

ISFJ

Dominant Introverted Sensing Auxiliary Extraverted Feeling

ISFJs are committed to their organization or group and the people in it and work diligently to meet the expectations of others and the requirements of their position. They focus on organizing their environment to meet the practical needs of other people.

Of all the types, ISFJs experience the most difficulty with change. Their primary focus is using their accumulated data, especially about people, as a base of understanding and acting. In changing situations in which they do not have experience, they can feel lost and overwhelmed. Because of their commitment to people, they also identify and empathize with everyone around them. ISFJs need lots of information and support to deal effectively with change.

When They Have to Deal with Losses

ISFJs contribute by:

- Feeling it is their duty to change
- Planning for losses—providing stability
- Taking time to close and process the losses
- Being sensitive to everyone's feelings and supporting others

ISFJs have difficulty with:

- Unplanned or spontaneous losses—if there's no plan, it's hard to let go
- Feeling all the pain—theirs and everyone else's
- Getting confused—have difficulty making decisions
- Becoming critical and impatient with themselves

During the Transition Period

ISFJs report the following reactions:

- Spend more time seeking support and discussion—or withdraw
- Feel a sense of loss, speak of "dismemberment"—can experience overwhelming sadness and self-doubt
- Feel frustrated and out of control because there's no plan—dislike uncertainty
- Slip back to old ways and ask, "Why change?"

ISFJs tend to focus on:

- What is the plan? Developing the plan, organizing things, setting up a timetable
- The past, "if only"—pity themselves and others
- Survival mechanisms
- Struggling to prioritize "correctly"

During the Startup Phase

ISFJs report the following as obstacles to starting:

- Need to see a plan before they can begin
- Need lots of pieces to see the big picture—use a more careful process than others
- Want to know people's needs are being considered
- Find it hard to deal with people who dismiss the past

ISFJs contribute by:

- Organizing the plan
- Including the necessary details that others may forget
- Remembering the feelings of others involved—offering support, nurturing, and stability

What ISFJs need during a time of change:

- Realistic data about why changes are necessary
- Time to adjust and plan
- Reassurance, understanding, and support
- A well-thought-out plan and time frame that recognize the personal effects of the changes
- A calm approach that allows them to move at their own pace
- Knowing what's expected of them personally

What ISFJs report when not supported in a time of change:

- Feel overwhelmed by new expectations and requirements
- Feel lost and alone—can get into self-pity and martyrdom
- May romanticize "the good old days"
- Can become rigid