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Chris Jackson

# Strengths Insight and Action-Planning Guide

SURVEY COMPLETION DATE: 04-14-2017



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## YOUR TOP 5 THEMES

1. Input
2. Intellection
3. Analytical
4. Ideation
5. Learner

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## 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

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### Input

#### SHARED THEME DESCRIPTION

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

#### YOUR PERSONALIZED STRENGTHS INSIGHTS

##### **What makes you stand out?**

It's very likely that you occasionally collect bits and pieces of information. At the time, the value of this material may not be apparent. In specific cases, you have found it useful to turn to some specialists for help. Perhaps these individuals can provide you with enough direction so you can ask some questions, render a few decisions, or try to map courses of action without upsetting anyone in the process. You avoid angering certain people by consulting with them before doing anything. Instinctively, you sometimes devote your entire attention to specific tasks you desire to complete. From time to time, you study what needs to be done and how you can tackle particular assignments. To some extent, your curiosity draws you to interesting sources of information: people, printed materials, the Internet, formal classes, casual conversations, or personal experiences. You might be happier when you know a few more things today than you knew yesterday. Driven by your talents, you may thirst for new ideas and knowledge. Sometimes you dive into your reading with abandon. Other times you lose yourself in a book. Maybe you pore over the thoughts contained in its pages for long stretches of time. Why? You might want to absorb as much information as you can. By nature, you pay close attention to current events. Numerous people merely recount what they heard, saw, or read. Typically you dive deeper into the topic. You are likely to generate theories, concepts, or philosophies to explain the reasoning behind newsmakers' decisions. You routinely gather information about events, policy statements, people, or crises. Your fresh insights are likely to draw equally engaged thinkers into the conversation. Because of your strengths, you may realize you are skilled in particular areas of specialization. Sometimes you take advantage of certain opportunities to broaden your knowledge base. You might try to obtain the latest facts, news, data, or research discoveries in your field. At the time you amass this information, its importance may not be apparent to you. You might be content to pull together bits and pieces of material so you can refer to them later if the need arises.

#### 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?

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# Intellection

## SHARED THEME DESCRIPTION

People who are especially talented in the Intellection theme are characterized by their intellectual activity. They are introspective and appreciate intellectual discussions.

## YOUR PERSONALIZED STRENGTHS INSIGHTS

### What makes you stand out?

Instinctively, you are mentally quick and highly resourceful. You constantly consider how you can upgrade all sorts of things in your personal or professional life. You eagerly seek and find opportunities to better yourself. Chances are good that you may prefer to read, write, and ponder philosophies, theories, or concepts that interest you. You might prefer to be alone with your thoughts rather than engage people in small talk at a social event. It's very likely that you frequently challenge your own thinking. You enjoy having time to yourself to process ideas and identify areas where you can make things better. Often you consider upgrading your environment and the people with whom you associate. You are just as likely to consider things you need to perfect. These may include, but not be limited to, your talents, personal characteristics, studies, career, productivity, progress, or projects. Driven by your talents, you probably need a place where you can be alone to reflect on your experiences or conversations with people. You often draw conclusions about a person's knowledge, skills, talents, likes, dislikes, or moods. These insights naturally influence how you interact with that individual in the coming days, weeks, or months. By nature, you have a rich vocabulary upon which to draw. The words you choose often expand and challenge your listeners' or readers' thinking.

## 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?

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# Analytical

## SHARED THEME DESCRIPTION

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.

## YOUR PERSONALIZED STRENGTHS INSIGHTS

### What makes you stand out?

Because of your strengths, you naturally use reason to discover how individuals are distinct or different. Your observations and assessments usually permit you to predict someone's behavior in various situations. It's very likely that you are an objective person. You investigate the problems you must face in life. You methodically reason through these difficulties. Often you create workable solutions. Chances are good that you normally direct most of your talent, energy, effort, and reasoning to the task at hand. Your good judgment probably allows you to establish long-term goals that are truly worthy of your undivided attention. By nature, you truly enjoy instructing people. You prefer to invest your time in trainees or students who genuinely appreciate your carefully reasoned approach to a particular topic. Instinctively, you sometimes easily process certain kinds of numerical information. Perhaps you perform specific mathematical calculations in your head, such as balancing your checkbook or splitting a restaurant bill. Maybe you prefer to deal with things that can be measured or counted.

