. Emotional responses, to them at least, are unpredictable and unreliable, and they too readily brush them aside. ISFJs especially take these rejections to heart very easily, shutting down in the face of such matter-of-fact rejection.

ESTJs are administrators at heart, and tend to classify things as what they have time to understand, and what they don't. That's part of why ESTJs prefer to keep their conversations practical and factual. It provides clarity so that right and wrong are clearly established, and prevents unnecessary wastage from things that have little bearing on daily reality. Whether ESTJs agree with that emotional disposition or not though, it is a fact of life that they must take the time to account for if they value the friendship.

When more emotionally-charged situations occur, not just among friends but with breakups and deaths in the family, ESTJs enjoy having friends who are able to simply stand by their side. ESTJs' reputation for impartial criticism may not seem like the best quality when their friends are going through such situations, but their ability to stand in silent support as well means more than their words ever could. They don't appreciate profuse pity and hugs, but they enjoy having a friend they can depend on.

Explorer Friends

The ESTJ – Explorer friendship is a bit of a mixed bag. Explorers are defined by the moment and its pleasures. They are known for unpredictability, and to logical and responsible ESTJs, are often simply reckless. But this actually works out well with ISTPs and ESTPs. They may have different approaches, but they also tend to enjoy the same things, like skill-based hobbies and the outdoors. The way Explorers lose themselves in the moment, though sometimes alarming, can also be quite refreshing.

Likewise, as fun as the moment is, it certainly does Explorers some good to remember that actions have consequences. A grand adventure is swell, but you need someone beside you who thought ahead to bring enough provisions. This is the real beauty of this friendship – Explorers have so many plans, but without the necessary details, they fall through. They need someone to make a reality check. It's dangerous to act without preparing, but fruitless to never act for caution.

While things work well enough with the Thinking types though, ISFP and ESFP can be a struggle for ESTJs. These types focus on emotional satisfaction and beauty. They have a far, far greater appetite for artful expression and their unexplored feelings than ESTJs are up for, and little fortitude when their ideas are checked. They'd both benefit from some mutual understanding, but really these Explorers are just too emotionally driven and ESTJs too ruthlessly practical to get along without some serious effort.

Like with their Sentinel friends, ESTJs appreciate the practical side of Explorers. The kinds of constructive projects and activities that ESTPs and ISTPs enjoy are the kind that ESTJs respect and enjoy most. Friendships with more adventurous ESTPs can be especially fun, but any of these Explorers, if they can find the right balance, can help to break up ESTJs' crust a little bit so they can see the world from a perspective rooted in just a bit more genuine curiosity.

Parenthood

ESTJs' mantra of "hard work, tradition, respect" is best exemplified in their relationships with their children. In many ways, they are the classic 50's era father figure – strict guardians of family traditions who have no trouble when it comes to enforcing the rules and standards they've established. Often seen as model citizens, ESTJs expect their children to carry that image, continuing the example they've set by being polite and respectful – insubordination is not tolerated.



ESTJs have a very responsibility-oriented life-view. They share a firm belief in the idea that one does what one can in order to contribute to the family and the community. This view is of course extended to their children. As soon as they are able, their children are expected to contribute in their own way, by cleaning their plates and their rooms and going to bed on time – by maintaining the order of things.

This inflexibility can become a challenge as their children grow into their more naturally rebellious adolescent years. ESTJs protect those they care about, and their children are no different, but they expect their children to adhere to the structures they've put in place to ensure that protection. ESTJs enjoy creating secure, stable environments, and consider it an affront to have those considerations rejected – again, insubordination is not tolerated.

It's not that they have wild, high-flying hopes of perfection for their children – ESTJs are down-to-earth people and simply want to see their children develop into respected, responsible adults. But ESTJ personalities also want their children to be strong-willed and capable, and that is something that can only happen when they have the chance to make their own decisions, and the chance to face the consequences of those decisions, good or bad, with the love and support of their parents.

They may face challenges as their children learn to balance a growing desire for independence with the respect and adherence to their duties required of them. ESTJs have a clear advantage though, with

consistency and direct honesty that never leaves their expectations ambiguous. It can be a tall order, but ESTJs' children always know what they need to bring to the table, and most come to recognize and appreciate the dedication and hard work their parents bring in return.

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, something ESTJs are more likely than most to believe. Rather, they are separate, growing, and whole individuals, with their own wants and needs. Their own personality types guide what kinds of information and interactions are most valuable to them. Each person demands a unique approach.

ESTJs, by the time they become parents, have had years to sort out what works for them. They prize responsibility and sensibility above just about all else. They value (or require) clarity and emotional stability in others. They believe that the accepted solution is the right one, and have trouble turning off the need for clearly defined, hierarchical relationships – even when their children are full-grown adults.

If they by chance end up raising a child who shares the Sentinel type group, ESTJs 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 community activities or hands-on hobbies – or if they actually want to be seen as weird? What happens if their children are impulsive and strongly emotional, behaving in ways that seem utterly irrational (but are in fact perfectly natural)?

ESTJs' strengths lie in stability and function, not spontaneity and sensitivity. They focus on encouraging useful roles, and just don't understand frivolous wants or "excessive" emotional expression. We hope that with these suggestions, ESTJs can strengthen that less-developed side of theirs and gain confidence as they learn to adapt to children who need to know why, or who want and crave ambiguity and the freedom to figure out their own way. We also hope to help ESTJ parents to develop more meaningful relationships with those children who do share their own traits and qualities.

Analyst Children

Analyst children expect themselves to be intelligent, independent, successful people. ESTJ parents are plenty eager to help them meet these expectations, but they have different ideas about how to get there.

Obedience and respect are important qualities to all Sentinels, and especially ESTJs. They can be caught quite off-guard by Analysts' willful nature. But the best lessons are by example, and ESTJs teach their Analyst children about the merits of respect and accountability by living those qualities every day.

While there can be some miscommunications, this arrangement usually works splendidly. Both types share the Thinking trait, so little is taken personally. It all comes down to what functions best. Analysts have different needs from Sentinels though, and it's important for ESTJ parents to take the time to really understand what their children need in order to achieve the success they both crave – and more importantly, to understand what their children actually consider to be success. Analysts don't seek out stability and reputation the way ESTJs do. What they need are strategic, intellectual challenges. It's why they argue, and why they push limits. Anything less is just damaging to their self-esteem.

There is a middle ground, and ESTJs have the skill to find it. Analysts may not respect authority for its own sake, but they do respect those who prove themselves intelligent. ESTJs' attention to detail and fact, and their down-to-earth practicality, are qualities worthy of admiration. They can be used to help steer their children towards structured activities that provide an outlet for those intellectual needs, be it chess clubs, debate or, in the teenage years, elective courses and guidance on selecting majors.

For fun, Analysts create their own activities and various experiments. ESTJ parents are happy to encourage such things by ensuring that activities and playmates are organized and available. As their children grow and activities become more complex though, ESTJs assert more guidance and support. Their Analyst children, meanwhile, crave ever more independence. For ESTJs, the right activities are the ones that have respected reputations. But Analysts are unlikely to play nice with the Girl Scouts, and their argumentative, off-key nature can be embarrassing for parents who put so much store in fitting in.

