
Strengths Insight and Action-Planning Guide

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Your Top 5 Themes

Competition
Restorative
Significance
Focus
Woo

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

Competition

Shared Theme Description

People who are especially talented in the Competition theme measure their progress against the performance of others. They strive to win first place and revel in contests.

Your Personalized Strengths Insights

What makes you stand out?

Chances are good that you undoubtedly outwit or outmaneuver most of your rivals. You aim to distinguish yourself as the champion. Your fear of losing likely fuels your desire to be victorious. It's very likely that you pursue courses of study that challenge you to expand your thinking. Learning is exhilarating, and you want more. You want to be the topmost performer or the best in the class. You feel restless until scores, ratings, and rankings prove you are "number one." Somehow you know you will earn this distinction. This knowledge steadies you when the margin of victory appears slim or the final outcome is uncertain. Driven by your talents, you are driven to be the very best. This explains why your thoughts turn to what you need to do better. As a result, you usually decide you need to acquire more skills and knowledge. Instinctively, you regularly set up rivalries between yourself and others. Your take-charge style ordinarily allows you to create opportunities where you can vie for the top prize or championship title. Because of your strengths, you really push yourself to be the best. You typically gain an advantage whenever you can dictate how the game will be played or how a project will be organized. You characteristically prefer to be the person in charge of your life.

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?

Restorative

Shared Theme Description

People who are especially talented in the Restorative theme are adept at dealing with problems. They are good at figuring out what is wrong and resolving it.

Your Personalized Strengths Insights

What makes you stand out?

It's very likely that you occasionally attempt to overcome your limitations or shortcomings. Maybe you gain basic skills so you can do certain things without having to ask for help. By nature, you generally let the pressures of each day determine what you need to revise, correct, repair, remodel, upgrade, revamp, or rework. Because of your strengths, you often capture and maintain interest by telling stories. You actively search for ways to improve your delivery. You probably practice incorporating interesting details into your descriptions of events, settings, or characters. Driven by your talents, you frequently identify parts of your life you want to change for the better. You also seek ways to upgrade things. You feel renewed mentally, physically, and emotionally each time you turn around a situation with your innovative thinking. Instinctively, you repeatedly decide you need to do things better. You hope these upgrades will prompt many your teammates, classmates, coworkers, or family members to befriend you. You want them to view you as a person of influence and/or importance.

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?

Significance

Shared Theme Description

People who are especially talented in the Significance theme want to be very important in the eyes of others. They are independent and want to be recognized.

Your Personalized Strengths Insights

What makes you stand out?

Because of your strengths, you gravitate to people whose work ethic is rock solid. You like to associate with individuals who are driven to excel and highly productive. It's very likely that you refuse to live a meaningless existence. You seek a vocation that allows you to express your deepest values every day. Work or school provides you with the opportunity to enrich and deepen the quality of your life. You really want to do what you love doing. Your job or studies need to be much more than a means to an end — that is, a paycheck or a diploma. By nature, you surround yourself with conscientious individuals who are driven to do important work. They probably motivate you to work even harder. You are on a quest to enhance your outcomes. You yearn to distinguish yourself from other strong performers. You continually strive to upgrade the quality of your results. Instinctively, you may seek to be regarded as a believable, competent, and accomplished person. Perhaps you appreciate being valued for your ability to reason through things. Sometimes you use bits of evidence to reconstruct ideas, processes, plans, and/or mechanisms. Sometimes you start with the whole and reduce it to bits of evidence. Driven by your talents, you work diligently to govern all kinds of situations, decisions, or plans. You ordinarily refuse to let anyone take charge of any aspect of your life.

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?

Focus

Shared Theme Description

People who are especially talented in the Focus theme can take a direction, follow through, and make the corrections necessary to stay on track. They prioritize, then act.

Your Personalized Strengths Insights

What makes you stand out?

Driven by your talents, you are typically exasperated by people who cannot set a clear direction for themselves. You can become annoyed by their inability to ignore distractions that prevent them from reaching their goals, meeting their deadlines, or following their plans. Instinctively, you might expend more physical or mental energy doing your job or pursuing your studies than some of your peers do. Perhaps you need to make measurable progress toward one or two goals each day to feel successful as a human being. Because of your strengths, you pinpoint what you need to accomplish. Then you give it your undivided attention. Few people can match your natural powers of concentration. It's very likely that you devote your full attention to immediate tasks and challenges. This explains why you give yourself plenty of time to comprehend what you read on the printed page or the computer screen. Diligence, persistence, and concentration are three of your distinguishing traits. By nature, you center your efforts on making improvements that you decide are intriguing and relevant to your life. You devote a great deal of time and energy to acquiring the knowledge and skills that you sense you lack. You regularly challenge yourself to address your shortcomings.

