



# Your Personality Type and Leadership Style

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When we think of leadership skills and personality type, we often think of the types that appear more domineering to other types, such as ENTJs and ESTJs. However, each personality type has a unique way of leading that is all their own. Some types are given more opportunities to lead than others, and other types lead in the background by making suggestions and subtly maneuvering situations to their rightful course.

Any personality type can be an effective leader. Every type is going to do it a little bit differently. Let's take a look at how each type can lead.

## ISTJ - The Detail-Oriented Leader

ISTJs are quiet, careful leaders. They want to make sure that the people they lead have clear direction, consistent, honest leadership, and a logical plan of action. They may feel an irresistible urge to organise people and take charge of projects. They will take plenty of time to make sure their plans are detailed, accurate, and fact-based. They will make it easy for everyone to understand where they're going and how to get there. When making decisions for a company or team, they will focus first on the facts and details, and then they will look at pros and cons. Throughout they will try to stay objective and fair.

**Possible Struggles:** ISTJs can get so caught up in the details of a problem that they lose sight of the big picture. They can also have difficulty taking into account the emotions and needs of everyone they lead. Tactfulness and empathy can be a struggle for ISTJs who ignore the role of emotions and feelings. They should look to intuitive and/or feeling team members to get suggestions on how to maintain morale and get their desired strategic, big picture outcomes.

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## ESTJ – The Decisive Leader

ESTJs are known as objective, efficient, and fair leaders. They enjoy making tough decisions and organising a team to get a job done quickly. They are practical, sensible, and down-to-earth. While they may seem domineering to many, they truly enjoy collaborating with people and coming up with goals as a team. When they make decisions they will look at the facts, the pros and cons, and what the most logical process is. They are very straightforward, unequivocal leaders and will generally be quick to find a clear direction and stick with it.

**Possible Struggles:** ESTJs have to be careful not to pressurise their way of doing things over other people's working styles, emotions, and differences. They may become so focused on impersonal pros and cons that they ignore how decisions might affect people in a personal way. They can also struggle by micro-managing the people they lead. They usually have a very clear idea of what they want and may have difficulty being open-minded to the suggestions of intuitive types.

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## ISFJ – The Thoughtful Leader

ISFJs are extremely committed, conscientious, and devoted leaders. They know how to stay organised, meet deadlines, and care for their team. They will be careful not only to make sure jobs are done well, but to make sure harmony is maintained within the group. They are generous, thoughtful, detail-oriented leaders. They give specific instructions, are clear in their expectations, and will put the needs of their team above their own personal needs in many cases. When ISFJs make decisions, they will first consider how those decisions will impact other people. They will also look at the facts, details, and practical implications.

**Possible Struggles:** ISFJs are good at staying on track with goals, but they may struggle with knowing which goals to prioritise. They may struggle with seeing things as a whole (the big picture) or strategising effectively. They may also try to avoid confrontation to such a degree that they struggle with making decisions. If a decision might negatively impact anyone in their group they may not know how to move forward. Having one or two advisors who have a thinking or intuitive preference can help them to manage the strategic aspect of leading.

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## ESFJ – The Generous Leader

ESFJs are encouraging, charismatic, and hard-working leaders. They empathise greatly with people and use that empathy and compassion to ensure that everyone is taken care of and heard. They are dedicated to their team and their shared goals, and they work in a timely, efficient manner. ESFJs are often called “servant leaders”, this is because they will put the needs of their team ahead of their own needs. If a crisis erupts, the ESFJ will be helping and supporting others instead of looking out for themselves. They are very caring and task-oriented individuals who will lead with kindness and clarity.

**Possible Struggles:** While ESFJs are experts of diplomacy, they can struggle with strategy and long-range planning. They are good at short-term task completion and practical planning, but taking strategic risks for the long-term benefit of a company or team is a struggle for them. They also may struggle with remaining objective. They desire to maintain harmony in their group so much that tough decisions or prioritising the needs of a company or vision over keeping everyone happy can be very difficult for them. If they can keep a thinking and / or intuitive type in an advisor position, this can help them to work out their big-picture vision and also ensure they balance their need for harmony with a logic-driven process.

