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Strengths Insight and Action-Planning Guide

SURVEY COMPLETION DATE: 03-09-2018



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A note of caution: Because many of your StrengthsFinder responses were neutral, the themes listed are based only on the pairs of descriptors to which you did respond with something other than a neutral response. Some people do not choose one descriptor from any given pair because they feel that neither — or both — descriptors fit them well. While this is acceptable, it does mean that any feedback you might receive that is based on these results may not be as personalized as it would be if your results were stronger. Please keep this in mind when you consider how well you feel your top five themes describe you.

YOUR TOP 5 THEMES

1. Context
2. Belief
3. Connectedness
4. Input
5. Includer

What's in This Guide?

SECTION I: AWARENESS

A brief Shared Theme Description for each of your top five themes

Your Personalized Strengths Insights, which describe what makes you stand out from others with the same theme in their top five

Questions for you to answer to increase your awareness of your talents

SECTION II: APPLICATION

10 Ideas for Action for each of your top five themes

Questions for you to answer to help you apply your talents

SECTION III: ACHIEVEMENT

Examples of what each of your top five themes "sounds like" -- real quotes from people who also have the theme in their top five

Steps for you to take to help you leverage your talents for achievement

Section I: Awareness

Context

SHARED THEME DESCRIPTION

People who are especially talented in the Context theme enjoy thinking about the past. They understand the present by researching its history.

YOUR PERSONALIZED STRENGTHS INSIGHTS

What makes you stand out?

It's very likely that you create a vision of the future by unraveling what happened in the past. You strive to understand the what, when, who, where, how, and why of events. You are determined to create a framework of facts so you can put things in perspective. Instinctively, you are quite intrigued by history's significant events and people. Information about global conflicts fascinates you. Chances are good that you are an enthusiastic student of the past. Why? The past offers insights about the coming months, years, or decades. When you can make sense of what has occurred, you are much more prepared to deal with upcoming changes or opportunities.

QUESTIONS

1. As you read your personalized strengths insights, what words, phrases, or lines stand out to you?
2. Out of all the talents in this insight, what would you like for others to see most in you?

Depending on the order of your themes and how you responded to the assessment, some of your themes may share identical insight statements. If this occurs, the lower ranked theme will not display insight statements to avoid duplication on your report.

Belief

SHARED THEME DESCRIPTION

People who are especially talented in the Belief theme have certain core values that are unchanging. Out of these values emerges a defined purpose for their life.

YOUR PERSONALIZED STRENGTHS INSIGHTS

What makes you stand out?

Instinctively, you may reject the idea that telling a falsehood about something unimportant is acceptable. Perhaps you refuse to make an innocent social excuse to protect someone's feelings. Driven by your talents, you place more importance on the purpose and value of what you do than on the monetary rewards that accompany success. It's very likely that you conclude that life is good as long as you can take proper care of your loved ones. You feel duty bound to provide for their material, emotional, physical, mental, and even spiritual well-being. Caring for them probably is one of your top priorities. Because of your strengths, you value financial security, but you refuse to think about it as much as many people do. You measure the quality of your life in less tangible but more meaningful ways. You place a higher priority on spending time with family and friends than working overtime to make extra money. You prefer a simple, less costly vacation to an expensive trip. You treasure a gift someone made for you more than a costly present purchased at an upscale, trendy store. By nature, you want only the very best for your family. This is a top priority for you. Your desire to provide for loved ones is evident in what you say and do every day.

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Connectedness

SHARED THEME DESCRIPTION

People who are especially talented in the Connectedness theme have faith in the links between all things. They believe there are few coincidences and that almost every event has a reason.

YOUR PERSONALIZED STRENGTHS INSIGHTS

What makes you stand out?

It's very likely that you sometimes sense a special bond with certain individuals regardless of whether you have met them. Perhaps time or distance does not prevent you from feeling closely linked to specific people or the lives they lead. Chances are good that you feel very pleased with yourself and life in general when your words and deeds align with your fundamental values. Driven by your talents, you sense that everything in life is somehow interrelated and interdependent. This idea steels — that is, fortifies — you to calmly face most of life's challenges and difficulties. Instinctively, you consider people more important than things. The value you place on humankind guides your decision-making. It also influences what you say and do as well as what you choose not to say and do. Because of your strengths, you occasionally think about some of the ways you are linked to every person on the planet. This may inspire you to include an interesting assortment of people in your life. Perhaps you look for ties between yourself and family members, coworkers, friends, classmates, or teammates.

