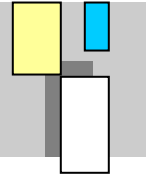


# Paragon Learning Style Inventory

*A Window into Learning Style and Cognitive Preference*



## A Self-Help Guide for Student Success Based on Learning Style

### *Introvert – Sensate (IS) Version*

Success is no accident. Whether what we seek is a sense of inner satisfaction, wealth or academic success, the formula for success is fairly well accepted. There are reasons why some people find more of it than others, regardless of their backgrounds or abilities.

This guide will lead you through a process of self-development. Each stage will build upon the last. As you reflect on the information provided, make note of your insights and the areas that you feel are those most important for you personally. At the back of the packet is a place to write some of your notes as well as your goals for personal development.

#### **This packet will lead you through the following 4 stages:**

1. Self-Understanding (as it relates to cognitive and learning style)
2. Development of a “Success Psychology”
3. Cultivating a personal sense of “Purpose.”
4. Goal Setting

*Note: Your success will be much more likely if you are working with your teachers or coaches.<sup>1</sup>*

### **Introvert Sensate Types**

<b>ISTJ</b> Serious, quiet, earn success by concentration and thoroughness. Practical, orderly, matter-of-fact, logical, realistic, dependable. See to it that everything is well organized. Take responsibility. Make up their minds as to what should be accomplished and work toward is steadily, regardless of protests or distractions.	<b>ISFJ</b> Quiet friendly, responsible, and conscientious. Work devotedly to meet their obligations. Lend stability to any project or group. Thorough, painstaking, accurate. Their interests are usually not technical. Can be patient with necessary details. Loyal, considerate, perceptive, concerned with how other people feel.
<b>ISTP</b> Cool onlookers. Quiet, reserved, observing and analyzing life with detached curiosity and unexpected flashes of original humor. Usually interested in cause and effect-how and why mechanical things work, and in organizing facts use logical principles.	<b>ISFP</b> Retiring, quiet, sensitive, kind, and modest about their abilities. Shun disagreements; do not force their opinions or values on others. Usually do not care to lead but are often loyal followers. Often relaxed about getting things done, because they enjoy the moment and do not want to spoil it by undue haste or exertion.

<sup>1</sup> All teachers have been provided “Developing a Success Psychology” and “How to Succeed with Students of Differing Learning Styles.”

## Step 1: Self – Understanding

There are many aspects to a human personality. We are all very complex and unique. It is useful to reflect on what makes us who we are, so that we can have a better understanding of why we have certain tendencies, why we relate to some people better than others, and what contributes to our unique view of the world around us. The better we understand ourselves, the more our actions are a product of choice, and less a product of reaction to conditioning and unconsciousness tendencies. We could say that there are 3 general types of mental mechanisms that influence our choices:

- A. *Our Cognitive Preferences*
- B. *Our Unconscious Conditioning*
- C. *Our Conscious thought process*

This section will help you better understand the first of these – **your cognitive preferences**.

These preferences are also called your learning style, your cognitive style, your personality type, or your temperament type. There are several effective instruments that have been developed for understanding these preferences, including the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator and the Paragon Learning Style Inventory. If you have not taken the Paragon Learning Style Inventory, contact your teacher or download it from the website: [www.calstatela.edu/plsi](http://www.calstatela.edu/plsi) before you continue. You will need your score to take advantage of this developmental process.

There are 4 packets in this series. This packet is designed specifically for those with an IS\_ combination. If your PLSI score was one of the following ISTJ, ISFJ, ISFP, ISTP, then you are a person with an (I) Introverted – (S) Sensate preference. When compared to your peers with other preferences, you will have very different ways of processing information, thinking, and interacting. Knowing your tendencies can be one key to success in school.

Examine the following descriptions in bold. They should recognize your preferences in the lists.

