

STRENGTHS FINDER

2.0

#1 New York

StrengthsFinder 2.0 Report

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Your Top 5 Themes

Ideation
Competition
Command
Strategic
Activator

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

Ideation

Shared Theme Description

People who are especially talented in the Ideation theme are fascinated by ideas. They are able to find connections between seemingly disparate phenomena.

Your Personalized Strengths Insights

What makes you stand out?

It's very likely that you welcome opportunities to exchange new theories, innovative thoughts, and intriguing concepts. Others' original thinking probably stimulates your creativity. Because of your strengths, you are an original and innovative thinker. Others frequently rely on you to generate novel concepts, theories, plans, or solutions. You refuse to be stifled by traditions or trapped by routines. You probably bristle when someone says, "We can't change that. We've always done it this way." Chances are good that you favor conversations where information, facts, or data are considered objectively — that is, emotions do not distort the truth. You pose questions, evaluate answers, and figure out how things work. Reducing an idea, theory, or process to its most basic parts provides you with many insights. You are likely to archive — that is, preserve — your discoveries so you can use them later. Driven by your talents, you scrutinize yourself from the perspective of an outsider looking in. Aware of your public persona — that is, the person you present yourself as — you strive to appear confident and polished. Being perceived as knowledgeable, trustworthy, and accomplished is an intentional undertaking for you. Instinctively, you tune in to people and figure out what they are saying and thinking about you. You are acutely aware of how individuals regard you. You probably curry — that is, try to win — the favor of some and seek to impress others.

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?

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?

It's very likely that you accomplish more whenever you spend time thinking about what you need to perfect or upgrade. Once you realize your outcomes are being compared to everyone else's, you become determined to do things better. Why? You intend to capture the top title or prize. Chances are, your hours of hard work ultimately produce the outstanding results you intended. Chances are good that 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 work hard to be the best or "number one." When your performance is compared to everyone else's, you aim to win. If you were an Olympic athlete, being presented with a silver or bronze medal would be a huge disappointment. Only the gold medal in your chosen event would make you happy. Because of your strengths, you set very high expectations for yourself. Typically you push yourself until you reach your goals. You are not content unless you deliver the best performance or produce the most outstanding results. Driven by your talents, you vie to be the first person to gain new skills and acquire the latest information in your field. You want to be known for your expertise. This is especially true when you realize your talents, skills, and knowledge are being compared to those of others.

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?

Command

Shared Theme Description

People who are especially talented in the Command theme have presence. They can take control of a situation and make decisions.

Your Personalized Strengths Insights

What makes you stand out?

Chances are good that you are primarily concerned with facts and reality. Usually you reject whatever is impractical or exists only in someone's imagination. Not surprisingly, you are determined to become proficient in the language of your chosen profession, area of study, or field of interest. You frequently introduce these terms in your speech or writing. Instinctively, you boldly make demands of and set requirements for people. When expressing opposition or arguing a point, you usually gain the advantage by using highly technical, academic, or professional words. Your vocabulary enables you to quickly assert — that is, state confidently without need of proof — your authority over others. Because of your strengths, you sometimes take calculated risks. You may study the pros and cons of a situation or assess of consequences of a particular action. Perhaps this thoughtful approach allows you to increase your number of successes. By nature, you rely on your extensive vocabulary of hard-to-understand words to give you an advantage over others in debates, conversations, presentations, or correspondence. You are restless to advance. You refuse to remain at the lowest pay or status level. You intentionally use complicated or theoretical terms to establish yourself as a contender in the minds of individuals who have clout — that is, influence or pull — with officials who determine promotions, control pay, or assign tasks. It's very likely that you are unsentimental and not often swayed by emotional arguments or passionate pleas. People are likely to describe you as quite realistic and practical.

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?

Strategic

Shared Theme Description

People who are especially talented in the Strategic theme create alternative ways to proceed. Faced with any given scenario, they can quickly spot the relevant patterns and issues.

Your Personalized Strengths Insights

What makes you stand out?