ESTJs place a great deal of importance on finding productive roles, which, despite the inevitable disagreements, is exactly the balance Analysts need to their unconventional visions. But they need to work as equals with their children if they're going to be as successful as they can be, and that can take some getting used to. If they can adjust to it, ESTJs often find a certain respect for the creativity and intellectual flexibility their children bear. Likewise Analyst children come to respect the simple effectiveness of following through on obligations, to everyone's benefit.

Diplomat Children

ESTJ parents and Diplomat children can be a frustrating match. Opposing on both their Observant-Intuition traits and their Thinking-Feeling traits, and in the case of INFPs on all four traits, they often simply don't understand each other. ESTJs and Diplomats just see things from very different perspectives.

ESTJs are impressed by the creativity and imagination that their children draw on. But they are also often frustrated by their children's clumsiness with the responsibilities of the world around them, from forgetting chores to missing details on college applications. Diplomats by their nature can appreciate the people that ESTJs are, their reliability and stature, but struggle to understand the need for those things in their own lives – though it's certainly something they can benefit from.

Emotional expression is the biggest challenge for ESTJs and Diplomats. Diplomats expect a more deep and far-reaching exchange than ESTJs are comfortable with, but this openness is what they need to stay happy and healthy. If all their interactions are reduced to household chores and getting out the door on time, however necessary, they can feel closed in. Diplomats' feelings are tied to their imaginations, and it can feel like there's some deep rift between them, when really it's just a lack of communication.

The most straightforward solution is for ESTJs to just remember to tell their children they love them. It can get left out in the hustle and bustle of daily life, but it can be made a part of the daily routine as well. Further, by explaining how much it means to them to be on time or polite, ESTJ parents can help their children to understand the importance of such things. They may not feel it in the same way, but Diplomats instinctively find value in what they know is important to those they care about.

By meeting each other's needs, ESTJ parents and Diplomat children help each other to be better-rounded people. Despite the misalignments, they share many important values like honesty, integrity, and fairness. Diplomats' gentle emotions can even help ESTJs to access their own feelings, something that doesn't happen for just anyone.

But enough of the heavy stuff – what about having fun? Despite their differences, ESTJs and Diplomats have quite a bit of overlap. Diplomats enjoy the wonder of living things and people and ideas, while

ESTJs appreciate community-oriented institutions. Trips to the library, zoos, museums and historical landmarks all allow ESTJ parents to examine the facts, while their Diplomat children can dream about how these stories, creatures, artifacts and landmarks have shaped the world today, and how they may shape the world tomorrow.

Encouraging INFPs and INFJs to write about these experiences, and ENFPs and ENFJs to talk about them, can help to extend and cement the positive experiences these parents and children share in these activities. Even when one thing or another falls flat, ESTJs' sense of parental responsibility and Diplomats' forgiving nature can always be depended on to let them try again.

Sentinel Children

The benefits of ESTJs' having Sentinel children are pretty easy to see. Because they share the Observant trait, they see the world much the same way, as things that simply are and must be, without the baggage of inferences and assumptions. ISTJs and fellow ESTJs also share the Thinking trait, making logical decisions over more principled emotions. Even ISFJs and ESFJs, if not always coming to the same conclusions, at least come to conclusions that can be followed in clear steps. This makes communication between ESTJ parents and their Sentinel children very straightforward.

It also means that they enjoy many of the same activities, such as keeping up with current events and many traditional hobbies like building and painting models. ESTJs' actions are planned and hands-on, not impulsive and impressionistic – it can be quite a relief to know that their children, especially fellow ESTJs, would rather plan a group hike or play chess than to write poetry together or play overly-involved fantasy games. ISTJ and ISFJ children challenge their parents' ideas about a more robust social life, but at least with activities that make sense and that both can happily engage.

However, the drawbacks are the same as in any relationship with poor diversity. Without differing perspectives, neither side is encouraged to develop their weaknesses to become better-rounded individuals. ESTJs encourage learning, but they focus on the things they value: community, measurable achievements, and organization. Intrinsic motivation, empathy, and the simple act of spontaneous fun

all suffer. Explaining how to save to buy a house is easy enough. Explaining exactly why someone's feelings are important though, or why curiosity is inherently valuable, is another matter.

Motivational and emotional lessons aside, flexibility is probably the most vital consideration for ESTJ parents. Sentinel children struggle to manage unpredictable environments and conflicting information, and ESTJs have poorly developed tools for encouraging such adaptations. Such situations, like deciding to move to a new area in search of more reliable work, are a fact of life, but with such stable parents, one their children rarely encounter. Sentinels all crave structure and predictability, which makes it easier for ESTJ parents overall, at least in the short-term, but there are drawbacks.

With too much structure, ESTJs' Sentinel children can grow up not learning to direct themselves at all, making it even more challenging to deal with the unforeseeable. Or they can maintain existing situations so stubbornly that they ignore chances to move forward in life. Taken too far, even the best-case scenario is that they lead a sterile life, missing out on adventures like world travel or better careers. At worst, they can miss out on the things that make life itself beautiful, fearing the disruption of falling head-over-heels in love, or of trying something new simply because they're passionate about it.

It sometimes makes sense to do what's proven over what might be fun, or to do what needs to be done, even if it means setting aside your passion. But when these behaviors become an ingrained habit, they breed unhappiness and dissatisfaction in ways that can prevent the relationships and experiences that are most rewarding. It's important for ESTJ parents to recognize their own need for self-direction, and to ensure that their children, no matter how stable they appear to be, realize theirs.

Explorer Children

If there's one thing ESTJs enjoy, it's getting what needs to be done, done. Lucky for them, Explorers share this passion for efficiency, though their approach is far more sporadic and dependent on the "fun factor". Rather than getting things done because they are expected to, Explorers get things done as a byproduct of striving 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.

ESTJs easily organize get-togethers to keep their children engaged, and love supporting them as they discover everything such activities have to offer. With a little practice, they can even frame chores and other daily necessities as games, helping their Explorer children to associate such things with fun, their key motivator. It doesn't take long to get a feel for what Explorers enjoy either – they are just so physically expressive, and when something strikes a chord, they can hardly be pulled away. The trick is to recognize that it's okay for the necessary and unnecessary alike to be fun.

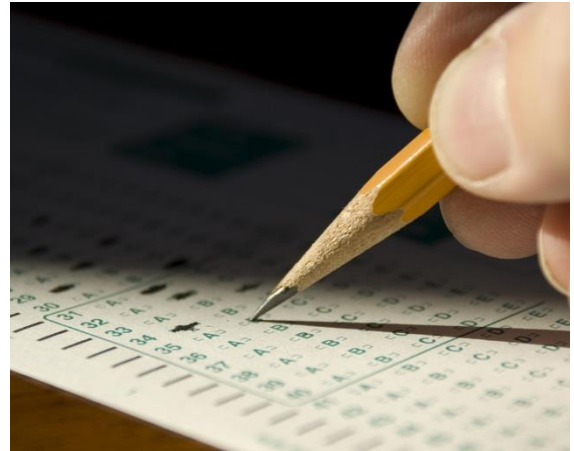
As they get older, Explorers seek more independence. They don't want their parents to keep offering up things to do, something structure-oriented ESTJs can struggle with. Explorers are creative, energetic people, and it can take everything ESTJs have just to keep Explorers' energy pointed in a useful direction, or at least in a direction that spares the walls another crayon mural.