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Input

SHARED THEME DESCRIPTION

People who are especially talented in the Input theme have a craving to know more. Often they like to collect and archive all kinds of information.

YOUR PERSONALIZED STRENGTHS INSIGHTS

What makes you stand out?

Driven by your talents, you may interpret and straightforwardly outline ideas, processes, or projects that some people have difficulty understanding. Chances are good that you might fix your mind on capturing the topmost honor when your performances or results are compared to those of certain individuals. Sometimes you attempt to know a little bit more than the people who pit their knowledge against yours. Perhaps you practice specific skills until they become almost natural. You might aim to be the very best when you can choose the activities. Instinctively, you may thirst for new ideas and knowledge. Sometimes you dive into your reading with abandon. Other times you lose yourself in a book. Maybe you pore over the thoughts contained in its pages for long stretches of time. Why? You might want to absorb as much information as you can. It's very likely that you may treasure certain books or publications because they seem to provide you with the information you desire. You might regard the printed word as the gateway to a vast world of new ideas. Perhaps your quest to interpret events, grasp facts, or understand concepts is limitless. Sometimes you read to broaden your perspective on very familiar as well as altogether unfamiliar topics. Because of your strengths, you periodically desire to take in additional facts, data, or background information. Perhaps these insights permit you to assist certain individuals when specific kinds of opportunities present themselves.

QUESTIONS

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2. Out of all the talents in this insight, what would you like for others to see most in you?

Depending on the order of your themes and how you responded to the assessment, some of your themes may share identical insight statements. If this occurs, the lower ranked theme will not display insight statements to avoid duplication on your report.

Includer

SHARED THEME DESCRIPTION

People who are especially talented in the Includer theme are accepting of others. They show awareness of those who feel left out, and make an effort to include them.

YOUR PERSONALIZED STRENGTHS INSIGHTS

What makes you stand out?

It's very likely that you might welcome the company of numerous people. There may be some individuals with whom you choose to spend less time, however. Chances are good that you sometimes find something to like in certain people you meet. You may be comfortable welcoming different sorts of individuals into your circle of acquaintances, family, teammates, or friends. Because of your strengths, you may enjoy interacting with others who prefer to participate in contests just for the fun of them. Spending time with others might be more important to you than keeping score, winning prizes, or capturing championship titles. Driven by your talents, you might welcome the opportunity to bond with others around a favorite pastime. Watching, discussing, or debating the outcomes of athletic events may appeal to your sociable, talkative, open, and fun-loving nature. Perhaps you are enthused whenever you have a chance to be around people who share your interest in sports. By nature, you periodically derive satisfaction from partnering with specific people. Perhaps you engage in certain activities if they require teamwork or interaction among individuals. Sometimes too much solitude dampens your enthusiasm or erodes your ability to be productive.

QUESTIONS

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2. Out of all the talents in this insight, what would you like for others to see most in you?

Depending on the order of your themes and how you responded to the assessment, some of your themes may share identical insight statements. If this occurs, the lower ranked theme will not display insight statements to avoid duplication on your report.

Questions

1. How does this information help you better understand your unique talents?
2. How can you use this understanding to add value to your role?
3. How can you apply this knowledge to add value to your team, workgroup, department, or division?
4. How will this understanding help you add value to your organization?
5. What will you do differently tomorrow as a result of this report?

Section II: Application

Context

IDEAS FOR ACTION:

Before planning begins on a project, encourage the people involved to study past projects. Help them appreciate the statement: “Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it.”

If you are in a role that requires teaching others, build your lessons around case studies. You will enjoy the search for the appropriate case, and your students will learn from these precedents. Use your understanding of the past to help others map the future.

At work, help your organization strengthen its culture via folklore. For example, collect symbols and stories that represent the best of the past, or suggest naming an award after a person who embodied the historical traditions of your organization.

Partner with someone with strong Futuristic or Strategic talents. This person’s fascination with what “could be” will stop you from becoming mired in the past, while your deep understanding of context will stop him or her from ignoring the lessons of the past. Together you are more likely to create something that lasts.

Accept change. Remember that your Context talents do not require you to “live in the past.” Instead, you can actually become known as an active agent for positive change. Your natural sense of context should allow you to identify more clearly than most the aspects of the past that can be discarded and those that must be retained to build a sustainable future.