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?

Woo

Shared Theme Description

People who are especially talented in the Woo theme love the challenge of meeting new people and winning them over. They derive satisfaction from breaking the ice and making a connection with another person.

Your Personalized Strengths Insights

What makes you stand out?

Because of your strengths, you have a facility — that is, an ease and readiness — for speaking. Under very few circumstances do you struggle to find just the right word to express a thought or feeling. Being able to put friends or strangers at ease quickly is one of your special gifts. Driven by your talents, you periodically expand recruit pools by starting conversations with newcomers or outsiders. You might be on a first-name basis with a great number of individuals. Perhaps you realize people rarely take time to know the strangers in their midst. The talents, knowledge, or skills these individuals possess may remain unknown until you discover them. By nature, you may be lighthearted and cheerful. Perhaps you feel elated when you can start a friendly exchange of ideas with someone you are meeting for the first time. It's very likely that you enjoy the companionship of others and relish social activities. You are apt to be the person who moves around the room getting acquainted and reacquainted with people. You typically do not spend all your time huddled in the corner with one or two best friends. Instinctively, you hope just about every person you encounter greets you warmly, thinks well of you, and chooses to spend more time with you. You truly enjoy the company of others. You trust they feel the same way.

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?

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

Competition

Ideas for Action:

- Select work environments in which you can measure your achievements. You might not be able to discover how good you can be without competing.
- List the performance scores that help you know where you stand every day. What scores should you pay attention to?
- Identify a high-achieving person against whom you can measure your own achievement. If there is more than one, list all the people with whom you currently compete. Without measurement, how will you know if you won?
- Try to turn ordinary tasks into competitive games. You will get more done this way.
- When you win, take the time to investigate why you won. You can learn a great deal more from a victory than from a loss.
- Let people know that being competitive does not equate with putting others down. Explain that you derive satisfaction from pitting yourself against good, strong competitors and winning.
- Develop a “balanced metric” — a measurement system that will monitor all aspects of your performance. Even if you are competing against your own previous numbers, this measurement will help you give proper attention to all aspects of your performance.
- When competing with others, create development opportunities by choosing to compare yourself to someone who is slightly above your current level of expertise. Your competition will push you to refine your skills and knowledge to exceed those of that person. Look one or two levels above you for a role model who will push you to improve.
- Take the time to celebrate your wins. In your world, there is no victory without celebration.
- Design some mental strategies that can help you deal with a loss. Armed with these strategies, you will be able to move on to the next challenge much more quickly.

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.

Restorative

Ideas for Action:

- Seek roles in which you are paid to solve problems or in which your success depends on your ability to restore and resolve. You might particularly enjoy roles in medicine, consulting, computer programming, or customer service.
- Don't be afraid to let others know that you enjoy fixing problems. It comes naturally to you, but many people shy away from problems. You can help.
- Give yourself a break. Your Restorative talents might lead you to be overly self-critical. Try to redirect this either toward things about yourself that can be fixed, such as knowledge or skill deficits, or toward external, tangible problems.
- Let other people solve their own problems. You might want to rush in and solve things for them, but by doing that, you might hinder their learning. Watch out for this, particularly if you are in a manager, coach, teacher, or parent role.
- Turnaround situations activate your natural forté. Use your Restorative talents to devise a plan of attack to revitalize a flagging project, organization, business, or team.
- Leverage your Restorative talents not only to tackle existing problems, but also to anticipate and prevent problems before they occur. Share your foresight and your solutions with others, and you will prove yourself a valuable partner.
- Study your chosen subject closely to become adept at identifying what causes certain problems to recur. This sort of expertise will lead you to the solution that much faster.
- Think about ways you can improve your skills and knowledge. Identify any gaps you have and the courses you can take to fill them.
- Constant improvement is one of your hallmarks. Seek opportunities to enhance your abilities through a demanding field, activity, or endeavor that requires exceptional skill and/or knowledge.
- Use your Restorative talents to think of ways to “problem proof” your work. Identify existing and potential issues, and design systems or processes to prevent errors in the future.

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.

