



MBTI® Report for HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONALS

Increasing patients' satisfaction with their care

Using your MBTI® preferences to serve your patients better

The success of healthcare organizations depends on many factors, including skilled talent, the dedication and hard work of staff, connected and integrated care teams, state-of-the-art equipment and technology, and funding. While success can be measured in a number of ways, the quality of patient care remains a central concern for healthcare providers.

Patient satisfaction remains the key measure by which healthcare organizations assess the quality and performance of their services. It is often benchmarked against a set of local as well as national standards, and can cover a range of themes, such as provision of information, care planning, dignity and respect, communication, listening and engagement, and rights and responsibilities.

The MBTI® Report for Healthcare Professionals helps doctors, nurses, healthcare assistants and clinical staff improve all aspects of their communication. It helps you become aware of how your individual personality type preferences affect the style of care you give. This awareness gives you access to a whole range of other styles of interaction with patients—and small, deliberate changes in care style can have a profound impact on patients' perceptions of and satisfaction with the care they receive.

Learning about your *care style*

The information in this report can help you understand how to interact with your patients more effectively. It increases your self-awareness and understanding of your particular care style, based on your four personality type preferences. The report highlights what comes naturally to you, as well as areas where you need to stretch, or *flex*, your style. Included are specific recommendations for how you can flex your care style to increase patients' satisfaction, which you can do by being open to alternative ways of interacting related to your opposite preferences. Most of these recommendations will add only a few minutes to your time with patients.

The report provides additional insights into how you deliver information to and spend time with patients, as well as why misunderstandings and conflicts may sometimes arise during your care. The report also describes the impact of job stress as it affects your care style, which can alter the choices you make in your patient interactions.



Your MBTI® type description: ISFJ

Key descriptors

The following key descriptors of ISFJs can help you understand the effect your care style has on your patients:

- Deliberate about what thoughts they share with others
- Striving to make sense of the world
- Cooperative and organized
- Conscientious and precise
- Focused on the here and now
- Operating behind the scenes
- Empathetic and supportive
- Realistic and practical
- Loyal and reliable
- Steady and consistent
- Able to listen patiently
- Earnest

Examining your preferences

ISFJs express their preference for **Introversion (I)** by spending much of their time, mostly in private, considering individual patients' condition and what impact it will have on how they feel. They thoughtfully and carefully anticipate what each patient might need from them. They strive to connect one-on-one with patients and listen intently to their needs and concerns.

ISFJ care providers express their preference for **Sensing (S)** by being practical in the way they serve others. They use medical data and other information to improve patients' care experience. They do not make assumptions based on a hunch but rather look at information objectively in making decisions about how to treat a particular condition. When presented by a rare or unfamiliar situation, ISFJ try to learn as much as they can from current research and the experiences of others who have successfully handled similar cases in the past.

Values are important to ISFJs—everything ISFJ care providers do in their work with patients is governed by their preference for **Feeling (F)**. Their goal is to please others, and they will go the extra mile to ease patients' discomfort or suffering. They feel they are at their best when they can serve patients and make them feel as good as possible.

Structure, clarity, and organization are essential for ISFJs. ISFJ care providers use their preference for **Judging (J)** in creating an appropriate treatment plan for patients, after considering alternatives. Patients typically feel they are in good hands with ISFJs because of their personal, considerate, and thorough treatment and their efforts to prepare for all possibilities.



Making patients feel comfortable

Patient: “Do you care about me and about making me feel comfortable?”

ISFJ care providers are good at making people feel important and comfortable and are adept at catering to patients' specific needs with empathy, kindness, and consideration for their feelings. ISFJs take the time to listen to patients' stories and make them feel important. They are practical and resourceful and know how and where to get patients what they need to feel better. Patients often feel comforted by the fact that ISFJs have thought through multiple scenarios and will have a back-up plan for their back up-plan.

Challenges for ISFJ care providers

ISFJs tend toward perfectionism and sometimes experience “analysis paralysis.” They have difficulty watching patients suffering or feeling uncomfortable, while accepting that there may not be a solution that could help them feel better. Their follow-up with patients is impeccable, and they circle back to keep patients updated with the most current information. When patients are upset or feel they are not receiving good treatment, ISFJs take it personally and feel as if they have let them down, even if it has little to do with their direct care.

What you can do to show patients courtesy and respect

Below are some of the attributes of your natural care style based on one of your four type preferences, along with suggestions on how you can increase your effectiveness by stretching, or *flexing*, that style.