Explorers can easily tax ESTJs' patience – they are so spontaneous and their interests so fleeting that even having to wait from one day to the next can ruin them. This “I want it now” attitude can be pretty frustrating for parents who place so much importance on consistency, who pride themselves on being seen as reliable. If Explorers' demands are countered too harshly, especially sensitive ISFPs and ESFPs, things can fall apart especially quickly.

Explorers' sensitivity to criticism and tendency to act without thinking about the consequences is by far the biggest frustration for ESTJ parents. This undeterred and impulsive self-indulgence makes building a reputation for responsibility especially difficult, something extremely important to ESTJs. But at the same time, Explorers hardly want for passion, the key ingredient in the most fulfilling successes. ESTJs' steady support and community involvement is just what Explorers need to have enough temperance and feedback to stay out of trouble, and to otherwise 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.



How ESTJs learn

Pragmatism, duty, and tradition: These are three words that are foundational to the how ESTJs learn. They are most comfortable in a traditional classroom with traditional teaching methods. ESTJs have little interest in the abstract or the theoretical. They are much more interested in the practical. They prefer that everything be a “how-to” experience on some level in the classroom. They will tolerate the theoretical only under the condition the lesson ties the idea to something practical. If a debate or lecture does not land on something useful, they are likely to see the whole experience as “going around in circles”. They are more at home with proven and conventional ideas linked to a concrete purpose. ESTJs in particular feel more confidence in the presence of hard-evidence over theories in the classroom.

“Type A” behavior, which is common among ESTJs, is often obvious even in their youth. They can be almost aggressive in their need to perform and succeed. Teachers and peers alike will view them as goal-oriented, and they may come across as restless and impatient.

Sentinels, careful in their attention to detail, don't mind routine and repetitive tasks as long as there is clear reason for it. (Sometimes that reason can be as simple as preserving a tradition.) ESTJs usually welcome hands-on training, and they appreciate models they can copy and opportunities to receive coaching. They work hard and strive to be good students. ESTJs appreciate feedback and they can see it

as an essential part of learning rather than a judgment. ESTJs work very slowly and steadily making it a point to get everything exactly right.

ESTJs are creatures of habit in both their actions and their thoughts. Once they believe something, it can be hard to get them to accept alternate ideas. This tendency can create difficulty in some courses that rely on imagination and creativity or during general class discussions. ESTJs need to be careful to not discount new information in their tendency to lean toward traditional and perhaps outdated ideas. Courses that ask for creative and abstract thought can be challenging for ESTJs for that reason. They prefer thoughts that connect the past with the present – not new ideas “out of nowhere”.

While ESTJs love to work in groups, the others in the group may feel pushed and rushed along by them. In most groups they join, they will ascend quickly to the leadership. There’s a certain fulfillment for ESTJs in organizing and leading a group of people to meet an objective. In a study group, they will most likely want to take charge and will lend a ton of productive energy to the group. Their leadership, however, will be about getting the job done “by the book” and not because of a particular vision they have. If the course is a creative one, this manner of leadership may be inhibiting. They may become impatient with other students who don’t contribute or can’t keep up – this may true in the larger classroom setting as well. However, for the ESTJs, there will be an underlying sense of service to others supporting their wish to lead.

Instructors can tap into ESTJs’ strengths by providing them with a sense they are doing something, not merely thinking about something. Providing ESTJs with cultural or historic context can also help them feel they are on solid footing. It will be distracting and uncomfortable for ESTJs if the teacher allows things to be “too relaxed” in the classroom. While it may healthy for ESTJs to step outside of their comfort zones and relax in the classroom a bit, this need for structure might be something instructors might want to understand to create a better learning environments for all of their students. Tapping them to lead something will probably motivate them even more than they already are.

Finally, ESTJs really dislike people unexpectedly putting them on the spot. They need to be sure of themselves and like to be confident in their answer before they commit to it. ESTJs always appreciate a reasonable amount of time to check their footing before they respond.

ESTJs in High School

In the classroom: ESTJs start high school from a great place just because of the way they approach the world. They're hardworking and dedicated to doing well. As far as earning good grades, this comes naturally to ESTJs and they may see it as a duty they need to perform.

ESTJs will do well in courses that promote administrative skills such as business, accounting or even math. Sentinels are great generalists in that they will do whatever is needed to promote the general good. They will approach any subject they take as a resource. While they may like or not like a course, they don't need the course to be interesting or exciting in order to apply themselves in the way that Analysts and Diplomats tend to. The course is there, it needs to be done, it's there for a reason, and ESTJs will simply do it regardless of their subjective feelings. While they may not appreciate a course that deals too much in the abstract and the theoretical, their work ethic and sense of duty will push them to plow through anyway.

One of the challenges ESTJs face in the high school classroom is that there is certain rigidity to them. As mentioned above they may have trouble with abstract or novel ideas. They stick firmly to rules and they always have a strong sense of duty. They also may have trouble in relationship to their fellow students in classroom. There may be mutual disdain if they are put in a group with students who want to cut corners or who don't attend conscientiously to the details of something. ESTJs may want to play strictly by the rules while their peers don't. The ESTJs can come across as somewhat harsh and pushy in these situations. This can cause friction and stress all around. On the other hand, teachers will probably value the care and attention that they put into their work. Being the hard-working students they tend to be, they may be very hard on those who are slower or don't carry their own weight. Sometimes, though, it's more about the impression ESTJs give off, rather than an actual need to control.

ESTJs will most likely work from the first day of high school to the day they graduate. They will always work hard and always diligently try to meet all the requirements put in front of them. Other students may slack off when the work becomes too predictable and easy or when they get toward the end of high school. ESTJs will not. They will continue to work to their highest level until they leave. They will feel duty-bound to do so.

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. And 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.



ESTJs are usually popular in high school but not in the usual superficial sense. As mentioned above, they are “people persons”. Assertive ESTJs in particular exude a great deal of confidence which is usually external. Inside, ESTJs in high school may not be any more confident than most. However, they give the clear impression that they know what they're doing and others gravitate toward them for that reason.

Like true Sentinels, ESTJs will make it a point to care for their friends. It won't be about sweeping compassion like that of a Diplomat as much as it will be about making sure they take care of the practical needs and feelings of others. This helpfulness can go a long way to creating serious bonds of friendship in high school for ESTJs.

Extra-curricular activities often pigeon-hole the modern teen into stereotypical niches. Cheerleaders are seen as the popular kids and Latin Club is for the nerds... and so on. ESTJs will gravitate to the clubs they “should” belong to. By that, it could be for academic improvement, service to others, or a career path clubs of some kind. Being practical, they will join clubs that will pad their resumes or their college applications as their guidance counselor might suggest. They may join the drama club or something of that nature, if it's presented as a community builder that upholds a fine long tradition or a similar reason. It will be important to them to be a stable part of any organization they join, and they will want to contribute as much or more than they gain from the club.

ESTJs enjoy the limelight and will relish any leadership role they take on. They will bring an efficiency and organization to a group in a way that will surpass anything most of their peers can do. Their business-like attitude and confident appearance can bring much energy to an organization.

Work or College?

While there are many more reasons involved in 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. There's a niche for everyone and college is just one possible path to finding it. So, what might the ESTJ consider when thinking about college?