Use fact-based comparisons to prior successes to paint a vivid picture for others of “what can be” in the future. The real-life illustrations you create can build confidence and emotional engagement.

You recognize that the best predictor of future behavior is past behavior. Probe your friends and coworkers about actions that might have contributed to their current successes so you can help them make better choices in the future. This will help them put their decisions into an overall context.

Read historical novels, non-fiction, or biographies. You will discover many insights that will help you understand the present. You will think more clearly.

Compare historical antecedents and situations to your current challenge. Identifying commonalities may lead you to a new perspective or an answer to your problems.

Seek out mentors who have a sense of history. Listening to their memories is likely to spark your thought process.

QUESTIONS

1. Which of these action items speak to you? Highlight the actions that you are most likely to take.
2. How will you commit to taking action? Write your own personalized action item that you will take in the next 30 days.

Belief

IDEAS FOR ACTION:

Clarify your values by thinking about one of your best days ever. How did your values play into the satisfaction that you received on that day? How can you organize your life to repeat that day as often as possible?

Actively seek roles that fit your values. In particular, think about joining organizations that define their purpose by the contribution they make to society.

The meaning and purpose of your work will often provide direction for others. Remind people why their work is important and how it makes a difference in their lives and in the lives of others.

Your Belief talents allow you to talk to the hearts of people. Develop a “purpose statement” and communicate it to your family, friends, and coworkers. Your powerful emotional appeal can give them a motivating sense of contribution.

Create a gallery of letters and/or pictures of the people whose lives you have substantially influenced. When you are feeling down or overwhelmed, remind yourself of your value by looking at this gallery. It will energize you and revive your commitment to helping others.

Set aside time to ensure that you are balancing your work demands and your personal life. Your devotion to your career should not come at the expense of your strong commitment to your family.

Don't be afraid to give voice to your values. This will help others know who you are and how to relate to you.

Actively cultivate friends who share your basic values. Consider your best friend. Does this person share your value system?

Partner with someone who has strong Futuristic talents. This person can energize you by painting a vivid picture of the direction in which your values will lead.

Accept that the values of other people might differ from your own. Express your beliefs without being judgmental.

QUESTIONS

1. Which of these action items speak to you? Highlight the actions that you are most likely to take.
2. How will you commit to taking action? Write your own personalized action item that you will take in the next 30 days.

Connectedness

IDEAS FOR ACTION:

Consider roles in which you listen and counsel. You can become adept at helping other people see connection and purpose in everyday occurrences.

Explore specific ways to expand your sense of connection, such as starting a book club, attending a retreat, or joining an organization that puts Connectedness into practice.

Within your organization, help your colleagues understand how their efforts fit in the larger picture. You can be a leader in building teams and helping people feel important.

You are aware of the boundaries and borders created within organizations and communities, but you treat these as seamless and fluid. Use your Connectedness talents to break down silos that prevent shared knowledge.

Help people see the connections among their talents, their actions, their mission, and their successes. When people believe in what they are doing and feel like they are part of something bigger, commitment to achievement is enhanced.

Partner with someone with strong Communication talents. This person can help you with the words you need to describe vivid examples of connection in the real world.

Don't spend too much time attempting to persuade others to see the world as a linked web. Be aware that your sense of connection is intuitive. If others don't share your intuition, rational argument will not persuade them.

Your philosophy of life compels you to move beyond your own self-interests and the interests of your immediate constituency and sphere of influence. As such, you see the broader implications for your community and the world. Explore ways to communicate these insights to others.

Seek out global or cross-cultural responsibilities that capitalize on your understanding of the commonalities inherent in humanity. Build universal capability, and change the mindset of those who think in terms of "us" and "them."

Connectedness talents can help you look past the outer shell of a person to embrace his or her humanity. Be particularly aware of this when you work with someone whose background is very different from yours. You can naturally look past the labels and focus on his or her essential needs.

QUESTIONS

1. Which of these action items speak to you? Highlight the actions that you are most likely to take.
2. How will you commit to taking action? Write your own personalized action item that you will take in the next 30 days.

Input

IDEAS FOR ACTION:

Look for jobs in which you are charged with acquiring new information each day, such as teaching, research, or journalism.

Devise a system to store and easily locate information. This can be as simple as a file for all the articles you have clipped or as sophisticated as a computer database.

Partner with someone with dominant Focus or Discipline talents. This person will help you stay on track when your inquisitiveness leads you down intriguing but distracting avenues.