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## ISTP – The Tactical Leader

ISTPs are quiet, observant, and effective leaders. They are open-minded and casual, focusing on realistic opportunities, plans, and tactics for success. They are willing to hear many perspectives, and prefer to not get too involved. You don't have to worry about being micro-managed by an ISTP; they like to give others freedom to find their own unique paths towards success. They like to work alone, and they strive to find the most effective way to achieve goals using the least amount of unnecessary effort. They are adaptable, cool-headed in a crisis, and excellent at troubleshooting. When they make a decision, they will first think of the most logical approach. After that, they will try to find the most efficient, streamlined course of action.

**Possible Struggles:** ISTPs are good at solving problems in the present moment, but they can struggle with seeing a long-term vision or plan for the future. They may also be so impersonal that they can ignore the emotional needs of others. They may struggle with being confined and constrained to a company or organisation, especially if they start to disagree with values in that group. They tend to work best alone, and may turn down leadership opportunities if they feel it will infringe on their space. If they are determined to be in leadership positions, they often benefit by having intuitive and / or feeling advisors who can help them to come up with a long-range vision and maintain positive morale in their group.

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## ESTP – The Fearless Leader

ESTPs are charismatic, effective, and fun-loving leaders. They are excellent at seeing opportunities and taking advantage of them quickly. They are skilled troubleshooters, inspiring speakers, and usually lend humour and adventure to any endeavour. They are masters of solving problems as they unfold and facing adversity with courage and optimism. The ESTP will try to be as logical as possible when making decisions. They will think of the pros and cons, and try to find the most streamlined, effective path towards success. They tend to know how to present plans in a way that will motivate others and maintain morale.

**Possible Struggles:** ESTPs are quick to see opportunities, but often find the technicalities of reaching a long-range vision frustrating. They don't tend to enjoy dwelling excessively on the future, and can tire of planning ahead. ESTPs also love their personal freedom and can feel trapped if they are stuck in an organisation or culture that asks too much of their time. They may struggle with staying committed to a vision or plan, always seeing new and different opportunities that seem more appealing. ESTPs who are committed to leadership can be helped by having an intuitive advisor to help them with some of the theoretical, long-range planning.

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## ISFP – The Sensitive Leader

ISFPs are unassuming, gentle, and compassionate leaders. They are good listeners, adaptable in their vision, and empathetic in their approach. They usually lead quietly, and will only seek out leadership positions in companies or organisations they truly believe in. They work best if they are leading a cause that will help people, especially those that are persecuted or marginalized. They believe in standing up for anyone who can't or won't stand up for themselves, so this is often where you'll see them lead most determinedly. When ISFPs make decisions, they will first consider how that decision aligns with their conscience and values, then they will think about how that decision will impact the people involved.

**Possible Struggles:** ISFPs tend to be flexible and hands-on in their work, and can feel frustrated if they are stuck in an office all day with rigid rules and deadlines. They can feel overwhelmed by long to-do lists and by living up to the expectations of other people. They can also have difficulty finding the most logical, objective approach to meeting a goal. Delivering tough news to team members, or firing people can be extremely stressful for them. ISFPs who are determined to be in leadership would be helped by having Intuitive and / or Thinking advisors who can help them to see strategic, long-range plans and can handle critiquing or correcting employees or team members.



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## ESFP – The Charismatic Leader

ESFPs are extremely likeable, fun-loving, and inspiring leaders. They are very in-tune to the needs of their team and will lead with honesty and compassion. They get excited about new opportunities and they are quick to adapt to changes. They don't mind getting involved with something that's rigorous or difficult to get a job done and to connect with the people around them. They know how to lift up team members, encourage them, and make the most of each moment. When they make decisions they will first consider how realistic or exciting the outcome will be. They will also think about how that decision will align with their values, and how it will impact the people involved.

**Possible Struggles:** ESFPs are free-spirits who don't like to be tied down or overwhelmed with long to-do lists. They can struggle with long-term commitments unless that commitment sits well with their values or compassion for people. ESFPs like to take advantage of the moment, and they are excellent at solving problems spontaneously, but they can get tired of focusing extensively on the future. They can also struggle to remain objective in decision-making since they are so concerned about how decisions will impact people. ESFPs who are determined to be in leadership can be helped by getting advice from intuitive and / or thinking types who can help them with theoretical, big-picture planning.