## 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?

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## 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?**

Chances are good that you are particularly skilled or knowledgeable about certain topics or activities. This partially explains your tendency to invent innovative or unusual ways of performing specific tasks. Maybe you grow bored when you are forced to follow the same series of steps day after day. Your boredom might become frustration when your suggestions for change are dismissed without consideration. Because of your strengths, you sometimes feel comfortable sharing your original ideas with groups. Perhaps they welcome your innovations. Maybe they realize you suggest novel ways of doing things they would never have considered. Driven by your talents, 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. It's very likely that you are sometimes aware of the opinions people have of you. Maybe you know when individuals approve or disapprove of your contributions, accomplishments, talents, shortcomings, words, or deeds. By nature, you may be delighted when you can generate new and innovative ideas for doing certain tasks or projects. Perhaps you lose enthusiasm or become bored when you are forced to follow standard operating procedures. Periodically you wonder if you are in the right job or course of study when your creativity is stifled. Maybe you are frustrated by people who conclude that your inventive suggestions are forms of criticism or insubordination — that is, refusal to submit to authority.

### 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?



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## Learner

### SHARED THEME DESCRIPTION

People who are especially talented in the Learner theme have a great desire to learn and want to continuously improve. In particular, the process of learning, rather than the outcome, excites them.

### YOUR PERSONALIZED STRENGTHS INSIGHTS

#### **What makes you stand out?**

By nature, you yearn to acquire additional knowledge and skills. Often you use these to do something better, more perfectly, or more completely than you have in the past. You seek opportunities to enhance your capacity for fixing things, correcting mistakes, or overcoming weaknesses. Driven by your talents, you might place a high value on seeking and gathering specific kinds of information. Perhaps your need to be informed motivates you to acquire knowledge so you are as smart as you want to be about certain subjects. Because of your strengths, you are motivated to continually acquire knowledge and skills. Discovering new ways to use your talents energizes you. You are likely to escape from situations and avoid people who want you to keep doing what you already know how to do well. Maintaining an intellectual status quo is unacceptable to you. Instinctively, you might enjoy acquiring certain types of knowledge and/or skills. You might want to build on particular abilities you know you already have. When you meet people who value education like you do, perhaps you are interested in hearing about a few of their personal or professional ambitions, intentions, or goals. Understanding what they aim to accomplish may be the beginning of a practical partnership or an enduring friendship. Chances are good that you enjoy pondering what you can revise, correct, renovate, upgrade, or relocate. When you are curious about a person, event, topic, project, activity, or idea, you devote much energy and time to studying it.

### 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?

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## 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

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### 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.

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## Intellection

### IDEAS FOR ACTION:

Consider beginning or continuing your studies in philosophy, literature, or psychology. You will always enjoy subjects that stimulate your thinking.

List your ideas in a log or diary. These ideas will serve as grist for your mental mill, and they might yield valuable insights.

Deliberately build relationships with people you consider to be “big thinkers.” Their example will inspire you to focus your own thinking.

People may think you are aloof or disengaged when you close your door or spend time alone. Help them understand that this is simply a reflection of your thinking style, and that it results not from a disregard for relationships, but from a desire to bring the most you can to those relationships.

You are at your best when you have the time to follow an intellectual trail and see where it leads. Get involved on the front end of projects and initiatives, rather than jumping in at the execution stage. If you join in the latter stages, you may derail what has already been decided, and your insights may come too late.