Two questions that ESTJs 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?* Once deciding a profession, it sometimes matter whether one has a degree. The helping professions, many of which require certification, tend to draw ESTJs. Teachers, social workers, nurses, physicians, and other certified positions need a degree. If certification is not necessary for the path ESTJs choose or they, like many 18 year olds, have not yet decided, deferring higher education may be an appropriate decision. It pains ESTJs to be somewhere they shouldn't be doing something they consider irrelevant. If there isn't a sense of purpose or meaning in college, it's likely just to be a bad experience.
- *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. ESTJs may find this a less compelling reason to attend college. The "growth argument" for attending school may sound a little frivolous to them. If they are not going for a certification or need any particular training, they may consider going straight to work more reasonable. However, even as practical as young ESTJs are, they may still have a yearning to better discover who they are and may still find a university setting good for that purpose.

When ESTJs go to College

Sentinels may have mixed feelings when entering college. There is an opportunity to gain some real skills and develop professional credentials. However, university life can be a more relaxed environment than high school. This can be disconcerting to a student with as many fixed habits and beliefs as ESTJs have.

College is a time for ESTJs to begin to consider and exploit their strengths and talents in a real way. ESTJs may find this a time where they can develop competence. They need to be careful to choose their major. If the courses are too abstract or theoretical, they will find no satisfaction. A major heavy in useful lectures, labs and practicums will suit ESTJs well.

ESTJs' course choices will be similar to the subjects they connected with in high school. They will do well in any detail-oriented work that needs careful administration: bookkeeping, business administration, health care, education, law, social work and religious studies. For the ESTJ the subject isn't nearly as important as its application and purpose. It's unlikely they will be attracted to less traditional courses ("women's studies" for example). They will instead seek more bedrock courses – perhaps something their parents might have taken a generation earlier.

The question for ESTJ is not whether they can do something. They have a strong work ethic and will do well in any niche they choose. But will they feel satisfied? Will they be fulfilled? Some feel that college and university is only about getting the tools you need to make a good living. ESTJs may fit into this category, but it won't be just about money. A higher principle will be a priority above money. With ESTJs there will be a sense of mission and money will only be peripheral consideration. Keeping books and keeping a business running smoothly may make ESTJs good MBA candidates.

Will ESTJ look for a "party school" to strengthen their university experiences? Like most young people, the ESTJ will delight in the autonomy that going away to college offers – but perhaps not as much as other types. Home can represent safety, duty, structure, even tradition for them. For most students, this is the first significant taste of life apart from their families and their families' rules (again, perhaps a mixed bag for ESTJs). However, they are generally too serious and too rules-bound to see the wild "party life" as something that fits who they are. Their social life will probably be relatively subdued when they go off to college.

However, they may take an excursion into the party life if they feel they need a break from stress. ESTJs, especially Turbulent ones, can be perfectionists with very specific standards and that may cause 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 although probably not common at all among ESTJs. More likely than not, such adventures, if pursued at all, will be short-lived phases for the ESTJ.

Career and Professional Development

The list of typical ESTJ careers is quite clear and straightforward, just as the description of their personality. ESTJs can be fairly flexible as far as their careers are concerned, but their traits push them in a certain direction and we will discuss this in a greater detail below.

To begin with, the keystone of the ESTJ personality and their careers is a profound respect for tradition, stability and security. ESTJs are very loyal and dependable – people with this personality type will do everything in order to meet their commitments

and fulfill their duties. Unsurprisingly, some of the best and most common ESTJ careers are in the military, police or legal fields. There is a reason why ESTJs are often called “model citizens” – and they do their best to project and maintain this image throughout their careers.

People with this personality type put facts and duties above everything else. Consequently, best ESTJ careers reward meticulousness, dedication and good leadership skills. ESTJs believe that everyone should do their best to complete the task to the highest possible standard and loathe individuals who cheat and cut corners to get ahead on the career ladder. There is no easier way to lose the respect of an ESTJ than to show that you believe that fun and games at the workplace are more important than actual work, no matter how hard it is. ESTJs have very high standards, especially when it comes to their own work, and are likely to put an extraordinary amount of effort to get the job done.

Regardless of the area they are working in, ESTJs are supervisors at heart. Nothing fascinates them more than making sure that everything is functioning well in their organization, that all resources are flowing smoothly, that all goods are being delivered on time etc. People with this personality type are factual, no-nonsense thinkers, able to retain an extraordinary amount of information in their memory and then pull out an obscure fact when that becomes necessary. ESTJs are the ultimate administrators for a reason



– their keen eye, social skills and diligence give them a distinct advantage over other personality types when it comes to managing resources or other people. These skills are becoming more and more important in today's world, bearing in mind the interconnectedness that is the essence of all major business enterprises.

ESTJs have many inherent leadership traits and genuinely enjoy organizing people. Their internal principles and values tend to be very clearly expressed; furthermore, ESTJs loathe disorganization and ineptitude – these traits make them fearsome, but highly efficient in the later, managerial stages of their careers. ESTJs also love putting new structures in place and are remarkably thorough. These traits make ESTJs brilliant business administrators, auditors and financial officers in the corporate world – such and similar careers are excellent choices for ESTJs. Perhaps somewhat surprisingly, ESTJs also tend to be good sales representatives.

Best ESTJ careers make good use of their hard work, honesty and motivation. ESTJs are also known for sticking to their projects until they are completed, no matter how hard it is. These traits are very important when it comes to advancing in a career – and ESTJs are well versed in this respect. Unfortunately, despite being smart and highly dedicated, ESTJs are likely to face many difficulties in their careers if they choose the wrong path. People with this personality type demand much of themselves and their need for security and stability does not help either – consequently, they may have difficulties coping with situations where their skills and efforts are not fully utilized or recognized. Ultimately, it all boils down to picking a career that is a good match for your traits and skills.

So, how do you choose the right path?

Getting on the Career Ladder

The best thing about being an ESTJ is that people with this personality type tend to be patient, knowledgeable and socially adept. Like other Sentinels, ESTJs are unstoppable when they find a niche that gives them an opportunity to contribute to the good of the organization or the society as a whole, while also being stable and secure – but getting such an opportunity can be a challenge.

Whatever their hobbies or aspirations, ESTJs do best when they embrace administration, factual analysis, or development and enforcement of rules and guidelines. It does not really matter whether a particular ESTJ wants or is able to get into commercial, legal or administrative fields which tend to be their top choices – sometimes their chosen profession has no direct links with these areas. What matters is the ESTJ's ability to manage the available resources in the best way possible, analyzing the available facts and using them in a way that not only answers the underlying questions, but also ensures or even enhances the stability of the entire system, whatever it may be.

ESTJs should embrace these strengths in the job-hunting stage as well. The good news is that they are likely to do very well when it comes to networking and socializing – the primary means of getting a job, especially in a tough job market. Furthermore, ESTJs exude stability and responsibility, which gives them the upper hand in interviews. People with this personality type should find it easy to show their prospective employer that they are trustworthy – they are usually able to communicate that fairly well. However, they may encounter difficulties when it comes to actually providing examples of previous work or describing their successes. ESTJs do not feel comfortable boasting about themselves, but that is often an unavoidable part of any interview. People with this personality type may find it easier to highlight their successes if they stick to factual data, describing what they had achieved in the previous role. Furthermore, such an approach will often be seen as more convincing than a never-ending stream of self-centered compliments. If you are a recent graduate, highlighting your academic achievements (which are likely to be quite impressive) may also be a good idea – and in any case, the ESTJ may feel more comfortable discussing something they have achieved as opposed to something they would imagine themselves doing.

