

Infographic - Working together based on your strengths



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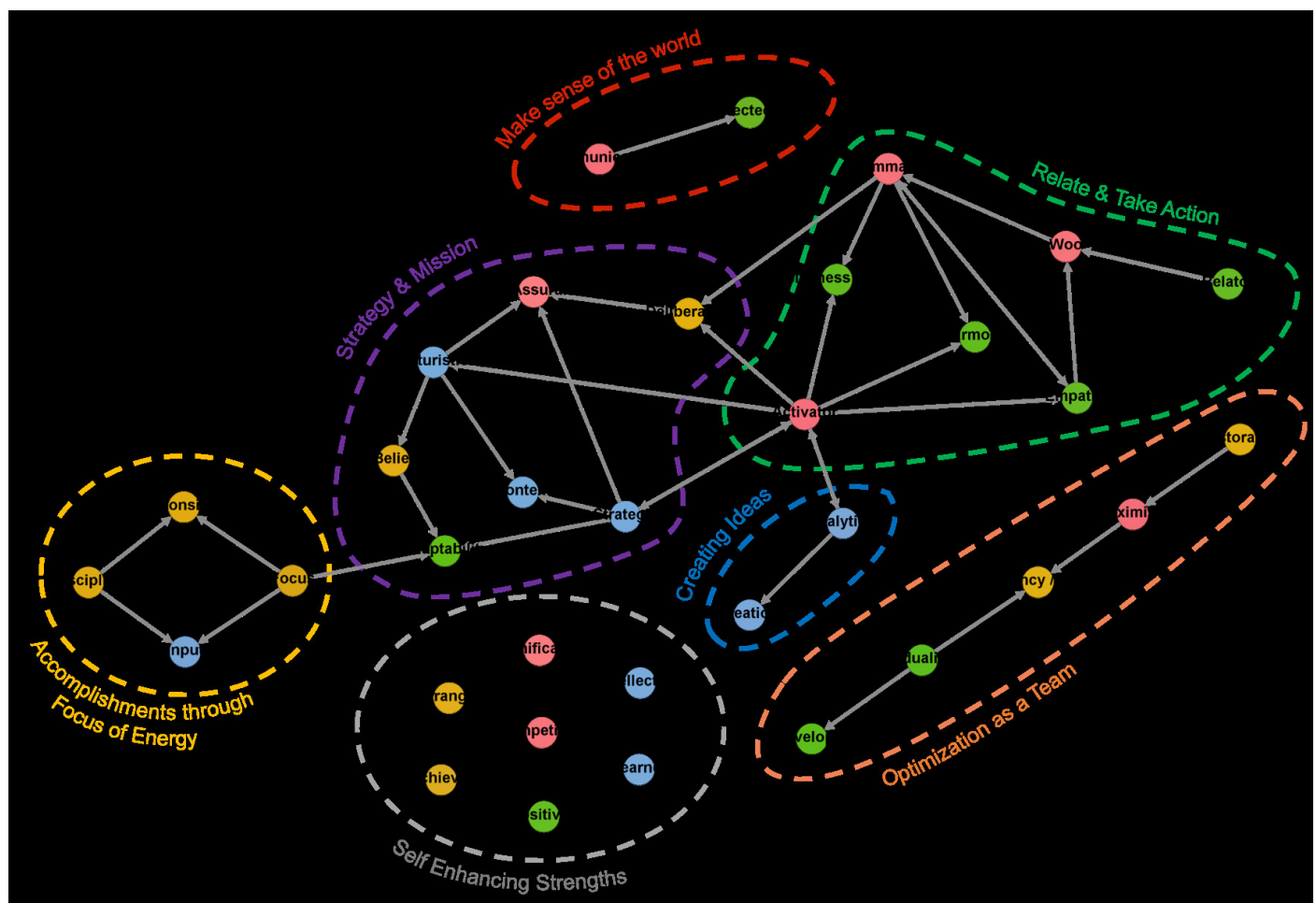
At our company (Deerns) a bottom-up initiative has emerged centered around the Gallup Strengthsfinder. This strength detector allows people to find out where their strengths and talent areas lie and enables them to further develop themselves.

What started as a small initiative has now grown to almost a quarter of the company having done this detector and finding out what their potential strengths are. Since in a consulting and engineering company working together in teams is an everyday practice,

we (myself and Marten Valk, initiator of the Strengthsfinder at Deerns) were very much interested in what having particular strengths means for working with others.