Flexing your Feeling care style with the opposite preference: Thinking

Your natural care style: Feeling

- You take the time to get to know personal information about your patients
- You give them a reason to trust you by showing your loyalty and compassion
- You show understanding and concern by asking questions related to how patients feel about even the small things
- You are empathetic to patients, even when you know there is little that can be done to help them feel more comfortable
- You listen intently and make them feel that what they say is important

Flex with the opposite preference: Thinking

- Don't take on too much; sometimes you can realistically attend to only one person at a time
- Recognize that conflict may be hard on you and that it may be difficult for you to push back when patients want more than you are able to give (e.g., pain meds, food, water, etc.); remind yourself that ultimately you are doing what will serve the patient best
- As appropriate, describe patients' treatment to them more specifically regarding possible side effects or possible complications that could affect their progress
- Try to include a schedule of care as part of the detailed information you provide to patients



Helping patients understand the details of their care

Patient: “Can you help me understand what is happening to me?”

ISFJ care providers make helping patients understand their treatment a top priority. They listen intently to their concerns or fears and show patience in answering their questions. ISFJs are deliberate in learning about treatment goals to be sure all interventions are serving those goals, and are practical in the way they share vital information with patients and adapt to their specific needs. They feel that the more information they have to share, the better equipped patients will be to face what lies ahead.

Challenges for ISFJ care providers

ISFJs may feel they have fallen short when patients are having a tough time understanding their message. Remember that patients learn and retain information at different rates, and that some may feel uncomfortable with certain personal questions. Try not to take it personally and realize that people in pain have different needs, including time alone. Be sure to ask whether they need clarification on anything you discussed, as sometimes patients are embarrassed or intimidated when they are unable to understand what you're telling them and don't want to admit it. Most patients need some reassurance from you that the course you are taking is the right one.

What you can do to help patients be better informed

Below are some of the attributes of your natural care style based on two of your four type preferences, along with suggestions on how you can increase your effectiveness by stretching, or *flexing*, that style.

Flexing your Introversion care style with the opposite preference: Extraversion

Your natural care style: Introversion

- You focus on sharing vital information with patients and may not extend the conversation beyond that
- You tend to think through your insights and opinions before sharing them with patients

Flex with the opposite preference: Extraversion

- Make sure you share with patients more than just the “need-to-know” information, as they may need to talk through what test results mean and their implications
- Keep patients informed about what you are doing to and for them, as you are doing it, so they can be involved in the process and understand its impact

Flexing your Feeling care style with the opposite preference: Thinking

Your natural care style: Feeling

- You allow the values of consideration and warmth to influence the direction of your care
- You use understanding and empathy to get patients to be as involved and invested in their own care as you are

Flex with the opposite preference: Thinking

- While being the bearer of bad news is not your forte, remember that you serve patients best by being direct and to the point—not by sugar-coating a difficult reality
- Recognize that just because you can't give patients good news does not mean that you are letting them down
- When patients respond to bad news with anger, listen and show understanding but avoid feeling that you are responsible for it; sometimes anger or frustration can be a critical motivator in behavior change



Assuring patients that their opinions about their care matter

Patient: “How much does my opinion matter in the care and treatment I receive?”

ISFJ care providers take the time to have in-depth one-on-one patient conversations, where patients do most of the talking, and they listen for the minute differences or symptoms that could change the diagnosis or treatment plan. They enjoy learning more about the core issues of the clinical challenge. They have a personal and passionate way of asking patients questions that helps them feel included in the course of their treatment and remind them that they have a role to play in their recovery.

Challenges for ISFJ care providers

ISFJs don't always feel comfortable with patients until they have had a chance to get to know them better. In new patient relationships they may be slow to reach out and ask them for their opinion. Do what you need to do to help you feel more comfortable asking patients questions—even the somewhat intrusive ones. They will see it as an extension of your care for them. ISFJs can also become preoccupied with their own thoughts—you must remember to reengage and focus on your patients.

What you can do to show patients you are listening to them

Below are some of the attributes of your natural care style based on two of your four type preferences, along with suggestions on how you can increase your effectiveness by stretching, or *flexing*, that style.

Flexing your Introversion care style with the opposite preference: Extraversion

Your natural care style: Introversion

- You often prefer to write things down and have another person on your care team share information with patients
- You use your personal warmth and nonverbal signals to help patients feel listened to and understood
- You explain to patients why their perspective is unique and important

Flex with the opposite preference: Extraversion

- When you are on rounds, be sure you pop in on patients for a quick hello to make sure they understand any information that may have been relayed through a third party
- Have patients reiterate their thoughts and opinions to make sure you are capturing them correctly
- With permission, include family members in the conversation; patients often feel more comfortable and less anxious if their family has some agency in the overall treatment plan

Flexing your Sensing care style with the opposite preference: Intuition

Your natural care style: Sensing

- You may like to gather a thorough history of patients' symptoms and hospitalizations to learn which treatments have worked and which have not
- You listen to patients' experiences and add what you know about others who have suffered from similar afflictions

Flex with the opposite preference: Intuition

- Give patients the big picture, including what could happen in the best- and worst-case scenarios; they may feel comforted by knowing what they may be facing
- Allow patients to share ideas about what they believe led to their current condition; often they will disclose a helpful detail that would otherwise have been missed



Being responsive to patients' needs

Patient: "Will you make an effort to honor my requests?"