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## INTJ – The Strategic Leader

INTJs lead with vision, rationality, and determination. They are guided by their intuition to see strategic pathways to a future goal. They have no problem directing, delegating, and putting plans into place. INTJs have a calm, focused demeanour that inspires confidence in members of their team. They develop enterprising plans and they have a strong determination to see those plans succeed. When they make decisions, they will first consider how those decisions will play out in the future. Then they will think of the most efficient, logical course of action.

**Possible Struggles:** INTJs can get so caught up in their vision that they lose sight of details that may be important. They can also struggle with maintaining morale because they tend to disregard politeness, niceness or tact in favor of being objective and decisive. Because of their preference for intuition, they may have difficulties putting their vision into words that will motivate sensing types. INTJs who are in leadership positions tend to be more balanced when they have sensing and / or feeling advisors who can help them to see important details and maintain morale with team members.

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## ENTJ – The Assertive Leader

ENTJs lead with confidence, strategic insight, and decisiveness. These straight-forward, ambitious leaders inspire confidence in their team. They can be counted upon to deliver on their promises and have big ideas. ENTJs will lead with honesty; saying what they mean, and sometimes not in the most conscientious manner. However, their determination and hard work is an example that will motivate others. Their visionary outlook will inspire the people around them, and their rational logic and swift decisiveness will keep things moving at a steady pace. They may not be the most sensitive people in the room, but they're often the most driven and intensely focused. When they make decisions they will first focus on what's logical, what will work quickly, followed by what will work most effectively in the long run.

**Possible Struggles:** ENTJs have to work to take their team member's feelings and needs into account. They are so determined to be objective and get things done quickly that they can completely drive over and ignore the feelings and ideas of other people. They can also be so caught up in getting things done quickly and so focused on their vision that they miss out on important details that need attending to. ENTJs work best when they have a mixed team of advisors. Fellow intuitives can help explain and define the ENTJ's innovative ideas. Sensing types can help them to see the details. Feeling types can help the ENTJ to maintain morale and take into account people's personal needs.

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## INTP – The Unconventional Leader

INTPs lead with accuracy, knowledge, and open-minded curiosity. INTPs strive to be democratic leaders, taking in opinions and ensuring that everyone feels heard (even if they disagree with their opinions). INTPs are not micro-managers or dictators. They like to give their team members the freedom to creatively find solutions to problems. That said, they will step in quickly if they see their company or organization heading toward dangerous waters. Their insight and strategic thinking make it easy for them to see how things will play out and how to avoid trouble. They have a strong vision for the future, and they will try to casually and gradually lead others towards that vision.

**Possible Struggles:** INTPs are extremely autonomous individuals, and will tire of leadership positions that put them in crowded rooms and at the mercy of other people's schedules and whims. They tend to like leading in the background through suggestions and with plenty of space to think creatively. INTPs also dislike bureaucratic obstacles and complications and get frustrated by dealing with details that get in the way of their overall goal. INTPs find ESXP partners helpful (where X represents either preference on that scale) as they can inspire team-members, keep people motivated, and take care of the details when the INTP needs alone time to think.

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## ENTP – The Innovative Leader

ENTPs are enterprising, strategic, and competitive leaders. They have a knack for entrepreneurship and they strive to challenge themselves and continually grow. They are intensely focused on their vision, always moving forward, always experimenting, always trying something new. ENTP leaders quickly see potential pitfalls and are skilled at troubleshooting and problem-solving in a crisis. They have a strong visionary focus and try to inspire that same vision and hopeful determination in their team members. When ENTPs make decisions, they will focus first on how decisions could play out, what opportunities might be available, and then what the most logical course of action is.

**Possible Struggles:** ENTPs can get so excited about new possibilities that they leave other projects unfinished. They can struggle with procrastination or finding ways to prioritise their many visions and plans. They may unintentionally overwork their staff and team as they try to give priority to every single idea and possibility that comes into their mind. They can also be too eager to debate and overly competitive with their team members, unintentionally offending others or ignoring others' ideas or values as not being important. Many ENTPs find the advice of a trusted feeling partner helpful as they can offer advice about how to maintain morale and communicate praise.

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## INFJ – The Perceptive Leader

INFJs are passionate, insightful, and visionary leaders. They are most often found in leadership positions that have a humanitarian cause. They believe in taking care of their team, listening to them, and understanding where everyone is coming from. They are strategic in their vision, always looking forward to a future goal and finding innovative ways to get there. They are perfectionistic and demanding of themselves, but encouraging and motivating to their team. When they make decisions, they will first consider how a decision will play out in the future, and how that decision will impact the people involved.