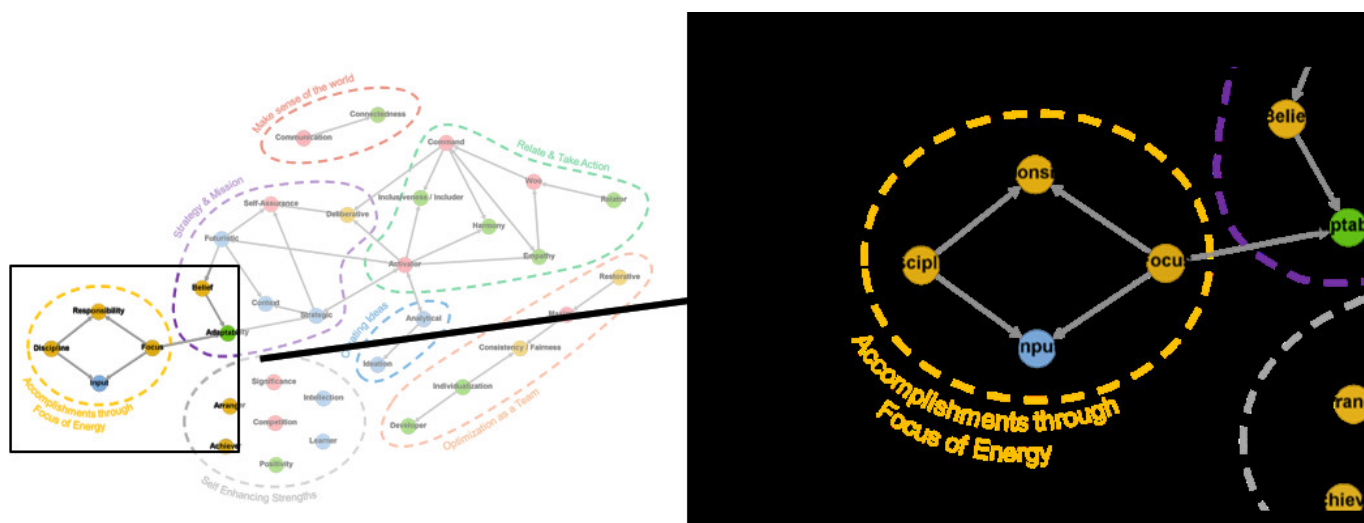
Based on the suggested pairings of strengths (see for example this [link](#)) we got a closer look in what themes could work well together, why some partnerships might come easy and why some can benefit from a better understanding in each other's strengths and motives. Having done a network analysis on this subject (and finding out there is not too much information to be found on the pairing of strengths), I supposed it could be helpful to share an infographic that summarizes the main analysis and relationships.

Note: In order to get a better understanding of this analysis, it is best to have taken notice of the Gallup Strengthsfinder themes (see for [example](#)).



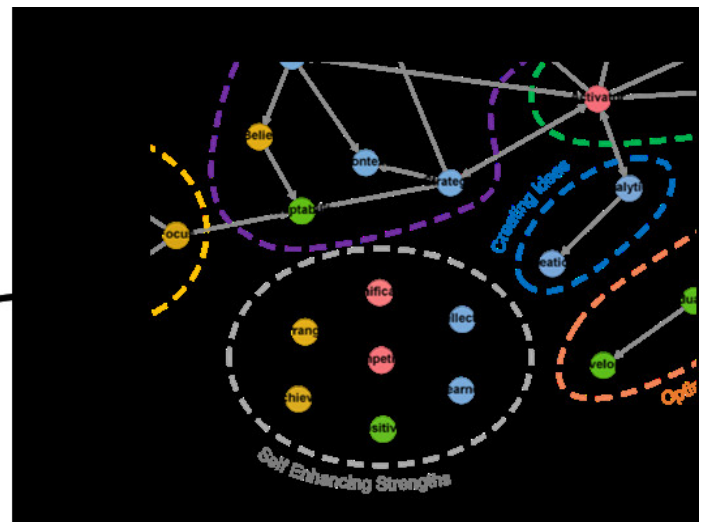
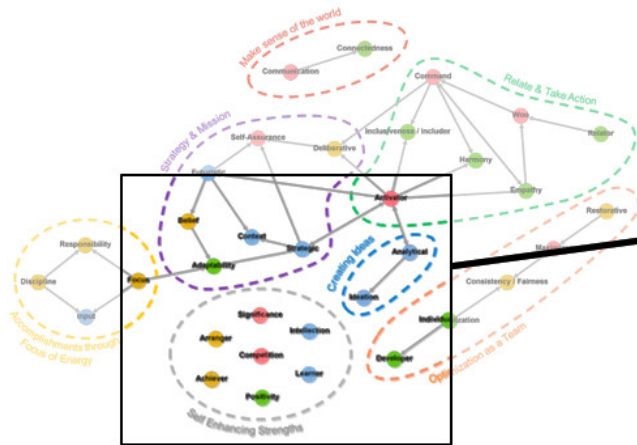
The network shown here gives all the identified relationships (or pairings) based on the 34 themes of the Gallup Strengthsfinder. To get an understanding of what we are seeing here, we will take a look at the three elements that make up this graphic: Pairings (arrows), Categories (colored nodes) and Sub-Communities (the encircled areas).