ISFJ care providers pride themselves on personal service and are often the first to roll up their sleeves and tackle a problem or situation when patients are in pain. Their sense of compassion and concern are helpful in getting patients to understand their clinical choices on medication and pain management, even if they are not in full agreement. ISFJs are likely to respond quickly to patients' requests, especially when those requests have to do with their level of comfort.

Challenges for ISFJ care providers

Even when ISFJs are trying to inform patients about why certain steps have to be taken for their safety, their indirect approach can sometimes be confusing to patients and give them an excuse to be noncompliant with recommendations. ISFJs also give too much of themselves to the job sometimes (e.g., like skipping lunch or staying too late), and you must remember to take a few minutes for yourself from time to time to make sure your own health does not become compromised.

What you can do to create a supportive environment

Below are some of the attributes of your natural care style based on one of your four type preferences, along with suggestions on how you can increase your effectiveness by stretching, or *flexing*, that style.

Flexing your Introversion care style with the opposite preference: Extraversion

Your natural care style: Introversion

- You find answers to patients' questions, no matter how difficult
- You enjoy the opportunity to speak to patients one-on-one
- You provide a safe outlet for patients to share their feelings in an effort to help them understand what they can do to continue making progress

Flex with the opposite preference: Extraversion

- Employ both verbal and nonverbal cues to show that you understand what your patients are saying
- Explain even basic steps and rationales of treatment to patients, in person when possible
- Follow up with patients after they are discharged to monitor any post-operative care challenges and assess their comfort level; for some patients, knowing that they are still being held accountable increases their compliance with recommendations



What you can do to help patients manage pain

Below are some of the attributes of your natural care style based on one of your four type preferences, along with suggestions on how you can increase your effectiveness by stretching, or *flexing*, that style.

Flexing your Feeling care style with the opposite preference: Thinking

Your natural care style: Feeling

- You tend to treat patient as individuals, and give each of them the benefit of the doubt
- You find it difficult to watch patients suffer and want to do whatever you can to help them feel better
- You listen to patients speak about their frustrations or feelings of helplessness concerning their pain; you are aware that even if you say nothing, it helps them feel understood

Flex with the opposite preference: Thinking

- Remind yourself that you do not have to be all things to all people, and it is OK if they see you as a little imperfect
- Challenge patients to set goals for themselves around their progress and try to help them feel empowered when they reach a milestone
- As you try to get patients to change unproductive habits that can lead to additional health problems, don't be afraid to push them a little to try harder—they may not be used to pushing themselves

What you can do to help patients manage the side effects of treatment

Below are some of the attributes of your natural care style based on one of your four type preferences, along with suggestions on how you can increase your effectiveness by stretching, or *flexing*, that style.

Flexing your Feeling care style with the opposite preference: Thinking

Your natural care style: Feeling

- You talk to colleagues to learn more about methods for helping patients manage side effects better
- You take the time to listen and to assess the degree of the side effects, as well as to find more effective methods of treatment
- You are adept at distracting patients from their pain by drawing their attention elsewhere

Flex with the opposite preference: Thinking

- Accept that there are times when there is absolutely nothing you can do to make patients feel better due to their side-effect profile; when patients complain and blame you that they don't feel better, take a step back and try not to take it personally
- Encourage patients to come up with their own solutions for managing side effects; consider developing strategies with them involving activities or exercises



Educating patients about their condition and making healthy choices

Patient: "Can you teach me how to improve my health?"

Some people eventually require medical care due to a lack of education about making better health choices. ISFJ care providers are good at leading patients to resources that can help them alter habits and change behaviors, having a large impact on their overall health. They take time to think through the kinds of changes that might be the most realistic for them and help devise ways to implement them. ISFJs excel at paying attention to what is or isn't working for patients, and can offer appropriate suggestions about fitness, nutrition, and other lifestyle choices.

Challenges for ISFJ care providers

Once patients are discharged, ISFJs tend to be ready to move on to the next case, but some patients need more follow-up to stay on track. Think about what might be the best way to stay connected with them. Patients' compliance improves when a personal relationship with a care provider serves to continue to hold them accountable. When patients require too much of your time and energy it can be draining, but remind yourself that you can be a decisive factor in patients' positive results and overall care experience.