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 ESTJ, you probably know many things and find many topics 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), organize a community event 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. ESTJs tend to be very good candidates, but they may find it difficult to handle an unexpected question and may consequently lose out to less qualified but better prepared candidates. Do not fail to prepare.

Thanks to their meticulousness, social skills and hard work, ESTJs rarely have major difficulties when it comes to landing their first job, or keeping it afterwards. However, it is also important to always keep everything in perspective. People with this personality type often say that they studied extremely 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. ESTJs are hardworking and strong-willed individuals, but their perfectionistic tendencies may lead to a lot of stress – and having a social support network would be of great help in such situations.

You should also never forget to listen to yourself, especially when deciding what would be a good career choice. ESTJs are comparatively 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 is popular or pays well – it may not be a good match for your individual set of skills or principles. In order to feel happy in the professional environment, ESTJs need to know that their contributions are respected and valued – this is unlikely to be the case if you are constantly struggling in an incompatible field.

Professional Development

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

ESTJs are often called supervisors for a reason – they have excellent managerial skills, a keen eye for detail and do not give up until they have found what they are looking for. People with this personality type tend to be less interested in building extensive systems or planning for contingency scenarios, leaving that for more technical-oriented Analysts. However, they live and breathe rules and structures – everything must be in order, budgets must be balanced, discrepancies and mistakes must be eradicated. This is what drives and motivates ESTJs and this is what they should be focusing on – positioning themselves in a way that allows them to focus their efforts on administering things, managing resources or making sure that the rules of the organization are adhered to. Your mind is both your greatest gift and your greatest course – if the environment is right, you will quickly be noticed and appreciated; if it is not, you will get frustrated by subpar performance of your colleagues and all the inefficiencies that you would like to fix. ESTJs are hardworking, patient individuals, so they are likely to do relatively well in many fields, but none will satisfy them as much as a logistical role would do. Try to consciously push yourself toward roles of this nature, wherever possible.

Another thing that is definitely worth mentioning here is the ESTJs' love of facts. You are likely to be a dedicated, meticulous individual, with one of your core strengths being your ability to remember and rely on a vast collection of various facts and data. Bear in mind, however, that those facts are likely to be different from what Intuitive types (Analysts or Diplomats) collect – they focus on theories and methods, filling them in with facts as and when necessary. In other words, people with those types pay more attention to abstract statements than concrete facts. ESTJs, on the other hand, focus on the facts themselves, seeing them as something that guarantees reliability and impartiality. Hence the ESTJs'

motto, “Just the facts, please” – people with this personality type are kind and cooperative, but they do not care much about superfluous information when it comes to making actual decisions. Facts, on the other hand... They do not lie. For this reason, you should try to steer your career towards roles that reward meticulousness and keen eye for detail, and most importantly, focus on concrete, factual data rather than abstract matters such as ideas, brainstorming, diplomacy or planning.

That being said, this does not mean that you should rely too much solely on what you know at the moment and refrain from developing your skills or expanding your knowledge. ESTJs are good at absorbing new knowledge – therefore, 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 ESTJs 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. You may find it quite difficult to force yourself to learn something new, depending on the topic – but try to get out of your comfort zone as otherwise you may be outmaneuvered by other people. Consistency and stability are important, but they should not prevent you from trying out new things. Furthermore, this would give you an excellent opportunity to expand your professional and personal network.

Tangentially, it is worth mentioning that this applies to educational qualifications as well. 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 ESTJs’ logistical thinking and ability to administer systems, whatever they may be – keeping your eyes open can sometimes yield great results. Few ESTJs 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 necessary have to get formal qualifications – nowadays, studying

independently is easier than ever. New knowledge is always valuable, so why not keep your mind 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, if you choose to – this approach is quite common among ESTJs, especially those in stable and 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. It could be anything – a local neighborhood initiative, a home improvement project etc. ESTJs tend to enjoy managing all kinds of projects, especially if they involve working with other people – so why not try something like this if you have got time? 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 keep you going through difficult times or grow into a proper business. If you are also in a position where you can divert some financial resources to your hobby, then all the better. ESTJs tend to be excellent logisticians, so you should not have any difficulties managing your resources and this parallel “career”.

In all likelihood, you will only be satisfied with your career path if you feel confident that it makes you a respectable and productive member of the society. ESTJs want to be seen as dependable and trustworthy, working hard to achieve that status, as well as security and stability. Consequently, if your work is not being appreciated and respected, you will likely feel restless. Unlike some other personality types, ESTJs always push themselves hard in the professional environment, even if their efforts are underappreciated – but that cannot last forever, with the ESTJ being secretly stressed and frustrated. Ultimately, everything depends on how flexible your chosen organization is – there are few career paths that are really unsuitable for ESTJs, but there are plenty of roles where your primary skills will be underutilized. So explore, learn and try to find a way to use your logistical 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. ESTJs aspire to be influential, dependable managers, seeking to administer and direct resources in the way that ensures the

survival and prosperity of their organization. Technical wizardry, sensuality or empathy are not their domains.

Finally, ESTJs do not fare well in situations where they need to do unfamiliar work under time pressures. People with this personality type are 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. ESTJs have an excellent set of leadership skills lurking beneath the surface, but being in the “emergency mode” can exhaust them very quickly. Unlike Explorers, Sentinels in general are more suited to be logisticians and administrators 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.

Sentinels – Sentinels

COMMON GROUND

Obviously, two Sentinels will find themselves “speaking the same language”. They’re about getting the job done and that will be the main thrust of their conversations. That doesn’t mean that people belonging to this type group won’t engage in casual conversation, but their motivation in that will likely be to create harmony in the workplace. They are often sincerely warm and personable. However, when it’s time to go to work, that becomes the clear focus. There can be a no-nonsense quality to their conversations.

Sentinels are pragmatists and are not much for the abstract and the theoretical. Discussion among them would most likely include discussions about facts and procedures. They like tradition and linking the things of the past with the things of the future. Sentinels would not spend much time talking about concepts or visions like the Analysts or the Diplomats. They are more likely to reflect on the here and now and getting things done. This doesn’t mean they don’t plan or talk about the future. Just that they will more likely discuss the more tangible aspects of it.

Sentinels are nurturers in the sense that they want to take care of other people. They try to make their lives easier through attention to detail, following policy and completed action. Sentinels will want to make sure that they consider every possibility toward that end. They will spend most of their time going over logistics and organization together to make sure that everything runs smoothly.

POTENTIAL PROBLEMS

The problems two Sentinels may have when talking to one another will most likely have nothing to do with understanding. However, they may have trouble if they become stuck in their own style of thinking without the benefit of insight from those who think differently. In business and in life, it's good to have varied personality types around to provide balance.

In this rapidly changing world of commerce, there is a constant need to switch perspectives from a macro view to a micro view and back. Many feel thorough mission statements combined with long-term imaginative planning is essential for an organization to survive. The Biblical book of Proverbs says, "Without a vision, the people perish." So it goes with modern businesses as well.

However, room full of Sentinels would be more likely to focus on the "nuts and bolts" plans of an organization but would not be comfortable dealing with the big picture. The Sentinels are wonderful at handling the micro view. When you need things achieved, these are the reliable and loyal people you want. However, for the macro view, the more visionary Analyst or Diplomat has much to offer a brainstorming session and efforts should be made to include them in such exercises.