Significance

Ideas for Action:

- Choose jobs or positions in which you can determine your own tasks and actions. You will enjoy the exposure that comes with independence.
- Your reputation is important to you, so decide what it should be and tend to it in the smallest detail. For example, identify and earn a designation that will add to your credibility, write an article that will give you visibility, or volunteer to speak in front of a group who will admire your achievements.
- Share your dreams and goals with your family or closest friends and colleagues. Their expectations will keep you reaching.
- Stay focused on performance. Your Significance talents will drive you to claim outstanding goals. Your performance had better match those goals, or others might label you as a big talker.
- You will perform best when your performance is visible. Look for opportunities that put you on center stage. Stay away from roles that hide you behind the scenes.
- Leading crucial teams or significant projects brings out your best. Your greatest motivation may come when the stakes are at their highest. Let others know that when the game is on the line, you want the ball.
- Make a list of the goals, achievements, and qualifications you crave, and post them where you will see them every day. Use this list to inspire yourself.
- Identify your best moment of recognition or praise. What was it for? Who gave it to you? Who was the audience? What do you have to do to recreate that moment?
- Unless you also possess dominant Self-Assurance talents, accept that you might fear failure. Don't let this fear prevent you from staking claims to excellence. Instead, use it to focus on ensuring that your performance matches your claims.
- You might have a natural awareness of what other people think of you. You may have a specific audience that you want to like you, and you will do whatever it takes to win their approval and applause. Be aware that while reliance on the approval of others could be problematic, there is nothing wrong with wanting to be liked or admired by the key people in your life.

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.

Focus

Ideas for Action:

- When you set goals, discipline yourself to include timelines and measurements. These will provide regular proof that you are indeed making progress.
- Seek roles in which you can function independently. With your dominant Focus talents, you will be able to stay on track with little supervision.
- Your greatest worth as a team member might be helping others set goals. At the end of meetings, take responsibility for summarizing what was decided, for defining when these decisions will be acted on, and for setting a date when the group will reconvene.
- Others will think, act, and talk less efficiently than you do. Pay attention. Sometimes their “detours” will lead to discoveries and delights.
- Stretch your goal setting beyond work. If you find yourself becoming too focused on work goals, set goals for your personal life. They will give weight to your personal priorities and thereby help create balance in your life.
- Hours can disappear when you are intent on a task; you lose track of time. Make sure that all of your objectives are met and all of your priorities are followed by scheduling your efforts and sticking to that schedule.
- You function best when you can concentrate on a few well-defined initiatives and demands. Give yourself permission to reject projects or tasks that do not align with your overall mission. This will help you concentrate your efforts on your most important priorities — and will help others appreciate your need for focus.
- Take the time to write down your aspirations, and refer to them often. You will feel more in control of your life.
- At work, be sure to tell your manager your mid-term and short-term goals. This might well give your manager the confidence to give you the room you need.
- Make sure that the focus points you set for yourself take into consideration both quantity and quality. The integrity of your objectives will ensure that the application of your Focus talents leads to solid and long-lasting success.

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.

Woo

Ideas for Action:

- Choose a job in which you can interact with many people over the course of a day.
- Deliberately build the network of people who know you. Tend to it by checking in with each person at least once a month.
- Join local organizations, volunteer for committees, and find out how to get on the social lists of the influential people where you live.
- Learn the names of as many people as you can. Create a file of the people you know, and add names as you become acquainted. Include a snippet of personal information — such as their birthday, favorite color, hobby, or favorite sports team.
- In social situations, take responsibility for helping put reserved people at ease.
- Find the right words to explain that networking is part of your style. If you don't claim this theme, others might mistake it for insincerity and wonder why you are being so friendly.
- Partner with someone with dominant Relator or Empathy talents. This person can solidify the relationships that you begin.
- Your Woo talents give you the ability to quicken the pulse of your surroundings. Recognize the power of your presence and how you open doors for an exchange of ideas. By simply starting conversations that engage others and bring talented people together, you will take performance up a notch — or several.
- The first moments of any social occasion are crucial to how comfortable people will be and how they will remember the event. Whenever possible, be one of the first people others meet. Your capacity for meeting and greeting new people will help to quickly put them at ease.
- Practice ways to charm and engage others. For example, research people before you meet them so you can talk about your common interests.

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.

Competition sounds like this:

Mark L., sales executive: “I’ve played sports my entire life, and I don’t just play to have fun — let me put it that way. I like to engage in sports I am going to win and not ones I am going to lose, because if I lose, I am outwardly gracious but inwardly infuriated.”

Harry D., general manager: “I’m not a big sailor, but I love the America’s Cup. Both boats are supposed to be exactly the same, and both crews have top-notch athletes. But you always get a winner. One of them had some secret up their sleeves that tipped the balance and enabled them to win more often than lose. And that’s what I am looking for — that secret, that tiny edge.”

Sumner Redstone, chairman of Viacom (now known as CBS Corporation), on his efforts to acquire that company: “I relished every minute of it because Viacom was a company worth fighting for and I enjoyed a contest. If you get involved in a major competitive struggle, and the stress that inevitably comes with it, you’d better derive some real sense of satisfaction and enjoyment from the ultimate victory. Wrestling control of a company like Viacom was warfare. I believe the real lesson it taught me was that it is not about money, it’s about the will to win.”