What you can do to explain medical issues appropriately

Below are some of the attributes of your natural care style based on one of your four type preferences, along with suggestions on how you can increase your effectiveness by stretching, or *flexing*, that style.

Flexing your Introversion care style with the opposite preference: Extraversion

Your natural care style: Introversion

- You focus on getting patients the information they need to be successful
- You educate them about the impact of their health choices on their care
- You encourage patients, with your kindness and compassion, to take responsibility for their health and demonstrate how small steps and changes can make a big difference

Flex with the opposite preference: Extraversion

- Don't assume that patients understand everything you are sharing with them; ask questions to confirm that they comprehend how their care will affect their life overall
- Follow up with a personal visit after you have explained the protocol of their care to answer any new questions or concerns; a personal connection helps patients feel that they are not alone in a difficult situation



What you can do to facilitate patients' post-hospital transition

Below are some of the attributes of your natural care style based on two of your four type preferences, along with suggestions on how you can increase your effectiveness by stretching, or *flexing*, that style.

Flexing your Feeling care style with the opposite preference: Thinking

Your natural care style: Feeling

- You appreciate your relationships with patients and work hard to develop trust and rapport with them so they are motivated to work hard to stay healthy
- You praise patients for the work they have done thus far and the changes they have made, and you encourage them to continue these behaviors after they leave the hospital
- You involve the personnel and social services required for a holistic approach that covers multiple aspects of recovery
- You believe that patients have better possible outcomes when they do one thing at a time and follow protocol and your recommendations

Flex with the opposite preference: Thinking

- When patients slip back into old habits, remind them of all the hard work they have done and that they don't want to put themselves back into a difficult or dangerous situation
- Explain to them the possible consequences of not following protocol and discuss creative ways that will work for them

Flexing your Judging care style with the opposite preference: Perceiving

Your natural care style: Judging

- You appreciate the role that structure and consistency play in improving patients' condition and behaviors
- You cater to each patient's unique situation by exploring specific treatment options showing the best results
- You remind patients that they must be involved in the course of their treatment and encourage them to explore the options they show the most interest in and are most likely to comply with

Flex with the opposite preference: Perceiving

- Remind yourself that there is more than one "right" way for each patient; sometimes people want flexibility and some options in their treatment plan and may find it hard to adhere to strict rules and guidelines
- Be open to the possibility that you may need to change the treatment plan (or recommend changes) if complications arise; follow up with patients according to the policies and procedural schedule of the hospital to stay on top of potential new developments



Some tactical recommendations

Patients judge the care they receive by the amount of time they have to wait and how much time you spend with them once you enter the room. To maximize your efforts with patients, in the first 60 seconds

- Introduce yourself
- Ask patients how they are feeling
- Ask them whether they have any questions
- Ask them whether they have everything they need
- Ask them how you can make them more comfortable
- Explain to them what happens next in their treatment

Leverage your natural talent for connecting with people to provide high-quality, productive care that leaves patients satisfied. Consider a few behaviors you want to develop and practice them in situations or with patients where they will have the most impact. Then you can achieve the results you want and ultimately help patients feel good about their care.



Managing your stress and the impact it has on patients

ISFJs have incredibly high standards and tend to be very hard on themselves when they are feeling stressed. When they experience ongoing stress that appears to have no end in sight, they can find themselves “in the grip,” a phrase that denotes a state of feeling almost paralyzed and unable to stop from making poor choices or behaving inappropriately. When that happens to you, the key is to first recognize the feeling and then engage in behaviors that will help bring you back to the version of you that operates best. Following is some information about ISFJs in the grip.

Indicators that you are “in the grip”

- Imagining numerous worst-case scenarios and believing all of them will happen
- Exaggerating the smallest challenge and feeling it is an impossible task to overcome
- Acting helpless or being passive-aggressive
- Losing faith in others and becoming cynical
- Feeling that people are not respecting your values and principles
- Losing confidence in what you know to be true about yourself
- Digging in your heels when people try to help you

How to get yourself back

- Brainstorm alternatives with a person you trust
- Rebuild your confidence by reminding yourself that you have good intentions
- Practice self-care (rest, eat healthy food, etc.)
- Put together a plan than focuses more on the positive than the negative
- Devise some short- and long-term strategies
- Take time for yourself and relax; take a walk or read a book

What to do in the meantime

- Think through whatever is troubling you and try to regain an objective perspective on your role as care provider
- Refuse to feel guilty about taking personal time to regroup
- Get some sleep
- Slow down and make a list of priorities to see where you need to start
- Take five minutes in the break room to compose yourself before meeting with patients
- Be kind to yourself and know that feeling in the grip will pass