It's very likely that you can reconfigure factual information or data in ways that reveal trends, raise issues, identify opportunities, or offer solutions. You bring an added dimension to discussions. You make sense out of seemingly unrelated information. You are likely to generate multiple action plans before you choose the best one. Because of your strengths, you pay close attention to what is going on around you. You listen. You quiz people. You read. You probably take notes on key points. As you accumulate lots of information, you disregard what is unrelated, and pay heed to what is really important. The more you reflect on what you know, the more problems begin to reveal themselves, and eventually solutions start taking shape in your mind. Finally, given the situation, you select the best plan from your list of options. Instinctively, you enjoy brainstorming — that is, a group problem-solving technique that involves the spontaneous contribution of ideas from all participants. Because you have acquired special skills and knowledge, you can suggest a number of alternative solutions. Your expertise often serves as a springboard for your own and others' imaginations. This is the case when you are encouraged to think about the future. Driven by your talents, you may have little difficulty finding the right words at the right time to express what you are thinking or feeling. Maybe you can present your concepts in a reasonable, orderly, or methodical way. Perhaps you generate a few options for others to consider. As a result, certain individuals might say you know how to get your ideas across to people. Chances are good that you usually identify problems others fail to notice. You repeatedly create solutions and find the right answers. You yearn to improve things about yourself, other people, or situations. You are drawn to classes, books, or activities that promise to give you the skills and knowledge you seek.

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?

Activator

Shared Theme Description

People who are especially talented in the Activator theme can make things happen by turning thoughts into action. They are often impatient.

Your Personalized Strengths Insights

What makes you stand out?

By nature, you energize others so they feel enthusiastic about a position you have taken, a conclusion you have reached, or an innovative idea you have proposed. As soon as you resolve to do something, you typically announce, “Let’s get started right away. We can do this!” Driven by your talents, you want to be in charge. As soon as you have made up your mind, you are eager to get started. People who interfere with your progress probably irritate you. Because of your strengths, you are naturally open and honest about who you are, what you have done, what you can do, and what you cannot do. Your straightforward explanations and stories help listeners see you as you see yourself. You reveal your strengths and limitations. You are forthright and plainspoken. People generally seek your company and want to work with you. Many are impelled to move into action by your words and examples. Instinctively, you typically take the lead. You seldom wait for orders or directions from people in positions of authority. You probably operate on the premise that it is better to ask for forgiveness than to ask for permission. Using this approach, you have delivered impressive results and reached important goals. It’s very likely that you commonly inspire your teammates to be as enthused as you are about various jobs, opportunities, events, causes, or ideas.

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

Ideation

Ideas for Action:

- Seek a career in which you will be given credit for and paid for your ideas, such as marketing, advertising, journalism, design, or new product development.
- You are likely to get bored quickly, so make some small changes in your work or home life. Experiment. Play mental games with yourself. All of these will help keep you stimulated.
- Finish your thoughts and ideas before communicating them. Lacking your Ideation talents, others might not be able to “join the dots” of an interesting but incomplete idea and thus might dismiss it.
- Not all your ideas will be equally practical or serviceable. Learn to edit your ideas, or find a trusted friend or colleague who can “proof” your ideas and identify potential pitfalls.
- Understand the fuel for your Ideation talents: When do you get your best ideas? When you’re talking with people? When you’re reading? When you’re simply listening or observing? Take note of the circumstances that seem to produce your best ideas, and recreate them.
- Schedule time to read, because the ideas and experiences of others can become your raw material for new ideas. Schedule time to think, because thinking energizes you.
- You are a natural fit with research and development; you appreciate the mindset of visionaries and dreamers. Spend time with imaginative peers, and sit in on their brainstorming sessions.
- Partner with someone with strong Analytical talents. This person will question you and challenge you, therefore strengthening your ideas.
- Sometimes you lose others’ interest because they cannot follow your abstract and conceptual thinking style. Make your ideas more concrete by drawing pictures, using analogies or metaphors, or simply explaining your concepts step by step.
- Feed your Ideation talents by gathering knowledge. Study fields and industries different from your own. Apply ideas from outside, and link disparate ideas to generate new ones.

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.

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.

Command

Ideas for Action:

- Your Command talents might compel you to wrestle for the reins of power because you love being in the driver's seat. But remember that even when you are not formally in charge, your presence can be an unseen yet powerfully felt force.
- Step up and break bottlenecks. Others count on your natural decisiveness to get things moving. When you remove roadblocks, you often create new momentum and success that would not have existed without you.
- Consider taking the lead on a committee. You have definite ideas about what you would like to see happen, and you can naturally influence a group to follow you. You might be comfortable spearheading new initiatives.
- Seek roles in which you will be asked to persuade others. Consider whether selling would be a good career for you.
- Find a cause you believe in and support it. You might discover yourself at your best when defending a cause in the face of resistance.
- You will always be ready to confront. Practice the words, the tone, and the techniques that will turn your ability to confront into real persuasiveness.
- In your relationships, seize opportunities to speak plainly and directly about sensitive subjects. Your unwillingness to hide from the truth can become a source of strength and constancy for your colleagues and friends. Strive to become known as a candid person.
- Ask people for their opinions. Sometimes your candor will be intimidating, causing others to tread lightly for fear of your reaction. Watch for this. If necessary, explain that you are upfront simply because it feels uncomfortable to keep things bottled up, not because you want to frighten other people into silence.
- Partner with someone with strong Woo or Empathy talents. Some obstacles do not need to be confronted; they can be circumvented. This person can help you avoid obstacles through relationships.
- Your "take charge" attitude steadies and reassures others in times of crisis. When faced with a particularly trying challenge, use your Command talents to assuage others' fears and convince them you have things under control.