### EXTROVERT (@60% of population)

learns best from doing  
is more at ease and confident socially  
likes to know how others are doing it  
gets energized from socializing  
readily volunteers and offers opinions  
ideas start from the outside in

### SENSATE (@65% of population)

**is more realistic and practical**  
**is more patient and steady**  
**uses his/her experience and common sense**  
**likes routines and order**  
**looks more for what is actual and sensible**  
**lives in the here and now**

### INTROVERT (@40% of population)

**likes to watch before doing**  
**prefers working alone or with one other**  
**sets own standards when possible**  
**likes quiet space to work**  
**seems "deep" and hard to understand**  
**ideas start from inside out**

### INTUITIVE (@35% of population)

is more imaginative and abstract  
likes new challenge, works in spurts  
trusts what makes sense to her/him  
dislikes routine and detail work  
looks more for what is possible  
lives toward her/his vision of the future

As you examine the preferences of both the introvert and the sensate sides of these 2 dimensions, you can see that your needs and comfort areas are different than many of the other students in your class.

When we put an introverted preference together with a sensing preference we get a unique combination, defined by the description – **Thoughtful Realist**. Here is a paragraph describing how a typical IS or Thoughtful Realist works best in schools. Again, it should sound familiar.

### IS's - Thoughtful Realists

Let me work independently on tasks that are clearly spelled out. Let me work with facts and information and I will be able to use my power of insightful realism to come to sound well thought-out conclusions. Give me a chance to be careful and thoughtful. I will be your most dependable and steady student if you give me work where the directions are clear and the desired outcome is understood beforehand. Give me recognition for my care and persistence since those are my strengths and I may not draw as much attention to myself as some of the other students. When you give vague careless directions or just expect me to “be creative” with no guidelines, I will likely feel some uneasiness and maybe even some resentment.

Now examine the chart below. If you are an ISFP or an ISTP, the SP description on the left should give you some additional insight into your natural learning preferences. If you are an ISFJ or ISTJ, the SJ description on the right should be helpful.

	Perceiving Types	Judging Types
<b>Sensing Types</b>	<b>SP's Sensible, Adaptable, Active types (@33% of the class)</b>	<b>SJ's Sensible, Decision-making types (@30% of the class)</b>
	When sensate qualities are combined with perceiver qualities the result is usually someone very tuned in to the here and now. They like doing and playing today, and not being too worried about tomorrow. They are the most spontaneous and easy-going. They like to get involved in new and interesting activities. School can be boring for the SP, if it means sitting still and doing all written work, but it can be fun too, because that's often where the action is	When sensate qualities are combined with judging qualities the result is usually someone who is very dependable and responsible. The SJ is very service-oriented and are good "team players". They most like situations that are spelled-out and well organized. SJ's like institutions like school, teams, church and family. They usually don't mind step-by-step work, and they like and do well in school (partly because most teachers are SJ's themselves).

Below are the results of some of the research that has been done in schools, specifically selected for what has been found relating to introverts and sensates. It is often helpful to know the tendencies that have been demonstrated by others of your type. It can help us know what our natural strong and less strong areas and preferred modes of instruction might be. As we come to better understand our natural tendencies, we can learn to use our strength areas with more challenging tasks, and then over time begin to work on our less developed skills to be more successful at a broader range of tasks.

Introversion Research	Sensate Research
<b>I</b> = Score high on “Auditory” learner scale <b>I</b> = Score high on “reflective” learner scale <b>I</b> = high “internal brain arousal” <b>IJ</b> = Least spontaneous <b>I</b> = Tendency to internalize emotion	<b>S</b> = Tend toward “left hemisphere” brain use <b>S</b> = Score high in fact retention <b>ISP</b> = Score high in computer aptitude <b>ST</b> = Writing tends to “practically explain” the events and chronicle the things that happened <b>SF</b> = Writing tends to focus on the people involved, creating a story with a beginning, middle and end <b>S</b> = Feel more comfortable when the teacher is leading the class. Low tolerance for ambiguity

## **So what?**

So I know about my learning style, so what? The answer is that knowing your learning style preference alone is not going to make you necessarily more successful. But it might help you feel like your tendencies, needs and values make a little more sense to you now. So, you should understand your strengths and weaknesses a bit better now. And your teacher has more resources related to your type that will be helpful if you are interested in learning more.

