

ESTP– Typewatching Profile

The Ultimate Realist

The classic ESTP slogan may be “When all else fails, read the directions.” This heavily action-oriented type, more than any other type, lives for the moment. If reading the directions delays “the moment,” it may therefore be a waste of time.

The ESTP is the ultimate realist with the lowest tolerance for unrelated theory. The ESTP’s focus is directed toward people and things (Extraversion), and information gathering is grounded in what’s real according to the five senses (Sensing). The information then is assessed objectively and analytically (Thinking) at the same time that the ESTP remains spontaneous, flexible, and open to any new alternative (Perceiving). These four preferences combine for quick, exact, tactile, objective, externally expressed responses to any situation.

The ESTP believes that time spent making plans and getting ready may mean missing what is going on right now. So, for example, going to school makes sense only as long as what’s taught is relevant and immediately usable. But the ESTP would rather plunge into the “real world” and deal with real (as opposed to textbook) problems using one’s innate talents instead of what one learns in books.

The ESTP would always rather be doing something than nothing. And the consequences of action can always be postponed to another day. Act now, pay later. Such tendencies in their personalities earn them very negative reputations from other types: they are “fidgets” and “hyperactive,” for example. Certainly the ESTP can seem exceedingly restless.

As outgoing realists with objectivity and flexibility, ESTPs demand a return on every investment of energy they make. If something doesn’t seem worth their while, they move on to the next thing. Rarely, if ever, does one find the ESTP finishing a book that doesn’t appeal; while some other types may wade through a dull book just to finish what they’ve started, or because they think it will be intellectually “good for them,” the ESTP views this as a silly waste of time. Similarly, it may be a waste of time to clean a room simply because it *should* be done. Better to wait until one needs to find some specific lost item. Then, cleaning the room has a purpose and the task makes sense.

Entertaining and gregarious, with a short attention span, the ESTP can often be found on center stage. The ESTP’s quick repartee, with a special knack for practical jokes, makes them fun to be with. People are easily drawn to and engaged by an ESTP. Their capacity to tackle and complete tough jobs, their fearlessness in trying anything at least once, and their keen sense of competition, make ESTPs doers, problem-solvers, and people upon whom one can count when an exciting challenge lies ahead. Not that the job will be done according to the rules. That’s part of the pride and cleverness of the ESTP. If the job becomes routine, the ESTP will lose interest and become bored, causing him or her to want to move on or change the setting.

Excerpted from *Type Talk* by Otto Kroeger and Janet M. Thuesen

One ongoing dilemma for this type is that they are often oblivious to established norms and procedures. As a result, they can be in continual trouble with those in authority. Some other types are specifically anti-authority and enjoy testing its legitimacy—not the ESTP. This type is simply oblivious to authority. Looking at a job or problem, he or she begins to see a way to complete or solve the dilemma and leaps right in, not having checked first as to whether there are established procedures for doing something. As a result, what may have been intended as a good deed by the ESTP may be seen as something completely different by others, who may end up dubbing the ESTP a “troublemaker” or similar term. The well-meaning ESTP ends up not a hero but a failure. Fortunately for them, ESTPs are not given to much self-punishment and simply move on to other endeavors.

ESTP females tend to be out of step with the mainstream. As a type, they are often given to athletics, especially competitive, hands-on, contact sports. If an ESTP female, true to her preferences, is a natural at these, she may be deemed a tomboy. Moreover, the hard-charging fix-it-or-forget-it model of the ESTP is not one readily associated with women in our society.

In a relationship as in most other things, the ESTP demands center stage. While deeply committed in a serious relationship, the expression of commitment may vary from day to day according to changing situations.

ESTP parents often have very realistic expectations of their children and mates. It isn't necessary for the ESTP's children to excel, or even go to college, but they simply must do something constructive and practical with their lives. More specifically, ESTP parents want their children to find something that will make them happy.

The ESTP life-style has a certain restlessness to it. There is always too much going on, with still more to do, never enough time. That, in itself, brings much excitement to the ESTP. Almost any event can be the excuse for a party: an athletic event, the end of summer, a baptism, a new job, a good grade, whatever. An ESTP can become quite involved in preparing and participating in such events. Sometimes all this flurry is only flurry, especially when ESTPs are disorganized, doing things in spurts and accomplishing very little. Then their lack of orderliness can be extremely frustrating to those around them. Their need for center stage can, at times, make them appear very abrasive to other types, as can their impatience with theory or even with long explanations.

As children, ESTPs are woefully misunderstood. These are the children we call “hyperactive” or “slow learners.” There is often a war between high-strung ESTP children and parents of a different type who think it necessary to “quiet” these apparent troublemakers. Actually, ESTP children are very creative and resourceful, often in the face of repeated attempts to get them to conform to more standard ways of behaving. With guidance instead of control, ESTPs do very well. They love family events but often do unexpected things. It's common for an ESTP—child or adult—to plan some special event and then forget to show up at the appointed hour. They find this perfectly natural behavior, but it can be very frustrating to others.

Work that is flexible, varied, and open to creativity can be challenging to an ESTP. Routine and predictability are considered a drag and lead to stress and low productivity. ESTPs want to learn as they go; they'll read the instruction manual only when absolutely necessary (and then only the parts of the manual that are relevant to the moment). They prefer to trust themselves and to rely on common sense to accomplish whatever is at hand. They are adept at entrepreneurial activities, and there are many ESTP small-business owners. Sports, auto racing and

Excerpted from *Type Talk* by Otto Kroeger and Janet M. Thuesen

repair, maintenance or operation of special equipment, and anything else that changes from day to day or moment to moment and is unpredictable has special career appeal.

As ESTPs age, they still require new mountains to climb. Though the mountains needn't be quite as high, they are still needed. A bit more reflective time is needed, too, although the preference continues to be for challenges that test common-sense skills and abilities. Without these challenges, retirement would be nothing but drudgery for an ESTP.

Famous likely ESTPs include General George Patton (who clamored for the limelight and always did the opposite of what was expected, usually at high risk); Lee Iacocca (who loved the thrill and challenge of taking on Congress, solved Chrysler's many problems one day at a time, and by his own words would never have taken the job if he had examined it first); Chicago Bears quarterback Jim McMahon (who loves the spotlight and did whatever was necessary on the field, no matter how unexpected or how risky); and *Peanuts*' Peppermint Patty (she often sleeps through class, finding the daily lessons boring, yet is always ready to play ball with Charlie Brown).

Excerpted from *Type Talk* by Otto Kroeger and Janet M. Thuesen