Engaging people in intellectual and philosophical debate is one way that you make sense of things. This is not the case for everyone. Be sure to channel your provocative questions to those who similarly enjoy the give and take of debate.

Schedule time for thinking; it can be energizing for you. Use these occasions to muse and reflect.

Take time to write. Writing might be the best way for you to crystallize and integrate your thoughts.

Find people who like to talk about the same issues you do. Organize a discussion group that addresses your subjects of interest.

Encourage people around you to use their full intellectual capital by reframing questions for them and by engaging them in dialogue. At the same time, realize that there will be some who find this intimidating and who need time to reflect before being put on the spot.

### 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.

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## Analytical

### IDEAS FOR ACTION:

Choose work in which you are paid to analyze data, find patterns, or organize ideas. For example, you might excel in marketing, financial, or medical research or in database management, editing, or risk management.

Whatever your role, identify credible sources on which you can rely. You are at your best when you have well-researched sources of information and numbers to support your logic. For example, determine the most helpful books, websites, or publications that can serve as references.

Your mind is constantly working and producing insightful analysis. Are others aware of that? Find the best way of expressing your thoughts: writing, one-on-one conversations, group discussions, perhaps lectures or presentations. Put value to your thoughts by communicating them.

Make sure that your accumulation and analysis of information always leads to its application and implementation. If you don't do this naturally, find a partner who pushes you from theory to practice, from thinking to doing. This person will help ensure that your analysis doesn't turn into paralysis.

Take an academic course that will expand your Analytical talents. Specifically, study people whose logic you admire.

Volunteer your Analytical talents. You can be particularly helpful to those who are struggling to organize large quantities of data or having a hard time bringing structure to their ideas.

Partner with someone with strong Activator talents. This person's impatience will move you more quickly through the analytical phase into the action phase.

You may remain skeptical until you see solid proof. Your skepticism ensures validity, but others may take it personally. Help others realize that your skepticism is primarily about data, not people.

Look for patterns in data. See if you can discern a motif, precedent, or relationship in scores or numbers. By connecting the dots in the data and inferring a causal link, you may be able to help others see these patterns.

Help others understand that your analytical approach will often require data and other information to logically back up new ideas that they might suggest.

## 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.

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## 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.

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## Learner

### IDEAS FOR ACTION:

Refine how you learn. For example, you might learn best by teaching; if so, seek out opportunities to present to others. You might learn best through quiet reflection; if so, find this quiet time.

Develop ways to track the progress of your learning. If there are distinct levels or stages of learning within a discipline or skill, take a moment to celebrate your progression from one level to the next. If no such levels exist, create them for yourself (e.g., reading five books on the subject or making three presentations on the subject).

Be a catalyst for change. Others might be intimidated by new rules, new skills, or new circumstances. Your willingness to soak up this newness can calm their fears and spur them to action. Take this responsibility seriously.

Seek roles that require some form of technical competence. You will enjoy the process of acquiring and maintaining this expertise.

As far as possible, shift your career toward a field with constantly changing technologies or regulations. You will be energized by the challenge of keeping up.

Because you are not threatened by unfamiliar information, you might excel in a consulting role (either internal or external) in which you are paid to go into new situations and pick up new competencies or languages quickly.

Research supports the link between learning and performance. When people have the opportunity to learn and grow, they are more productive and loyal. Look for ways to measure the degree to which you and others feel that your learning needs are being met, to create individualized learning milestones, and to reward achievements in learning.

At work, take advantage of programs that subsidize your learning. Your organization may be willing to pay for part or all of your instructional coursework or for certifications. Ask your manager for information about scholarships and other educational opportunities.

Honor your desire to learn. Take advantage of adult educational opportunities in your community.

Discipline yourself to sign up for at least one new academic or adult learning course each year.

Time disappears and your attention intensifies when you are immersed in studying or learning. Allow yourself to “follow the trail” by scheduling learning sessions during periods of time that will not be interrupted by pressing engagements.