Similar to that, a discussion of innovation and change, if extensive enough, may be unsettling for Sentinels. They connect with the traditional ways of doing things. Sentinels bear their name for a reason. In that important role, they take care of others and they take care of a fixed way of doing things. They serve as the anchors needed in a stable society. However, having said that, the world is a rapidly changing place and often organizations need to innovate to compete. "Thinking out of the box" is an overused cliché that shows through its overuse how important thinking in new ways has become.

For Sentinels, a challenge to the confines of the proverbial box may feel almost like an affront. They have probably spent a lot of time protecting the status quo and may get uncomfortable when it's threatened.

Sentinels should be aware of these traits and invite other personality types to the table when the topic becomes about developing new products or systems.

Control may be issue when two Sentinels try to communicate. While they try to get along well with others, they are willing to sacrifice harmony if they feel it is in the way of their goals. They may decide there is a “right way” to do something and defend that way vigorously. Their internal read on the situation will be that they are working for the “greater good” within whatever context they are acting. Two Sentinels with a sense of conviction and different ideas on how to bring about results may clash.

TIPS FOR COMMUNICATING

- Enjoy the comradery of someone who sees things the way that you do. Alliances of like-minded people often make life easier. There’s much less of need to expend energy making the case for something.
- Be sure to recognize the efforts of your fellow Sentinels. Recognition provides them with energy to move forward. However, their work is not always recognized as it is frequently done behind the scenes. But who understands better than Sentinels what other Sentinels do and want?
- Beware of control issues. Understand that your ultimate goals are probably the same and there is more than one way to do almost anything.

Sentinels – Analysts

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 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.

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.

Sentinels – Diplomats

COMMON GROUND

Both Sentinels and Diplomats like to take care of other people and will have much to talk about when it comes to the human side of work. While the Diplomats focus more on ideological matters involving compassion, Sentinels' interests lie more in taking care of others on a more practical level. For example, Sentinels might want to make sure they complete the payroll so everyone receives their pay. Meanwhile, the Diplomats might focus on making sure that everyone receives fair treatment and they genuinely benefit from professional development. Both find energy and self-respect in doing good for others, and there is plenty of common ground on which to bond in that area.

HOW THEY COMPLEMENT ONE ANOTHER

As hinted at in the preceding paragraphs, Sentinels and Diplomats will most likely complement each other by providing different kinds of support for the organization. For Diplomats, it's the larger picture and the big ideas that are important. They are interested in growth for themselves and others. Details do not always concern them, and anything that comes across as "picky" may feel unimportant to Diplomats. So, they sometimes miss small but essential details. Sentinels do not and organizations need their diligence to run smoothly.

On the other hand, Sentinels can become so involved in making sure they do every little thing correctly that they can "miss the forest for the trees". They can get so caught up in the details and procedures that they lose the larger purpose of what they're doing. Partnering with a Diplomat can help them hold onto the greater vision of an organization, especially around issues about human capital.

POTENTIAL PROBLEMS

Conflict arises between Diplomats and Sentinels when there is an opinion that one is too controlling (Sentinels) or the other is too lax (Diplomats). If one arrives 10 minutes early for work and another arrives 10 minutes late, you can almost guess which one is the Sentinel and which is the Diplomat. It won't be because Diplomats thumb their noses at the rules or time clocks. It's just that those 10 minutes are not as important to them on their mental list of priorities. To them, as long as they get their job done, what does

it matter? However, that might be hard to explain to a Sentinel supervisor who finds comfort in enforcing the rules. It can become difficult to bridge this gap in attitudes.

Diplomats are often able to understand things intuitively. Their view of the world comes from an almost subconscious linking of information and feelings. They are always imagining something better. Sentinels protect efficiency and order using proven standards and methods. In a way, they try to connect something that has worked in the past with the future hoping that will bring guarantee the same results.

Similarly, Diplomats often accurately size up other employees simply by using their instincts. Sentinels will prefer a proven established employee evaluation check list to do the same thing. While these two styles may not necessarily conflict, they can. Sentinels have to be careful not to judge Diplomats as “flaky”, having their “heads in the clouds”, or too future-oriented. Diplomats have to be careful not to judge Sentinels as too pedestrian or lacking imagination.

The two personality types can resolve these potential problems by understanding that both world views have something to offer. Practicing patience in the middle of pronounced differences is always good advice and always helps communication.

TIPS FOR COMMUNICATING

Advice for Sentinels concerning Diplomats:

- When talking about procedures with a Diplomat, couch the discussion about how these specific standards might affect larger considerations in the workplace. Connect these rules to values and fairness. You have a better chance of connecting with them if you appeal to their sense of morals and empathy rather than a set of rules that may feel arbitrary to them.
- Diplomats will not respond well to “that’s the way we’ve always done it” or “that’s what you’re supposed to do.” Take care not to offer that style of argument. Growth and development motivate Diplomats, and they always assume there is potential for something different and better. A company rule book usually says little about evolving, and so it probably won’t carry much weight in a discussion with a Diplomat.

- Diplomats like to encourage others. Remember that feeling traits are strong for Diplomats and sometimes they need encouragement themselves. Take a moment to recognize their efforts out loud even if you don't always agree with their methods.

Advice for Diplomats concerning Sentinels:

- Be careful not to judge Sentinels as too unimaginative, work-a-day or rigid. Try to remember the efficiency and stability they offer is a necessary part of any organization and don't be quick to write them off. Share abstract thoughts or imaginative ideas with them sparingly. While they might not have any trouble grasping your vision, they will probably have little interest in it.
- Don't spend much time talking to Sentinels about feelings. While they can be warm and friendly at work, getting the job done and preserving order is more important to them than how an individual feels. They will most likely view any necessary sacrifice of someone's feelings as something "for the greater good."
- Show appreciation for what Sentinels do. While they may not actively seek recognition, it energizes them when they receive it, and they gain self-confidence from it.

Sentinels – Explorers

COMMON GROUND

It's easy to get the impression that Sentinels and Explorers are polar opposites. While they often approach things differently, they both gather their information from the world around them rather than from an internal source like the Analysts or the Diplomats. However, that's where most of their likenesses end. While Explorers are more in touch with things directly and immediately, Sentinels usually filter their experiences through what they remember and how things have always been. Explorers relish the new and exciting while Sentinels favor the traditional and stable. Despite these differences, they both speak in terms of what is practical and tangible.

HOW THEY COMPLEMENT ONE ANOTHER

Explorers and Sentinels most often complement each other when things go wrong. Sometimes even the tried-and-true ways of doing things fails us. This can be disconcerting to Sentinels, but a compelling

problem to solve for Explorers. In this ever-changing world, there are often times when the old methods no longer work. There may be no other choice other than to develop a new way of doing things and there's nobody better equipped to help a Sentinel should this happen than Explorers.

On the other hand, sometimes an Explorers' impulsive drive to find solutions can get off-track. Sometimes, the best answer when a situation goes bad is to retreat to a known starting place. "Known places" are where Sentinels like to spend their time. Some have commented that sometimes, as Explorers get older, they seek out Sentinel marriage partners to help them settle down. While this makes sense, it also makes sense that it could apply to professional situations. There are times when boldly "winging" it can lead to effective solutions. However, there are also times when such approaches create more problems than they solve. Sometimes a Sentinel can help an Explorer "come home", figuratively speaking. Sentinels usually know how to repair a situation or they know someone who does. This can be of great help to the Explorer who has wandered too far in the wrong direction.

