



## StrengthsFinder 2.0 Report

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# Strengths Insight and Action-Planning Guide

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## Your Top 5 Themes

Activator  
Belief  
Maximizer  
Input  
Command

## 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

### 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?*

Driven by your talents, you sometimes pinpoint and acknowledge the grand ideas certain people share with you. Now and then, you ask a few questions. Maybe you listen to others talk about their unique interests, backgrounds, experiences, strengths, limitations, goals, or fears. By nature, you might work hard to be liked. Perhaps you find something special about each person you meet. This might be one way you ingratiate yourself — that is, win the favor of — certain individuals. Because of your strengths, you periodically issue direct orders to certain individuals. Some may feel you are overstepping the bounds of your authority or are being a bit bossy. Perhaps this is just your way of influencing some people to apply their time or energy to the task at hand. Chances are good that you now and then notice that certain people feel you are a bit threatening. You may use this trait to your advantage when you are trying to influence a particular person to move into action or see things the way you do. Perhaps in your dealings with some individuals, you tone down or moderate your forcefulness. It's very likely that you may excel as a solo performer. Sometimes you are eager to start a new project, job, or assignment. People who cause delays might frustrate you. Why? Perhaps they do not share your sense of urgency or understand your need to make progress.

#### 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?

## 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?*

By nature, you might be determined to push for specific kinds of changes that could benefit humankind or Earth itself. To some extent, your desire to have an impact motivates you to enter into conversations with intelligent people. Sometimes drawing on their knowledge and ideas as well as sharing your wisdom is exciting. Perhaps some of these discussions redirect your thinking or cause you to reexamine your purpose in life. It's very likely that you enjoy helping certain individuals discover ways to use their talents. Even years later, you may revel in their accomplishments. When you are feeling sad, you occasionally recall the faces of specific people you have coached, taught, mentored, or tutored. Some of these memories are priceless. Why? Perhaps they fill you with a kind of satisfaction that cannot be purchased. Driven by your talents, you sometimes delve into opportunities or situations to find clues for handling them. Piecing together patterns of cause and effect from past or current events sometimes allows you to propose alternate routes to a particular goal. Perhaps few things take you by surprise. Why? You might study several options or craft innovative solutions that short-circuit problems before they arise. Instinctively, you sometimes use your passion for reading to collect a few ideas for resolving issues, correcting mistakes, or overcoming obstacles. Maybe the act of reading allows you to generate some options for dealing with certain kinds of predicaments — that is, difficult, perplexing, or trying situations. Because of your strengths, you enter contests simply to have fun. In the process, you often find yourself part of something much larger such as building team spirit or raising funds for a worthy cause. This sense of being linked to other people means a lot more to you than finishing first or claiming an award.

### 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?

## Maximizer

### Shared Theme Description

People who are especially talented in the Maximizer theme focus on strengths as a way to stimulate personal and group excellence. They seek to transform something strong into something superb.

### Your Personalized Strengths Insights

*What makes you stand out?*

Chances are good that you may choose to become well acquainted with only certain people. Periodically you discover someone's unique qualities, personality traits, interests, or strengths. You might position the person for success when you know what drives him or her to produce outstanding results. Maybe you realize that specific techniques you use with one person are unlikely to inspire everyone. It's very likely that you might be attracted to people who acknowledge your talents as an individual contributor. Sometimes your chances of success increase a bit when you can determine how you will solve problems, reach goals, acquire knowledge, apply your skills, or handle assignments. By nature, you might spend more time thinking about your good points than your shortcomings. Perhaps you are aware that you make more progress or do things better when you build on your talents. Instinctively, you occasionally combine your fascination for reading with your ability to figure out what sets specific individuals apart from everyone else. You might discover the things that interest someone. Then you may read more about these topics. Perhaps you aim to collect insights that inspire the person to take advantage of his or her one-of-a-kind talents, knowledge, and/or skills. Driven by your talents, you might figure out what makes some people unique and special.

### 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?

## 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?*

Because of your strengths, you occasionally ask questions and intently listen to the answers of certain people. This behavior might surface when you meet a stranger or newcomer. Occasionally you eavesdrop on what they are telling someone else. Not wanting anyone to feel like an outsider, you try to draw individuals into the conversation. This partially explains why you search for a specific reason to involve them in a few of your own or the group's activities. By nature, you might notice that you choose to spend time with intelligent adults. Besides enjoying their company and mature thinking, perhaps you welcome the opportunity to engage in sophisticated, knowledgeable, and thoughtful conversation. You may amass ideas, theories, or concepts from some of these encounters. A few of the insights you gain may prove to be useful days, weeks, months, or even years later. Driven by your talents, you periodically surprise yourself and others by referring to a relatively obscure fact or insight you found in a book. Maybe you are delighted when something you filed in your memory or documented expands your own as well as your colleagues' thinking. You might bring to conversations the major thoughts of writers, researchers, historians, policymakers, common folks, or prestigious leaders. Possibly reading is your ticket of admission to some interesting discussions. Instinctively, you sometimes are more comfortable talking about ideas than issuing orders or dealing with conflict. You may gravitate to conversations with certain people who have the ability to cast aside emotions and concentrate on the facts. Perhaps you find evidence to make your points. You might wish others would do the same. It's very likely that you might choose to read things that are somewhat related to your work. Perhaps the printed materials or Internet sites you scan expand your knowledge base as a professional or as an expert. Maybe your definition of recreational reading differs somewhat from that of people you know.