In a nutshell – your IS type is going to say less, but see a lot. So you need to value your insights. And recognize that there are a lot of things that you are good at that others find difficult (i.e., processing information, working independently, producing careful products). If you feel less outgoing than others in your class, that is OK, it is just part of your natural tendency. You will always be an introvert, but you may not always be shy. That is up to how you develop your social skills. As you become more knowledgeable about type, you can see how your understanding of your natural tendencies can help you develop other kinds of skills.

## **Step 2 – Developing a Success Psychology**

Your learning style is going to be pretty stable over your lifetime. That is, if you are an IS today, you will probably still be an IS in 30 years. But what is important is, will you be a happy, fulfilled, successful, and contented IS? Understanding our style will help, but what determines ones' success will their values, attitudes and choices.

Earlier we talked about 3 things that influence our choices – 1) our cognitive or learning style, 2) our unconscious thoughts and 3) our conscious thoughts. You can't do much to change the first one, but you can do a lot to change the second. And only you can make choices for yourself. So why would you want to change what is going on in your unconscious mind (also called your mental conditioning)? The answer is that it will make all the difference in whether you are happy or unhappy, achieving or not, and bringing positive circumstances into your life or not. In other words, we could say that at any time our unconscious mind is operating from either a *success or a failure psychology*.

## **Defining the Success Psychology**

What makes someone oriented to success, achievement and high self-esteem is not an accident or a mystery. Research tells us that people with the following 3 traits are more successful in schools and in life.

- *An Internal Locus of Control*
- *A Sense of Acceptance and Belonging*
- *A Mastery (Process) Orientation*

In this section we will use our knowledge of our cognitive type to help us best develop these 3 areas of thinking.

## **A Three Factor Operational Definition of SUCCESS PSYCHOLOGY**

Our self-concept (and so tangentially our psychology of achievement) is very dependent on factors within our environment. It is formed as a result of our years of experiences (especially the early ones). It could be said that one's eyes and ears record the messages they receive from others, especially those most important to them. Because one's unconscious accepts all words and emotions as facts, no matter how legitimate or based in reality, one's psychological orientation to trying and achieving is being continuously constructed and reconstructed by what is encountered in the mirror of others verbal and non-verbal messages

**Research into academic achievement produces three factors that strongly correlate with achievement, a success-orientation and self-esteem. Each of the factors/components outlined below is separate but interrelated. In the attempt to better understand and/or promote success in oneself and others, addressing these three components can help clarify our efforts.**

**INTERNAL LOCUS OF CONTROL:** This factor is defined by one's sense of internal causality and orientation toward personal responsibility. The more internal LOC the more we feel like our destiny is in our own hands. It could be contrasted to seeing life as a series of accidents or "things that happen to us."

**It comes from: recognizing that our actions result in consequences, seeing cause and effect relationships related to success and failure, being given freedom, power and control with an expectation of using them responsibly.**

**SENSE OF BELONGING AND ACCEPTANCE:** This factor reflects how much one feels wanted and a part of the group, and how much one likes and accepts them self as they are. The more one feels accepted and acceptable, the more they are able to express themselves, act authentically and be fully present to others. Self-acceptance could be contrasted to self-aggrandizement or a compulsion to please.

**It comes from: accepting messages from VIPs (including self-talk), practicing a positive approach and attitude, experiencing emotional safety, and feeling a part of a community.**

**GROWTH ORIENTATION vs. Fixed Ability Orientation:** This factor relates to one's thinking related to the root of their competence. Everyone needs to feel competent and confident, but if it is perceived as coming from "how good we are" at a task (related to innate ability), then we tend to give up quickly and protect our egos in the face of failure. If our confidence is rooted in our experience in persist to find solutions, enjoying the learning process, and approaching a task with the desire to overcome challenges, we will tend to grow and achieve more. In this orientation intelligence is something that can be improved not innate. This dynamic is at the root of a person being basically either success-seeking or failure-avoiding.