Your mind is open and absorbent. You naturally soak up information in the same way that a sponge soaks up water. But just as the primary purpose of the sponge is not to permanently contain what it absorbs, neither should your mind simply store information. Input without output can lead to stagnation. As you gather and absorb information, be aware of the individuals and groups that can most benefit from your knowledge, and be intentional about sharing with them.

You might naturally be an exceptional repository of facts, data, and ideas. If that's the case, don't be afraid to position yourself as an expert. By simply following your Input talents, you could become known as the authority in your field.

Remember that you must be more than just a collector of information. At some point, you'll need to leverage this knowledge and turn it into action. Make a point of identifying the facts and data that would be most valuable to others, and use this information to their advantage.

Identify your areas of specialization, and actively seek more information about them.

Schedule time to read books and articles that stimulate you.

Deliberately increase your vocabulary. Collect new words, and learn the meaning of each of them.

Identify situations in which you can share the information you have collected with other people. Also make sure to let your friends and colleagues know that you enjoy answering their questions.

QUESTIONS

1. Which of these action items speak to you? Highlight the actions that you are most likely to take.
2. How will you commit to taking action? Write your own personalized action item that you will take in the next 30 days.

Includer

IDEAS FOR ACTION:

Consider roles in which you can take responsibility for representing voices that are not usually heard. You will derive a great deal of satisfaction from being a spokesperson for these people.

Look for opportunities to bring together people of diverse cultures and backgrounds. You can be a leader in this area.

Help those who are new to an organization or group get to know other people. You will always be adept at quickly making people feel accepted and involved.

An anti-elitist, you may clash with those who feel they have earned the right to perks and power. Rather than disputing their claim, use your Includer insights to help everyone find common ground and value in their contributions.

Acknowledge the dissonance you feel when you must be the bearer of bad news. Look for partners who can help you justify your position so you don't apologize or soften the message too much.

Not every person is lovable or even likeable. While many of your friends or colleagues may be put off by difficult people, you have a natural capacity to truly care for all people. Let others know that if they ever come to the end of their rope with a problematic individual, they can call on you to step in.

Choose roles in which you are continuously working and interacting with people. You will enjoy the challenge of making everyone feel important.

Partner with someone who has dominant Activator or Command talents. This person can help you when you have to deliver news that might hurt someone's feelings.

Realize that people will relate to each other through you. You are a conduit for information. You can interact with all parts and all people in a group and keep them effectively connected to each other.

Explain what we all have in common. Help others understand that to respect the differences among us (our diversity), we must begin by appreciating what we all share (our similarity).

QUESTIONS

1. Which of these action items speak to you? Highlight the actions that you are most likely to take.
2. How will you commit to taking action? Write your own personalized action item that you will take in the next 30 days.

Section III: Achievement

Look for signs of achievement as you read these real quotes from people who share your top five themes.

CONTEXT SOUNDS LIKE THIS:

Adam Y., software designer: “I tell my people, ‘Let’s avoid vuja de.’ And they say, ‘Isn’t that the wrong word? Shouldn’t it be déjà vu?’ And I say, ‘No, vuja de means that we’re bound to repeat the mistakes of our past. We must avoid this. We must look to our past, see what led to our mistakes, and then not make them again.’ It sounds obvious, but most people don’t look to their past or don’t trust that it was valid or something. And so for them, it’s vuja de all over again.”

Jesse K., media analyst: “I have very little empathy, so I don’t relate to people through their present emotional state. Instead, I relate to them through their past. In fact, I can’t even begin to understand people until I have found out where they grew up, what their parents were like, and what they studied in college.”

Gregg H., accounting manager: “I recently moved the whole office to a new accounting system, and the only reason it worked was that I honored their past. When people build an accounting system, it’s their blood, sweat, and tears; it’s them. They are personally identified with it. So if I come in and blandly tell them that I’m going to change it, it’s like me saying I am going to take your baby away. That’s the level of emotion I was dealing with. I had to respect this connection, this history, or they would have rejected me out of hand.”

BELIEF SOUNDS LIKE THIS:

Michael K., salesperson: “The vast majority of my nonworking time goes to my family and to the things we do in the community. I was on the countywide Boy Scouts board of directors. And when I was a Boy Scout, I was pack leader. When I was an Explorer, I was junior assistant leader for the Boy Scouts. I just like being with kids. I believe that’s where the future is. And I think you can do a whole lot worse with your time than investing it in the future.”