Pairings - Arrows



Each arrow in the figure represents a relation between two strengths (or themes). The direction of the arrow says something about which strength can benefit from another. **An arrow going from theme 1 to theme 2 says that someone who is strong in theme 1 can be of help to someone who has theme 2 amongst its strengths.**

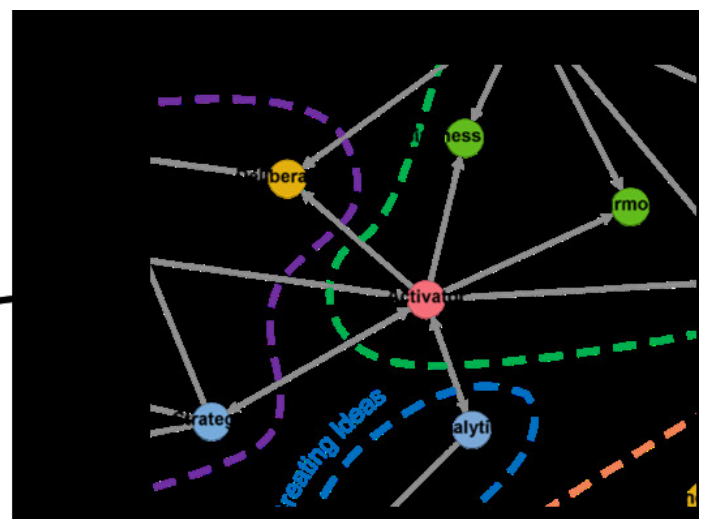
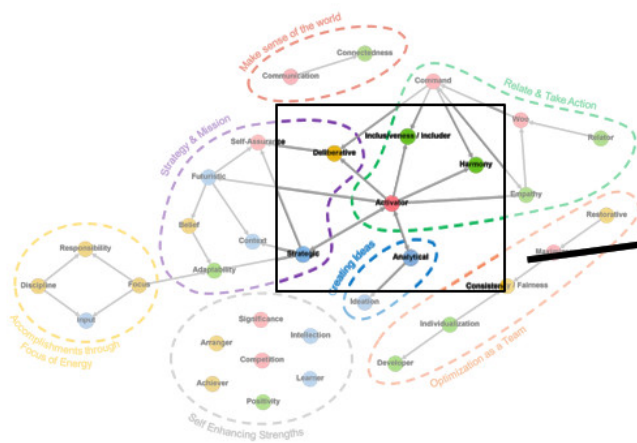
For example: If we look at the lower-left corner, both the themes 'Focus' and 'Discipline' can add something to the theme 'Responsibility'. In practice, one can imagine that someone having the strength 'Responsibility' (taking psychological ownership of what one says he or she will do) is a very valuable asset in getting things done because of their commitment. However, this could also be their pitfall. Without the proper frameworks or focus, someone being that committed can lose themselves in what they are doing and even gets drowned in their responsibility. Here is where themes such as 'Discipline' and 'Focus' come in. People with these themes bring structure and direction (respectively) to the table and thus can help someone with 'Responsibility' work at its full potential.



It is also seen that some arrows connecting two themes point both ways (for example between the 'Strategic' and 'Activator' themes). This means both can benefit from each other's strengths and, as you can imagine, two people working together with these themes can form a very strong coalition.

Lastly, we see also themes that aren't connected to others. This doesn't mean that people with these themes can't work together with other people. It merely means that people with these themes work well together with people who have the same themes (as is in particular the case for 'Achiever') or that there are no specifically obvious connections to one or more specific themes.