**It comes from: having learning goals vs. performance goals, getting recognition or criticism for our efforts and not for our abilities, taking learning risks that pay off, and VIPs communicating an incremental vs. fixed view of intelligence and ability.**

## **Developing a Success Psychology**

To develop a success psychology you will need to work hand in hand with your teachers. They have been given ideas to help promote these skills in your class. But in this section let's explore what we can do on our own to promote these mental patterns within our thinking.

### **Locus of Control:**

The most predictive trait that successful people have is an understanding of the cause and effect relationship between their thinking and the quality of their life. In essence, successful people take responsibility to "make it happen." Here are some self-statements that will help you develop this trait:

*I alone am responsible for my success.*

*I understand that my thoughts will lead to actions, which will lead to how my life turns out, so I take my thoughts seriously, and try to think positively.*

*There are few accidents in life, I recognize that events have causes and everything is connected.*

Those with an IS-J combination tend to have a relatively high internal locus of control. This area is likely not one that you struggle with. The IS-P combination tends to have a more casual view of the world. This can be very effective in many ways. Being in the moment can be an effective avenue to success, but be careful not to discount the power of your thinking, or forget to give sufficient attention to the future.

### **Acceptance and Belonging:**

If one does not feel a sense of self-acceptance and a feeling of belonging to a group (family, team, club, friends, class) then it leads to depression, low-self esteem, low motivation, and/or seeking love in unhealthy places. If you do not learn to love yourself, no one else will. Here are some self-statements that will help you develop this trait:

*I accept and love myself for who I am.*

*I accept and show care for others first, before I look for others acceptance of me.*

*I allow myself to be loved and accepted as part of "healthy" groups*

For the ISF combination, your loyalty and care for the welfare for others usually translates into being well liked. But be sure to take the time to give yourself love and affirmation. Don't forget your own needs. The IST combination may have difficulty connecting with others in some cases. It is more difficult as an introvert to be socially adept in your younger years. Remember that it is OK to be an introvert. It is very important that you love and accept yourself and appreciate all of your gifts. It is easy, especially for the IS-J combination to be self-critical and discount their own gifts. The IS needs to be patient in this area. Don't judge your self by other's standards, appreciate who you are, and your reward will be deeper friendships and a greater sense of self-satisfaction.

### **Growth Orientation:**

What keeps most people from success in life, is a "fear of failure" mentality. Examine the 2 orientations outlined on the previous page, and on the last page of this packet, describing the research of Carol Dweck. It is easy to take on a fixed view of our abilities and overtime fall into a helpless (fear of failure) pattern. But those who use that mentality will be both less happy and less successful. Learn to enjoy the challenge of the new or difficult situation, and focus your energy into the process and products will work out. Avoid comparing yourself to others. Learn to enjoy the feeling of overcoming your doubts, insecurities and fears. Success will come from your attitude much more than your current ability level.

*I trust that if I do a good job with the process good results will happen.*

*I will persist in the face of difficulty, I enjoy the challenge and do not fear failure. I never quit.*

*I am not my past grades, scores, or outcomes, I am getting better and growing every day.*

*I will not put limits on myself or let others do so.*

IS types are prone to valuing the end product over the process of getting there. It is worthwhile for the IS, especially the ISJ types to give up a little control over the outcomes and put more attention on learning from the process. ISJs can also get a great deal of perceived self-esteem from getting good grades and being praised. Be careful not to let this lead to a fear of lesser evaluations or a tendency to judge your success by the ratings of others. ISP types can be susceptible to looking for the easy path to what they want. This can work, but make sure that you are not avoiding the attention it takes to the process to ensure a quality outcome. Keep your attention on growth and learning and less on the quickest way to get done.

### Step 3 – Tapping into a Sense of Purpose

When one has a sense of purpose, his or her work is more focused, inspired, and meaningful. Developing a success psychology will lead to a more effective, enjoyable, and productive life, but adding a clearer sense of purpose will help you ground your success in things that you really care about.

Ask yourself what you really love to do. Where do your gifts lie? Learning to translate your gifts into benefit for others is the key to being happy, and will lead to prosperity if it is sincere.