## 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.

### 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.”

### INTELLECTION SOUNDS LIKE THIS:

Lauren H., project manager: “I suppose that most people who meet me in passing presume that I am a flaming extrovert. I do not deny the fact that I love people, but they would be amazed to know how much time alone, how much solitude, I need in order to function in public. I really love my own company. I love solitude because it gives me a chance to allow my diffused focus to simmer with something else. That’s where my best ideas come from. My ideas need to simmer and ‘perk.’ I used this phrase even when I was younger: ‘I have put my ideas in, and now I have to wait for them to perk.’”

Michael P., marketing executive: “It’s strange, but I find that I need to have noise around me or I can’t concentrate. I need to have parts of my brain occupied; otherwise, it goes so fast in so many directions that I don’t get anything done. If I can occupy my brain with the TV or my kids running around, then I find I concentrate even better.”

Jorge H., factory manager and former political prisoner: “We used to get put into solitary confinement as a punishment, but I never hated it as much as the others did. You might think that you would get

lonely, but I never did. I used the time to reflect on my life and sort out the kind of man I was and what was really important to me: my family, my values. In a weird way, solitary actually calmed me down and made me stronger.”

### ANALYTICAL SOUNDS LIKE THIS:

Jose G., school system administrator: “I have an innate ability to see structures, formats, and patterns before they exist. For instance, when people are talking about writing a grant proposal, while I’m listening to them, my brain instinctively processes the type of grants that are available and how the discussion fits into the eligibility, right down to the format of how the information can fit on the grant form in a clear and convincing way.”

Jack T., human resources executive: “If I make a claim, I need to know that I can back it up with facts and logical thinking. For example, if someone says that our company is not paying as much as other companies, I always ask, ‘Why do you say that?’ If they say, ‘Well, I saw an ad in the paper that offers graduates in mechanical engineering five grand more than we are paying,’ I’ll reply by asking, ‘But where are these graduates going to work? Is their salary based on geography? What types of companies are they going for? Are they manufacturing companies like ours? And how many people are in their sample? Is it three people, and one of them got a really good deal, thus driving the overall average up?’ There are many questions I need to ask to ensure that their claim is indeed a fact and not based on one misleading data point.”

Leslie J., school principal: “Many times, there are inconsistencies in the performance of the same group of students from one year to the next. It’s the same group of kids, but their scores are different year to year. How can this be? Which building are the kids in? How many of the kids have been enrolled for a full academic year? Which teachers were they assigned to, and what teaching styles were used by those teachers? I just love asking questions like these to understand what is truly happening.”

### 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.”

### LEARNER SOUNDS LIKE THIS:

Annie M., managing editor: “I get antsy when I am not learning something. Last year, although I was enjoying my work, I didn’t feel as though I was learning enough. So I took up tap dancing. It sounds strange, doesn’t it? I know I am never going to perform or anything, but I enjoy focusing on the technical skill of tapping, getting a little better each week, and moving up from the beginners’ class to the intermediate class. That was a kick.”

Miles A., operations manager: “When I was seven years old, my teachers would tell my parents, ‘Miles isn’t the most intelligent boy in the school, but he’s a sponge for learning, and he’ll probably go really far because he will push himself and continually be grasping new things.’ Right now, I am just starting a course in business-travel Spanish. I know it is probably too ambitious to think I could learn conversational Spanish and become totally proficient in that language, but I at least want to be able to travel there and know the language.”

Tim S., coach for executives: “One of my clients is so inquisitive that it drives him crazy because he can’t do everything he wants to. I’m different. I am not curious in that broad sense. I prefer to go into greater depth with things so that I can become competent in them and then use them at work. For example, recently one of my clients wanted me to travel with him to Nice, France, for a business engagement. So I started reading up on the region, buying books, and checking the Internet. It was all interesting and I enjoyed the study, but I wouldn’t have done any of it if I wasn’t going to be traveling there for work.”

## 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?