Lara M., college president: “My values are why I work so hard every day at my job. I put hours and hours into this job, and I don’t even care what I get paid. I just found out that I am the lowest paid college president in my state, and I don’t even care. I mean, I don’t do this for the money.”

Tracy D., airline executive: “If you are not doing something important, why bother? Getting up every day and working on ways to make flying safer seems important to me, purposeful. If I didn’t find this purpose in my job, I don’t know if I could work through all the challenges and frustrations that get in

my way. I think I would get demoralized.”

CONNECTEDNESS SOUNDS LIKE THIS:

Mandy M., homemaker: “Humility is the essence of Connectedness. You have to know who you are and who you aren’t. I have a piece of the wisdom. I don’t have much of it, but what I do have is real. This isn’t grandiosity. This is real humility. You have confidence in your gifts, real confidence, but you know you don’t have all the answers. You start to feel connected to others because you know they have wisdom that you don’t. You can’t feel connected if you think you have everything.”

Rose T., psychologist: “Sometimes I look at my bowl of cereal in the morning and think about those hundreds of people who were involved in bringing me my bowl of cereal: the farmers in the field, the biochemists who made the pesticides, the warehouse workers at the food preparation plants, even the marketers who somehow persuaded me to buy this box of cereal and not a different one sitting next to it on the shelf. I know it sounds strange, but I give thanks to these people, and just doing that makes me feel more involved with life, more connected to things, less alone.”

Chuck M., teacher: “I tend to be very black and white about things, but when it comes to understanding the mysteries of life, for some reason, I am much more open. I have a big interest in learning about all different religions. I am reading a book right now that talks about Judaism versus Christianity versus the religion of the Canaanites. Buddhism, Greek mythology — it’s really interesting how all of these tie together in some way.”

INPUT SOUNDS LIKE THIS:

Ellen K., writer: “Even as a child, I found myself wanting to know everything. I would make a game of my questions. ‘What is my question today?’ I would think up these outrageous questions, and then I would go looking for the books that would answer them. I often got in way over my head, deep into books that I didn’t have a clue about, but I read them because they had my answer someplace. My questions became my tool for leading me from one piece of information to another.”

John F., human resources executive: “I’m one of those people who thinks that the Internet is the greatest thing since sliced bread. I used to feel so frustrated, but now if I want to know what the stock market is doing in a certain area or the rules of a certain game or what the GNP of Spain is or other different things, I just go to the computer, start looking, and eventually find it.”

Kevin F., salesperson: “I am amazed at some of the garbage that collects in my mind, and I love playing Jeopardy and Trivial Pursuit and anything like that. I don’t mind throwing things away as long as they’re material things, but I hate wasting knowledge or accumulated knowledge or not being able to read something fully if I enjoy it.”

INCLUDER SOUNDS LIKE THIS:

Harry B., outplacement consultant: “Even as a child, although I was very shy, I always made sure that I was the one inviting others to play. When picking teams or sides in school, I never wanted anyone not to participate with us. In fact, I can remember when I was ten or eleven, I had a friend who was not a member of our church. We were at a church banquet, and he showed up at the door because typically we had our youth activity at the church on that night. Immediately, I got up, brought him over to our family, and sat him down at the table.”

Jeremy B., defense lawyer: “When I first started this job, I met people and became fast, furious friends with them almost on day one, only to find out later that, you know, this person’s got a lot of issues, and I’ve already included them in dinner parties and our social circle. My partner, Mark, is like, ‘What is it exactly that made you want to include this person?’ And then it’s a matter of figuring out what pushed my buttons when I first met them, what made me enjoy them so much. And, you know, making sure that this is the aspect of them that Mark and I focus on . . . because once I include someone in my circle, I don’t dump them.”

Giles D., corporate trainer: “In class, I seem to be able to sense when someone is disengaging from the group discussion, and I immediately draw them back into the conversation. Last week, we got into a lengthy discussion about performance appraisals, and one woman wasn’t talking at all. So I just said, ‘Monica, you’ve had performance appraisals. Any thoughts on the subject?’ I really think this has helped me as a teacher because when I don’t know the answer to something, very often it is the person I pull in who supplies the answer for me.”

QUESTIONS

1. Talk to friends or coworkers to hear how they have used their talents to achieve.
2. How will you use your talents to achieve?