Restorative sounds like this:

Nigel L., software designer: “I have these vivid memories of my childhood woodworking bench with hammers and nails and wood. I used to love fixing things and putting things together and making everything just so. And now with computer programs, it’s the same thing. You write the program, and if it doesn’t work, you have to go back and redo it and fix it until it works.”

Jan K., internist: “This theme plays in my life in so many ways. For example, my first love was surgery. I love trauma, love being in the OR, love sewing. I just love fixing things in the OR. Then again, some of my best moments have been sitting at the bedside of a dying patient, just talking together. It is incredibly rewarding to watch someone make the transition from anger to acceptance about grief, to tie up loose ends with family members, and to pass with dignity. And then with my kids, this theme fires every day. When I see my three-year-old buttoning her sweater for the first time and she buttons it crooked, I feel this powerful urge to walk up and rebutton the sweater. I have to resist, of course, because she has to learn, but, boy, it’s really hard.”

Marie T., television producer: “Producing a morning TV program is a fundamentally clumsy process. If I didn’t like solving problems, this job would drive me up the wall. Every day, something serious goes wrong, and I have to find the problem, fix it, and move on to the next one. If I can do that well, I feel rejuvenated. On the other hand, if I go home and a problem remains unsolved, then I feel the opposite. I feel defeated.”

Significance sounds like this:

Mary P., healthcare executive: “Women are told almost from day one, ‘Don’t be too proud. Don’t stand tall.’ That kind of thing. But I’ve learned that it’s okay to have power, it’s okay to have pride, and it’s okay to have a big ego — and also that I need to manage it and drive it in the right directions.”

Kathie J., partner in a law firm: “Ever since I can remember, I have had the feeling that I was special, that I could take charge and make things happen. Back in the ‘60s, I was the first woman partner in my firm, and I can still recall walking into boardroom after boardroom and being the only woman. It’s strange, thinking back. It was tough, but I actually think I enjoyed the pressure of standing out. I enjoyed being the ‘woman’ partner. Why? Because I knew that I would be very hard to forget. I knew everyone would notice me and pay attention to me.”

John L., physician: “All through my life, I felt that I was onstage. I am always aware of an audience. If I am sitting with a patient, I want the patient to see me as the best doctor he or she has ever had. If I am teaching medical students, I want to stand out as the best medical educator they have ever had. I want to win the Educator of the Year award. My boss is a big audience for me. Disappointing her would kill me. It’s scary to think that part of my self-esteem is in other people’s hands, but then again, it keeps me on my toes.”

Focus sounds like this:

Nick H., computer executive: “It is very important to me to be efficient. I’m the sort of guy who plays a round of golf in two and a half hours. When I was at Electronic Data Systems, I worked out a set list of questions so that I could conduct a review of each division in 15 minutes. The founder, Ross Perot, called me ‘The Dentist’ because I would schedule a whole day of these in-and-out, fifteen-minute meetings.”

Brad F., sales executive: “I am always sorting priorities, trying to figure out the most efficient route toward the goal so that there is very little dead time, very little wasted motion. For example, I will get multiple calls from customers who need me to call the service department for them, and rather than taking each one of these calls as they come and interrupting the priorities of the day, I group them together into one call at the end of the day and get it done.”

Mike L., administrator: “People are amazed how I put things into perspective and stay on track. When people around the district are stuck on issues and caught on contrived barriers, I am able to pole-vault over them, reestablish the focus, and keep things moving.”

Doriane L., homemaker: “I am just the kind of person who likes to get to the point — in conversations, at work, and even when I am shopping with my husband. He likes to try on lots of things and has a good time doing it, whereas I try one thing on, and if I like it and it is not horribly priced, I buy it. I’m a surgical shopper.”

Woo sounds like this:

Deborah C., publishing executive: “I have made best friends out of people that I have met passing in the doorway. I mean, it’s awful, but wooing is part of who I am. All my taxi drivers propose to me.”

Marilyn K., college president: “I don’t believe I’m looking for friends, but people call me a friend. I call people and say, ‘I love you,’ and I mean it because I love people easily. But friends? I don’t have many friends. I don’t think I am looking for friends. I am looking for connections. And I am really good at that because I know how to achieve common ground with people.”

Anna G., nurse: “I think I am a little shy sometimes. Usually I won’t make the first step out. But I do know how to put people at ease. A lot of my job is just humor. If the patient is not very receptive, my role becomes that of a stand-up comedian. I’ll say to an eighty-year-old patient, ‘Hi, you handsome guy. Sit up. Let me get your shirt off. That’s good. Take your shirt off. Whoa, what a chest on this man!’ With kids, you have to start very slowly and say something like, ‘How old are you?’ If they say, ‘Ten,’ then I say, ‘Really? When I was your age, I was eleven’ — silly stuff like that to break the ice.”

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?