POTENTIAL PROBLEMS

There are clearly things about Explorers that drive Sentinels crazy and the other way around. However, the Explorer has the advantage in this as they usually go with flow and don't allow others to bother them much. For the Sentinels, however, their problems with Explorers can be disturbing for them.

While Explorers have no problem cutting corners when necessary, Sentinels usually dedicate their lives to making sure those corners remain intact just the way they've always been. Sentinels like things to be orderly and predictable. Explorers can have a freer attitude and loves things that are new and interesting. Metaphorically, Sentinels will have a favorite restaurant they go to most of the time, and Explorers will want to sample all the latest restaurants that open in town. At work, Explorers can come across as reckless and undisciplined to Sentinels. To Explorers, Sentinels might appear boring and uninspired by their environment. While the opinions of each type are usually more reactionary stereotypes than real, they can get in the way of trust and open communication.

While keeping the status quo strong and in place seems essential to Sentinels, Explorers will have no problem doing whatever they need to done to solve a problem regardless of "how it's always been done". Sentinels see the tried-and-true means as the way to a guaranteed end. Only the end concerns Explorers

and they may use any means necessary to get there. For them, it doesn't have to follow traditional protocol.

It's easy to see how Sentinels can view Explorers as being at cross-purposes with them. Sentinels may devote an undue amount of time trying to get Explorers to walk in a straight line according to the rules. Meanwhile, Explorers may ignore the Sentinels as they do whatever they feel they must do, going in a straight line or serpentine, to master a situation. The possibilities for conflicts are endless.

TIPS FOR COMMUNICATING

Advice for Sentinels concerning Explorers:

- Smile and enjoy an "it takes all types to run a world" attitude. Explorers can be a strong asset in the workplace. While everyone needs to follow the rules, you playing the role of "rules police" may be more trouble than it's worth if the Explorer is contributing in positive ways. Try to keep it all in balance.
- Actively show appreciation for the good things Explorers do. Do this as much for you as for the Explorers. It may go a long way toward seeing them in a different light.
- In a discussion with an Explorer, avoid any form of the argument "because it's always been that way". If you follow that line of reasoning, they will probably no longer be paying attention to the point you're trying to make.

Advice for Explorers concerning Sentinels:

- As Santayana wrote: "'Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it.'" Don't be too quick to dismiss the Sentinels' attachment to the past, the settled protocol. There can be much to learn there. Don't be afraid to ask why you need to do something a certain way. Doing so may avoid problems.
- Recognize the necessary work Sentinels do and show appreciation for it. This will help build a work relationship with Sentinels who are energized by recognition.

Career Progression

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

Answers to these questions depend heavily on the field that the ESTJ is in. People with this personality type tend to do better in managerial roles, making sure that everything works smoothly, all stakeholders are happy and all goals and deadlines are being met, as opposed to becoming self-contained subject matter experts. This means that ESTJs 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 administrative 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, it is also often possible to progress in a field where achievements are not measured by the number of people reporting to you. ESTJs, like other Sentinels, are very good when it comes to administering resources and making sure that systems work as they are supposed to, 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 ESTJs 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 ESTJ 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 ESTJ'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. ESTJs excel in roles where they are given a clear set of rules and are able to work more or less independently. 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. In most cases, traditional promotion paths suit ESTJs very well, but corporate jockeying may exhaust them very quickly.

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 ESTJ can offer, or simply because of the lack of room for growth. Here are some ideas of what ESTJs 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. ESTJs are hardworking, diligent individuals, and their impressive ability to remember copious amounts of facts 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. ESTJs value respect, control and self-reliance, and being self-employed would give them an excellent opportunity to enjoy these things.

Furthermore, self-employment solves one of the major hurdles that ESTJs are likely to encounter in the corporate environment – resistance by individuals who are either unwilling or unable to put in the effort and play by the rules. 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 irrational orders or dealing with people who are more interested in play than work. Self-employment offers many major

benefits to ESTJs, especially in today's global and always-connected environment, and people with this personality type are highly likely to be successful in this area.

However, there is no point in trying to start a business without a good idea. This is where the ESTJs' meticulousness and hard work start to shine. Anyone could come up with a random idea and try turning that into a business (and failing 99% of the time due to poor planning) – but it takes a lot of hard work to do proper research, develop a solid business plan and ensure that your business does not crumble after the first month. Think of an interesting way to fulfill an existing need (or create one) and do it better than your competitors – which will not be that difficult, given the ESTJs' amazing ability to leverage their connections and plough through mundane work with a smile on their face. ESTJs can be excellent entrepreneurs, having both the knowledge 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 ESTJ 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 ESTJ 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.

Business (Logistics and Management)

Having something or someone you need at the right place and at the right time is the heart and soul of logistics and management. There is perhaps no better personality type than a Sentinel for carrying out this important work. ESTJs are good at it because their ability to reach out and to work with other people. If a widget isn't where it's supposed to be, ESTJs are good at discovering who can correct the mistake the quickest.

However, ESTJs usually won't allow the widget to become lost in the first place. They work "by the book" and are team players, so their loyalty to their company and their colleagues is important to them. They know how to rally co-workers and can be good at motivating them to complete projects but only if the work includes well-defined tasks that make sense to them.

ESTJs will find great satisfaction in helping their team succeed and sincerely enjoy leading others. However, they will not put up with laziness and cutting corners and can be somewhat demanding as leaders. They may need to temper this some to avoid discouragement and low morale, especially among younger workers. However, ESTJs are adept at social interaction and can do an adequate job of smoothing over feelings should it come to that. Jobs that utilize these qualities might include:

- Office manager
- Customer service manager
- Leading sales teams
- Retail manager or owner
- Human resources and professional development
- Retail buyer
- Shipping manager
- Hotel management
- Cook / Chef / Kitchen Manager
- Accountant / auditor
- Banking
- Asset management
- Data analysis
- Entrepreneur

Healthcare

At the core of most Sentinels is the need to take care of others in concrete and practical ways. ESTJs are no different. This makes them excellent candidates for healthcare work. Clearly their traits equip them

to care for patients especially when you consider their attention to detail and their ability to organize and to meet goals.

ESTJs are good members of a treatment team so long as their occasional stubbornness doesn't get in the way. ESTJ health workers typically will not tolerate negligence or mistakes and this is invaluable in a medical setting. Jobs that may fit them well include:

- Family physician
- Nurse
- Dentist
- Medical secretary
- Physical therapist
- Dietitian
- Speech pathologist

Education

In elementary education and in courses that involve teaching practical skills, ESTJs make excellent teachers. "No child left behind" which was the motto of an education movement is a marching order for the Sentinel teacher. ESTJs own the internal motivation necessary to help children progress as they should both individually and as a group. They genuinely will care whether their students learn or not.