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.

Strategic

Ideas for Action:

- Take the time to fully reflect or muse about a goal that you want to achieve until the related patterns and issues emerge for you. Remember that this musing time is essential to strategic thinking.
- You can see repercussions more clearly than others can. Take advantage of this ability by planning your range of responses in detail. There is little point in knowing where events will lead if you are not ready when you get there.
- Find a group that you think does important work, and contribute your strategic thinking. You can be a leader with your ideas.
- Your strategic thinking will be necessary to keep a vivid vision from deteriorating into an ordinary pipe dream. Fully consider all possible paths toward making the vision a reality. Wise forethought can remove obstacles before they appear.
- Make yourself known as a resource for consultation with those who are stumped by a particular problem or hindered by a particular obstacle or barrier. By naturally seeing a way when others are convinced there is no way, you will lead them to success.
- You are likely to anticipate potential issues more easily than others. Though your awareness of possible danger might be viewed as negativity by some, you must share your insights if you are going to avoid these pitfalls. To prevent misperception of your intent, point out not only the future obstacle, but also a way to prevent or overcome it. Trust your insights, and use them to ensure the success of your efforts.
- Help others understand that your strategic thinking is not an attempt to belittle their ideas, but is instead a natural propensity to consider all the facets of a plan objectively. Rather than being a naysayer, you are actually trying to examine ways to ensure that the goal is accomplished, come what may. Your talents will allow you to consider others' perspectives while keeping your end goal in sight.
- Trust your intuitive insights as often as possible. Even though you might not be able to explain them rationally, your intuitions are created by a brain that instinctively anticipates and projects. Have confidence in these perceptions.
- Partner with someone with strong Activator talents. With this person's need for action and your need for anticipation, you can forge a powerful partnership.
- Make sure that you are involved in the front end of new initiatives or enterprises. Your innovative yet procedural approach will be critical to the genesis of a new venture because it will keep its creators from developing deadly tunnel vision.

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.

Activator

Ideas for Action:

- Seek work in which you can make your own decisions and act on them. In particular, look for start-up or turnaround situations.
- At work, make sure that your manager judges you on measurable outcomes rather than your process. Your process is not always pretty.
- You can transform innovative ideas into immediate action. Look for creative and original thinkers, and help them move their ideas from conceptual theory to concrete practice.
- Look for areas that are bogged down by discussion or blocked by barriers. End the stalemate by creating a plan to get things moving and spur others into action.
- You learn more from real experience than from theoretical discussions. To grow, consciously expose yourself to challenging experiences that will test your talents, skills, and knowledge.
- Remember that although your tenacity is powerful, it may intimidate some. Your Activator talents will be most effective when you have first earned others' trust and loyalty.
- Identify the most influential decision makers in your organization. Make it a point to have lunch with each of them at least once a quarter to share your ideas. They can support you in your activation and provide critical resources to make your ideas happen.
- You can easily energize the plans and ideas of others. Consider partnering with focused, futuristic, strategic, or analytical people who will lend their direction and planning to your activation, thereby creating an opportunity to build consensus and get others behind the plan. By doing this, you complement each other.
- Give the reasons why your requests for action must be granted. Otherwise, others might dismiss you as impatient and label you a 'ready, fire, aim' person.
- You possess an ability to create motion and momentum in others. Be strategic and wise in the use of your Activator talents. When is the best time, where is the best place, and who are the best people with whom to leverage your valuable influence?

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.

Ideation sounds like this:

Mark B., writer: “My mind works by finding connections between things. When I was hunting down the Mona Lisa in the Louvre museum, I turned a corner and was blinded by the flashing of a thousand cameras snapping the tiny picture. For some reason, I stored that visual image away. Then I noticed a ‘No Flash Photography’ sign, and I stored that away too. I thought it was odd because I remembered reading that flash photography can harm paintings. Then about six months later, I read that the Mona Lisa has been stolen at least twice in this century. And suddenly I put it all together. The only explanation for all these facts is that the real Mona Lisa is not on display in the Louvre. The real Mona Lisa has been stolen, and the museum, afraid to admit their carelessness, has installed a fake. I don’t know if it’s true, of course, but what a great story.”