### 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?

## 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?*

Instinctively, you are unsentimental and not often swayed by emotional arguments or passionate pleas. People are likely to describe you as quite realistic and practical. Chances are good that you might generate certain types of ideas quickly. Occasionally you draw links between facts, events, people, problems, or solutions. You may present numerous options for consideration. Perhaps your innovative thinking fosters ongoing dialogue between and among associates, committee members, teammates, or classmates. Because of your strengths, you might be the person people look to for original thoughts during discussions or meetings. Your reputation for innovative thinking partially explains why groups attempt to recruit you. Perhaps you embrace opportunities to be creative. It's very likely that you sometimes enliven or stop conversations with your thought-provoking statements, unusual viewpoints, jarring questions, pointed demands, or candid opinions. Sometimes you deftly play the devil's advocate — that is, take the opposing view. Once in a while, you force people to think philosophically about the meaning of good, evil, truth, justice, or happiness. Driven by your talents, you attempt to read as often as possible because you enjoy it so much. During group gatherings, perhaps you introduce a few more questions, suggestions, solutions, or innovative ideas than other participants do.

### 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

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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

### 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.

## 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

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## Maximizer

### Ideas for Action:

- Once you have identified your own greatest talents, stay focused on them. Refine your skills. Acquire new knowledge. Practice. Keep working toward strength in a few areas.
- Develop a plan to use your most powerful talents outside of work. In doing so, consider how your talents relate to the mission in your life and how they might benefit your family or the community.
- Problem solving might drain your energy and enthusiasm. Look for a restorative partner who can be your chief troubleshooter and problem solver. Let that person know how important your partnership is to your success.
- Study success. Deliberately spend time with people who have discovered their strengths. The more you understand how marshaling strengths leads to success, the more likely you will be to create success in your own life.
- Explain to others why you spend more time building on great talent rather than fixing weaknesses. Initially, they might confuse what you are doing with complacency.
- Don't let your Maximizer talents be stifled by conventional wisdom, which says you should find what is broken and fix it. Identify and invest in the parts of your organization or community that are working. Make sure that most of your resources are spent in the build-up and build-out of these pockets of excellence.
- Keep your focus on long-term relationships and goals. Many make a career out of picking the low-hanging fruit of short-term success, but your Maximizer talents will be most energized and effective as you turn top potential into true and lasting greatness.
- See if you can make some of your weaknesses irrelevant. For example, find a partner, devise a support system, or use one of your stronger talents to compensate for one of your weaker ones.
- Seek roles in which you are helping people succeed. In coaching, managing, mentoring, or teaching roles, your focus on strengths will prove particularly beneficial to others. Because most people find it difficult to describe what they do best, start by arming them with vivid descriptions.
- Devise ways to measure your performance and the performance of others. These measures will help you spot strengths, because the best way to identify a strength is to look for sustained levels of excellent performance.

### 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.

## 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.

### Section III: Achievement

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

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.’”

**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.”

### Maximizer sounds like this:

Gavin T., flight attendant: “I taught aerobics for ten years, and I made a point of asking people to focus on what they liked about themselves. We all have parts of our body that we would like to change or that we would like to see differently, but to focus on that can be so destructive. It becomes a vicious cycle. So I would say, ‘Look, you don’t need to be doing that. Instead, let’s focus on the attribute you like about yourself, and then we’ll all feel better about expending all of this energy.’”

Amy T., magazine editor: “There is nothing I hate more than having to fix a poorly written piece. If I have given the writer a clear focus and she comes back with a piece that is completely off the mark, I almost can’t bring myself to write comments on it. I’m more inclined to just hand it back to her and say, ‘Just please start again.’ On the other hand, what I love to do is take a piece that is so close and then refine it to make it perfect. You know, just the right word here, a little cut there, and suddenly it’s a brilliant piece.”

Marshall G., marketing executive: “I am really good at setting a focus for people and then building a sense of team spirit as we all march forward. But I am not so good at strategic thinking. Fortunately, I have a boss who understands that about me. We have been working together for quite a few years. He has found people who play the strategic role, and at the same time, stretches me to be even better at the focus and team-building role. I’m so lucky to have a boss who thinks this way. It’s made me more secure and made me charge ahead much faster, knowing that my boss knows what I am good at and what I’m not good at; he doesn’t bother me with the latter.”

### 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.”

### 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.”

## Questions

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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?