
Introduction to Strengths

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What is a Strength?

Mastery created when one's most powerful talents are refined with practice and combined with acquired relevant skills and knowledge.

Why Strengths?

Research has proven that the best way to develop people is to identify the ways in which they most naturally think, feel, & behave as unique individuals and build on it.



Research based

- Gallup's 50 years of research
- More than one million work teams
- More than two million people have taken it

How to recognize a Strength

Where do you learn quickly?

When do you lose track of time?

What comes easy or naturally for you?

When you were a child, what did you love to do?

When do you feel you are adding the most value?



Why Strengths?

Counter to:

- deficit based
- focus on areas of lacking and weakness
- finding fault first

As long as you keep a person down, some part of you has to be down there to hold her down, so it means you cannot soar as you otherwise might.

-Marian Anderson, Musician

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- We want people to bring their ‘whole-self’ to the work place
 - We want to recognize and celebrate our various racial and cultural identities
 - We want shared leadership

Multicultural Frameworks to Strengths

Reclaiming ones ethnic background...accepting ways of being that are different than one's own are two dimensions of the change process. Cultural difference is embraced, valued...asking/exploring what is “right and beautiful” in all of us.

- excerpted from Modern Racism and Internalized Oppression, Valerie Batts

Signature Theme



Signature Theme x Application



Signature Theme x Application

(Knowledge & Skill)



Talent x Application

(Knowledge & Skill)

= STRENGTH



StrengthsFinder = Signature Theme (or talent) Finder

- Talent theme = category of talents; recurring and consistent patterns of thought, feeling, or behavior
- Facilitate personal development and growth
- Basis of further exploration helping to capitalize on greatest talents and apply to new challenges.

“What would happen if we studied what was right with people?”

- Donald Clifton

Executing	Influencing	Relationship Building	Strategic Thinking
Achiever	Activator	Adaptability	Analytical
Arranger	Command	Developer	Context
Belief	Communication	Connectedness	Futuristic
Consistency	Competition	Empathy	Ideation
Deliberative	Maximizer	Harmony	Input
Discipline	Self-Assurance	Includer	Intellection
Focus	Significance	Individualization	Learner
Responsibility	Woo	Positivity	Strategic
Restorative		Relator	

Adapted with permission from Authenticity Consulting, LLC

For example...

**Sarah's Top 5
Signature Themes /
Talents**

Activator

Analytical

Futuristic

Ideation

Relator

Activator:

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

Analytical:

- People who are especially talented in the Analytical theme search for reasons and causes. They have the ability to think about all the factors that might affect a situation.

Futuristic:

- People who are especially talented in the Futuristic theme are inspired by the future and what could be. They inspire others with their visions of the future.

For example...

**Sarah's Top 5
Signature Themes /
Talents**

Activator

Analytical

Futuristic

Ideation

Relator

Ideation:

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

Relator:

- People who are especially talented in the Relator theme enjoy close relationships with others. They find deep satisfaction in working hard with friends to achieve a goal.

Potential Indicator of Weakness



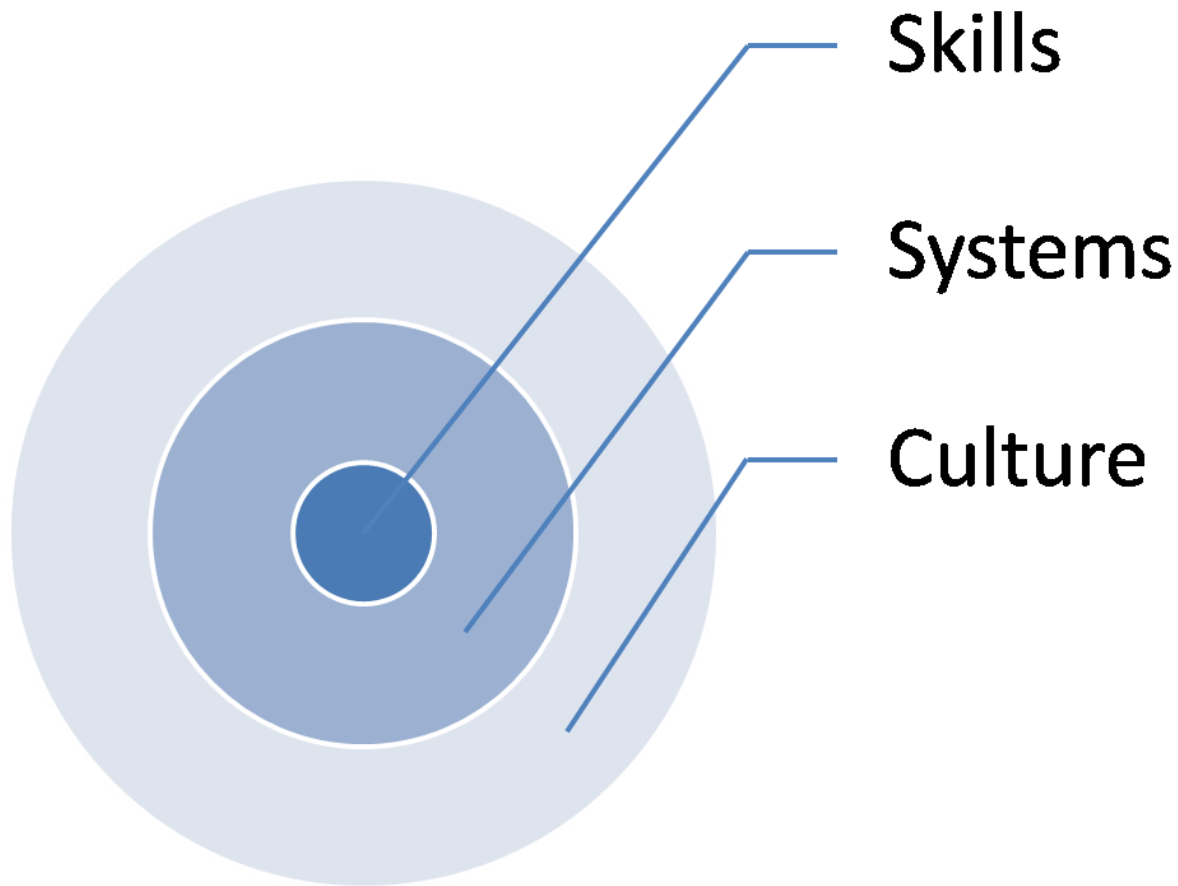
Understanding and Managing for Weaknesses

- **Weaknesses**
 - are depleting
 - are frustrating
 - burn us out
 - make us defensive or lack confidence
 - are areas of slow learning

Strategies

- Get good enough
- Support system or partner up with someone
- Use a strength to compensate
- Stop doing it

Relevance to our HR roles



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Individual Development Planning with Strengths Focus

1. Define your goals – **enhance strengths** and mitigate weaknesses
2. Write action steps you will take to meet development goals
3. Anticipate obstacles and identify solutions
4. Identify **strengths** you will leverage to help you achieve your development goals
5. Identify resources and support
6. Accountability
7. Celebration

Additional Resources

- The Gallup – Strengths Finder Website
<http://www.strengthsfinder.com/home.aspx>
- March 22nd, Full day training @ CompassPoint
<https://www.compasspoint.org/workshop/Using+Strengths+for+Personal%2C+Staff%2C+and+Team+Development>