Andrea H., interior designer: “I have the kind of mind where everything has to fit together or I start to feel very odd. For me, every piece of furniture represents an idea. It serves a discrete function both independently and in concert with every other piece. The ‘idea’ of each piece is so powerful in my mind, it must be obeyed. If I am sitting in a room where the chairs are somehow not fulfilling their discrete function — they’re the wrong kind of chairs or they’re facing the wrong way or they’re pushed up too close to the coffee table — I find myself getting physically uncomfortable and mentally distracted. Later, I won’t be able to get it out of my mind. I’ll find myself awake at 3:00 a.m., and I walk through the person’s house in my mind’s eye, rearranging the furniture and repainting the walls. This started happening when I was very young, say seven years old.”

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.”

Command sounds like this:

Malcolm M., hospitality manager: “One reason I affect people is that I am so candid. Actually, people say that I intimidate them at first. After I work with them a year, we talk about that sometimes. They say, ‘Boy, Malcolm, when I started working here, I was scared to death.’ When I ask why, they say, ‘I’ve never worked with anyone who just said it. Whatever it was, whatever needed to be said, you just said it.’”

Rick P., retail executive: “We have a wellness program whereby if you consume less than four alcoholic beverages a week, you get twenty-five dollars; if you don’t smoke, you get twenty-five dollars a month. So one day I got word that one of my store managers was smoking again. This was not good. He was smoking in the store, setting a bad example for the employees, and claiming his twenty-five dollars. I just can’t keep stuff like that inside. It wasn’t comfortable, but I confronted him with it immediately and clearly: ‘Stop doing that, or you are fired.’ He’s basically a good guy, but you can’t let things like that slide.”

Diane N., hospice worker: “I don’t think of myself as assertive, but I do take charge. When you walk into a room with a dying person and his family, you have to take charge. They want you to take charge. They are a bit in shock, a bit frightened, a bit in denial. Basically, they’re confused. They need someone to tell them what is going to happen next, what they can expect — that it’s not going to be fun but that in some important ways, it will be all right. They don’t want mousy and soft. They want clarity and honesty. I provide it.”

Strategic sounds like this:

Liam C., manufacturing plant manager: “It seems as if I can always see the consequences before anyone else can. I have to say to people, ‘Lift up your eyes; look down the road a ways. Let’s talk about where we are going to be next year so that when we get to this time next year, we don’t have the same problems.’ It seems obvious to me, but some people are just too focused on this month’s numbers, and everything is driven by that.”

Vivian T., television producer: “I used to love logic problems when I was a kid — you know, the ones where ‘if A implies B, and B equals C, does A equal C?’ Still today, I am always playing out repercussions, seeing where things lead. I think it makes me a great interviewer. I know that nothing is an accident; every sign, every word, every tone of voice has significance. So I watch for these clues and play them out in my head, see where they lead, and then plan my questions to take advantage of what I have seen in my head.”

Simon T., human resources executive: “We really needed to take the union on at some stage, and I saw an opportunity — a very good issue to take them on. I could see that they were going in a direction that would lead them into all kinds of trouble if they continued following it. Lo and behold, they did continue following it, and when they arrived, there I was, ready and waiting. I suppose it just comes naturally to me to predict what someone else is going to do. And then when that person reacts, I can respond immediately because I have sat down and said, ‘Okay, if they do this, we’ll do this. If they do that, then we’ll do this other thing.’ It’s like when you tack in a sailboat. You head in one direction, but you jinx one way, then another, planning and reacting, planning and reacting.”

Activator sounds like this:

Jane C., Benedictine nun: “When I was prioress in the 1970s, we were hit by the energy shortage, and costs skyrocketed. We had a hundred and forty acres, and I walked the acreage every day pondering what we should do about this energy shortage. Suddenly I decided that if we had that much land, we should be drilling our own gas well, and so we did. We spent one hundred thousand dollars to drill a gas well. If you have never drilled a gas well, you probably don’t realize what I didn’t realize: namely, that you have to spend seventy thousand dollars just to drill to see if you have any gas on your property at all. So they dug down with some kind of vibratory camera thing, and they told me that I had a gas pool. But they didn’t know how large the pool was, and they didn’t know if there was enough pressure to bring it up. ‘If you pay another thirty thousand dollars, we will try to release the well,’ they said. ‘If you don’t want us to, we’ll just cap the well, take your seventy thousand, and go home.’ So I gave them the final thirty thousand and, fortunately, up it came. That was twenty years ago, and it is still pumping.”

Jim L., entrepreneur: “Some people see my impatience as not wanting to listen to the traps, the potential roadblocks. What I keep repeating is, ‘I want to know when I am going to hit the wall, and I need you to tell me how much it is going to hurt. But if I choose to bump into the wall anyway, then don’t worry — you’ve done your job. I just had to experience it for myself.’”

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?