To help clarify your purpose, it is useful to perform the following exercise. First just write down some things that you like to do, things that you are good at, and ways you like to help others. Second, try to reduce all those things to a paragraph. And then see if you can reduce it to just a sentence or two. Use that sentence or two as a guide. It is likely that understanding your learning preferences will help you better recognize your gifts, but don't feel limited by them.

Here is a chart depicting the career choices that have been made by some others with your learning style preferences. It should not limit, your thinking related to what you want to devote your life to, but it may be of interest.

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>ISTJ</b></p> <p><b>Management Administration Law Enforcement Accounting</b></p> <p>Or any other occupations where they can use their experience, attention to detail and dedication to organizational goals to accomplish practical tasks.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>ISFJ</b></p> <p><b>Education Health Care Religious Settings</b></p> <p>Or any other occupations where they can use their experience and/or their understanding of organizational standards to help others and support the "team."</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>ISTP</b></p> <p><b>Skilled Trades Technical Fields Computers Agriculture Military</b></p> <p>Or any other occupations where they can use their practical expertise to solve technical problems and/or process information effectively.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>ISFP</b></p> <p><b>Health Care Business Law Enforcement</b></p> <p>Or any other occupations where use their attention to detail in a service-oriented field.</p>

**NOTES TO MYSELF:**

**Things that struck me about my LEARNING STYLE preferences that of which I want to make a note.**

**Things I want to do to improve my INTERNAL LOCUS OF CONTROL**

**Things I want to do to improve my sense of ACCEPTANCE AND BELONGING**

**Things I want to do to use less of a helpless pattern and more of a MASTERY PATTERN**

**Notes to myself – ideas that I want to remember when I sit down to develop my PERSONAL PURPOSE STATEMENT.**



## Appendix – In-depth Explanation of variable 3 – the Mastery-Orientation

Carol Dweck in her research over the course of 20 years has developed a very useful paradigm with which to examine academic self-concept, achievement, and motivation. She shows very clearly that future success is not so much the result of talent or current level of achievement, but as a result of the orientation/tools one uses to approach learning tasks.

### Two types of Students (and views of ability/intelligence):

**Fixed ability/intelligence theory:** These students seek to look smart and avoid looking dumb. Their highest desire is to accomplish tasks successfully and prove their ability to others. So they seek tasks that will make them look good to others and maintain their conception of themselves as high ability.

**Growth theory:** These students see satisfaction coming from immersion in the process of learning. Every opportunity to learn or try is an opportunity to get better. They do not focus on what the outcome will say about them, but what they can attain from taking part in the venture.

### Two corresponding reactions to failure:

**Helpless Pattern:** When confronted by failure, students with a fixed ability orientation dealt with it by assuming there was nothing they could do further. Their ability was not enough to overcome the difficulty of the tasks and so they felt helpless. After failure, they quickly began to put down their ability/intelligence and perceived the whole of their effort as disproportionately unsuccessful.

**Growth Pattern:** Students with an incremental/process orientation, when faced with a failure condition, immediately began to consider the various ways that they could approach the task differently. They used self-instruction to motivate and guide themselves through the challenging task.

### How each type of pattern is conditioned

Helpless Pattern	Growth Pattern
<p>Being given performance goals (i.e., goals related to measuring the ability of the participant.</p> <p>Focus on ends/products</p> <p>Being given praise and feedback related to how good at the task or intelligent one is.</p> <p>Focus on ability/intelligence</p> <p>Promote stereotypical beliefs about various groups typical ability/intelligence.</p> <p>Develop a failure psychology</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• External locus of control</li> <li>• Individuality and competition</li> <li>• Worth is related to ability level</li> </ul>	<p>Being given learning goals (i.e., goals related to how much one is going to learn)</p> <p>Focus on means/processes</p> <p>Being given operational feedback related to process aspects of the task.</p> <p>Focus on effort and application</p> <p>Challenge stereotypical beliefs about various groups typical ability/intelligence.</p> <p>Develop a success psychology</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Internal locus of control</li> <li>• Belonging and Acceptance</li> <li>• Use personal standards to judge success</li> </ul>

Over time those with a growth pattern showed a higher level of success in school, and a lower incidence of falling into a fear of failure.