ESTJs function best with younger children who need instruction involving rudimentary skill building. They may do well teaching older students as long as the courses involve building a skill such as home economics, second languages or automobile mechanics. Education jobs for the ESTJ might include:

- Elementary school teacher
- Auto mechanic or shop teacher
- Home economics teacher
- Coach (any sport or skilled-based activity)
- Language teacher for non-native speakers
- School principal

- Academic researcher (particularly collecting and organizing data)

Law and Law Enforcement

There are major differences between law enforcement and the practice of law. The reason we lump them together here is because a similar reason motivates ESTJs to embrace both types of careers. Unlike Explorers, who also gravitate toward these jobs, ESTJs don't run to crime scenes because of the excitement. They don't create arguments in the courtroom for the drama. Their main concern is sincerely for preserving law and order.

ESTJs have a strong respect for tradition and following the rules and are sticklers for upholding both. Law enforcement and certain types of law practice promote these ideals and appeal to ESTJs. People with this personality type are happy when they can climb the ladder and can provide some leadership in these careers. Some position may include:

- Corporate or contract lawyer
- Judge / Paralegal
- Police / Crime investigator
- Military
- Legislator
- Warden or other penal facility worker

What Would Make a Job Unsuitable for an ESTJ?

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 ESTJs.

Working alone

ESTJs will not be comfortable in a cubicle doing solitary work unless perhaps it involves phone sales or outreach. But even then, they will yearn for more solid human interaction. ESTJs are a tremendously

social type. They need people and ESTJs like to manage their co-workers. They see their business relationships as friendships and may feel uncomfortable if they don't get to know or work directly with the person in the next cubicle.

Loose Structure

ESTJs need a strong sense of structure to feel at ease in their positions. They respect the authority of the boss, the reliability of their colleagues or subordinates, and the sovereignty of time-honored rules. A clear hierarchy and chain of command at a job provide ESTJs with a sense that there is a solid foundation holding everything up.

ESTJs don't like improvised action or taking unproven paths. They need a sense that they have a firm foothold in a company, but they will not have that sense if the ground is continuously shifting. While people with this personality type might contribute to a brainstorming session if it seems required, they will likely do so in a limited fashion. Contributions may include rehashing old ideas with which they are comfortable. "Remember when we used to..." may be a phrase they use in such sessions.

If the company culture is too forgiving of mistakes, which sometimes are the results of useful risks, ESTJs (especially Turbulent ones with their perfectionistic tendencies) may feel out of place. ESTJs workers demand a tight ship.

Lack of Recognition

ESTJs enjoy others recognizing the work they do. They and other Sentinel types may not be obvious about it, but others noticing their efforts energizes them. For ESTJs in particular, this means promotions and elevation to a leadership position. Sentinels, more than the other types, need some positive acknowledgment for their undertakings. When researching a job, ESTJs should check to see that there is room for advancement because they are happiest when entrusted with a leadership position. Promotions and raises show that others appreciate their competency.

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?

ESTJ Colleagues

- Good networkers, enjoy connecting to other people
- Honest, friendly and down to earth
- May clash with colleagues who are always looking for improvements, suggesting new changes etc.
- Very good at observing what is going on in their environment
- Have a strong need to feel part of the organization – may get stressed in temporary roles
- Will strongly dislike colleagues who (in their opinion) try to get ahead by using shortcuts, e.g. clever networking, showing off their skills, sharing bold but risky ideas with the management etc.
- Have no problems accepting criticism
- Want to do everything “by the book”
- May find it difficult to express their emotions or offer emotional support to a colleague
- Value peace and security in the workplace
- Prefer working alone or with someone who has a similar personality type
- Dislike brainstorming and theorizing, but enjoy putting ideas into practice
- May find it quite difficult to acknowledge the validity of ideas that contradict their opinion, unless they have a lot of respect for that person
- Have perfectionist tendencies and very rarely give up

ESTJ Managers

- Enjoy organizing other people
- Strong-willed, will defend their team and their own principles regardless of the opposition

- May micro-manage their team
- Expect other people to respect their authority, sometimes unconditionally
- Likely to put the existing rules and traditions above their own ideas when it comes to leading the team
- May resist change (“We have always done things this way”)
- Loathe laziness and bad work ethic
- Able and willing to make difficult decisions
- Live by the “Only the facts, please” motto, especially when it comes to requests from subordinates in the workplace
- Love responsibility and power resulting from it
- Very intolerant of their subordinates’ failures to meet their obligations at work
- Believe that truth is more important than sensitivity

ESTJ Subordinates

- Very loyal and dedicated, but may also be quite inflexible
- Willing to voice their opinions, especially when it comes to deciding what is and is not acceptable
- Respect traditional methods, unlikely to experiment
- Responsible, will do their best to fulfil their duties
- May be too stubborn and inflexible
- Willing to deal with routine tasks
- Very punctual
- Likely to be “jacks of all trades”
- Respect authority and prefer traditional hierarchies at work
- Need to have a clear set of instructions and well-defined responsibilities
- May be very reluctant to give up responsibilities even if it becomes apparent that another person is better suited for that task or if the workload becomes unmanageable

What Do Other ESTJs Say?

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

“I am a high school teacher. I am not sure whether this job is my dream job, but I certainly enjoy sharing my knowledge with my students and making sure that they get all the materials they need in order to achieve the grades they deserve. I cannot stand the ever-changing rules though – I wish the administration would just leave me alone to do what I do best.”

“I have worked as a lawyer for the past 15 years. I think I am quite good at this job and I like it. Would not change my career to anything else, even if I was given a chance. The most difficult part of this job is spending hours upon hours going through all the legal documents and case files, but then I get to take pleasure in arguing my client’s case at court. All that hard work pales in significance if I am able to win the case.”

“I’m a nursing student working on my bachelor’s degree and eventually would like to move on to be a nurse practitioner. I like this occupation because it is very science heavy, requires intellect and critical thinking, and offers an opportunity to help others. Previously I spent 7 years in finance, and while I did quite well, I didn’t love it. I only liked the parts where I was sharing knowledge to help others. I’ve made a lot of mistakes, but I wouldn’t change them; I learned from my mistakes and they’re part of who I am. If I could change one thing about myself it would be to be a bit less judgmental. I hold myself and others to a very high standard and it tends to always make me feel like I am lacking, or that someone else is coming up short. It leads to never being satisfied, which is good for self-improvement, but not for self-esteem. It’s tough on relationships also.”

“I got my MBA nearly six year ago and have been working for a major bank since. I head a team of accountants and also do a fair bit of project work from time to time. This is my dream job as I am respected by my peers, get to interact with a lot of like-minded people, and I am fairly certain that my career prospects are quite good as well. I have made plenty of mistakes in the past, one of which was spending too much time considering whether or not I should go for a PhD – but I decided to go into the business administration and have not regretted that since. I really believe my role is a great match for my personality type and all its quirks.”

“I run a rental property business. I have had a few difficult years, but things are picking up and I am quite hopeful. Being an entrepreneur is quite stressful, but I enjoy the responsibility and I know that my employees trust me to make the right choices. I especially enjoy meeting other entrepreneurs and developing my professional network – the business world is full of sharks, but there are also many nice people simply trying to make a living. I used to miss the stability offered by ‘proper’ jobs, but now I would not give up my freedom for anything. And honestly, I simply love to run the show instead of just being one of the actors.”

As you can see, ESTJs can be found in a variety of jobs, ranging from nursing to business management. It is not the role itself that matters, but the ESTJ’s ability to rely on their connections and administrative skills. There are fields that are more ESTJ-friendly than others (e.g. law or business administration), 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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