**Possible Struggles:** INFJs can be workaholics as leaders and can burn themselves out as they push themselves to an unattainable standard of perfection. INFJs may also struggle with presenting their vision in a clear way, with sequential steps and a straightforward course. Because INFJs keep their visions mostly to themselves, they often feel flustered when trying to share that vision with others. This can be frustrating for them and the people they work with. INFJs also struggle with giving negative feedback or dealing with conflict situations. Conflict is anathema to the INFJ and they may ignore negative situations or handing out criticism when it's needed. They are often helped by having a partner or advisor with a thinking preference who can help them to deal with conflict situations and maintain objectivity.

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## ENFJ – The Passionate Leader

ENFJs are charismatic, understanding, and motivational leaders. They believe in encouraging their team, leading by example, and making the world a better place. They are organised and goal-oriented, always keeping a clear eye on the future and motivating their team to work together to get there. They are very disciplined and focused, but also deeply concerned about taking care of their team and understanding where everyone is coming from. They are not afraid to get rigourously involved with their team and work hard alongside them to make plans succeed. They use their intuition and feeling to navigate social settings with ease, making them excellent diplomats.

**Possible Struggles:** ENFJs hate conflict and try to be encouraging and withhold criticism as much as possible. This can cause negative situations to escalate as they put off dealing with them for too long. They may also be so focused on their personal relationships that they lose sight of a clear, objective, logical course of action. As EJ types, ENFJs can also be too hasty to make decisions and may need to remind themselves to take the time to reflect on decisions before moving forward. ENFJs are often helped by having an ISTX or INTX advisor on their team (where X represents either preference on that scale). These types (although very different from each other) can help them to take the time see alternate viewpoints and logical ways to deal with conflict situations.

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## INFP – The Sincere Leader

INFPs are passionate, caring, and empathetic leaders. They often take up leadership positions that allow them to fight for a humanitarian cause they believe in. They are very innovative in their plans, and open-minded to hear many different viewpoints. They have excellent written communication skills and are skilled at conveying a viewpoint in a moving and compassionate manner. They are excellent listeners, encouraging leaders, and passionate in their pursuits. More than anything, the INFP leader longs to improve the world for people. When they make a decision, they will first consider how that decision will align with their values and morals. Afterwards, they will consider how that decision will affect the people involved.

**Possible Struggles:** INFPs are very accepting people who like to create an encouraging atmosphere for their team. They may struggle with giving criticism or dealing with conflict. Unless someone has violated one of their personal values, they may refrain from saying anything. They may also struggle with accepting criticism from their team. Leaders inevitably get criticism at some point from their team members. This can be a struggle for INFPs who take criticism very personally. INFPs find a lot of deadlines and huge to-do lists overwhelming, and they may find themselves feeling trapped if they are having to rush to get everything done. INFPs can be helped by having advisors with a thinking or judging preference. The thinking types can help them to stay objective, and the judging types can help them to prioritise and manage deadlines.



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## ENFP – The Inspirational Leader

ENFPs lead with imagination, vision, and passion. They are resourceful individuals who find many innovative ways to make a difference in the world. They tend to have frequent brainstorming sessions with their team and enjoy giving everyone a chance to speak their mind. They are encouraging and uplifting, inspiring others with all their ideas and all the possibilities they see around them. ENFPs are not micro-managers and they enjoy giving their team the freedom to complete tasks in their own creative ways. They don't mind sharing leadership and they are very open to a plethora of ideas and viewpoints. When making decisions, ENFPs focus first on the potential possibilities of each decision, then they think about how that decision will impact the people involved.

**Possible Struggles:** ENFPs may struggle with prioritising their many ideas. Some ENFPs try to give each of their ideas and ambitions equal priority and wind up overworking themselves or their team. ENFPs can also struggle with finishing projects. They may feel pulled to so many new ideas and projects, that they lose interest in the projects they've already started and leave them unfinished. ENFPs may struggle with keeping track of the details of all their tasks. They may get so focused on their vision that they lose track of important facts and nuances that need attending to. Many ENFPs find that having an SJ advisor or partner helps them to prioritise, keep track of details, and follow through on important tasks.

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