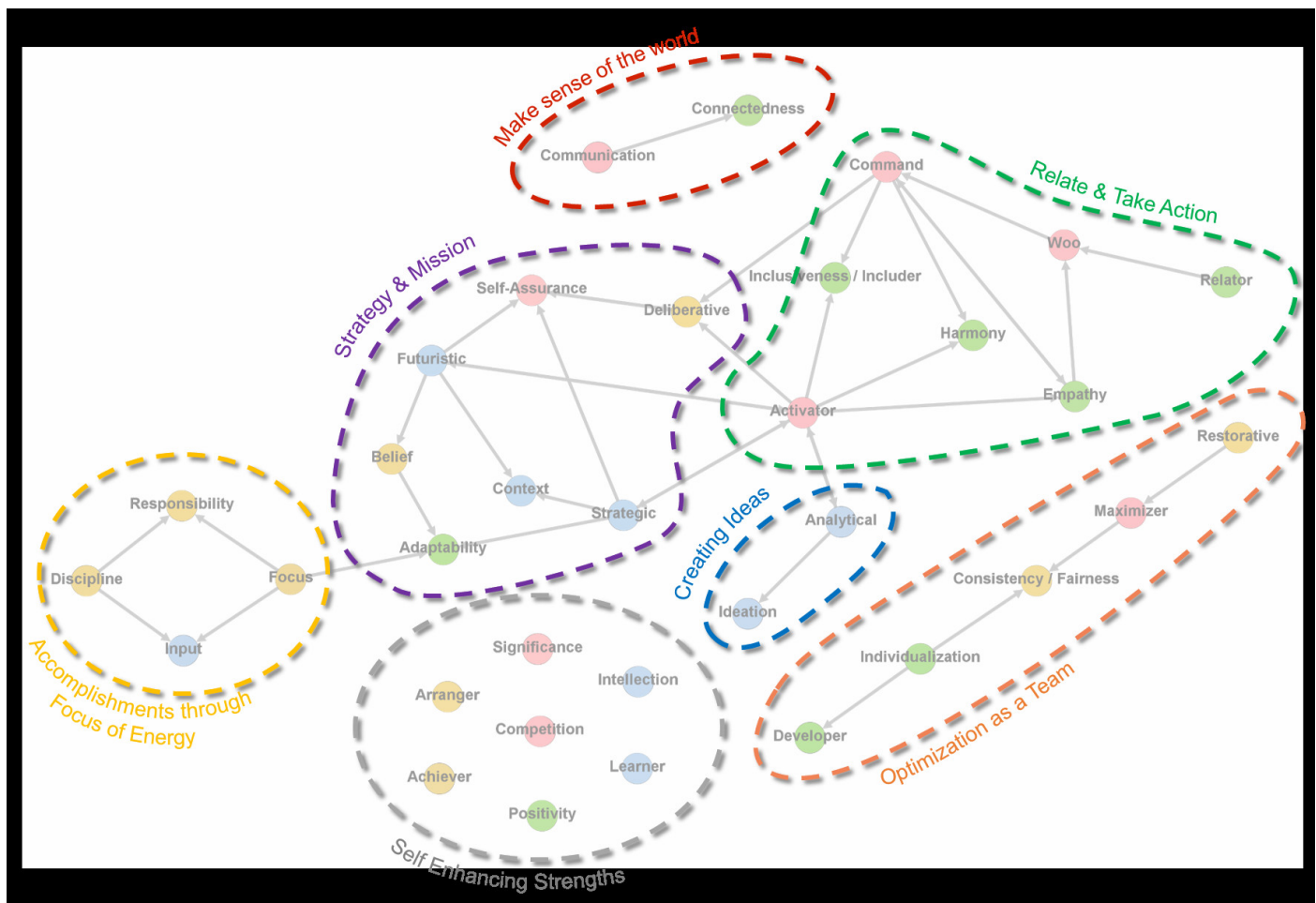
Categories - Colored Nodes



The colored nodes represent the main category that the themes are in. These are defined as:

- **Blue – Strategic Thinking** – People with dominant ‘Strategic Thinking’ themes are able to analyze information, create ideas and see the path to take for the future.
- **Red – Influencing**– People with dominant ‘Influencing’ themes are able to reach the public. They they charge and they can market the team’s ideas.
- **Green – Relationship Building**– People with dominant ‘Relationship Building’ themes are the glue that keep the team together. They are a valuable asset to the team, since they can make the necessary connections within and outside the team.
- **Yellow – Executing** – People with dominant ‘Executing’ themes know how to make things happen. These are the people who can focus their energy and get things done.

Sub-Communities - The Encircled Areas



The basis for the ‘spiderweb’ you see in the figure is made with analysis software ‘Gephi’. This program makes it possible to visualize complex networks and perform some data analysis. In particular the modularity feature is used to determine some sub-communities in the system of 34 themes. This essentially boils down to the following: based on the pairing information, **the highlighted areas depict sub-cultures or sub-systems within the bigger system** (of the total 34 themes). Themes within a sub-system have strong connections amongst each other, which in practice could mean (if you allow me to draw some possibly far-fetched conclusions) that a team made of people with these strengths could be a very strong partnership. I also took the liberty to define some labels for the different teams of themes, just to give an idea of a possible general purpose of a team that is centered around such an area.

Coming up next:

In a next article I will go into my top 5 strengths and see how the different relationships are of influence when working in teams.

All figures are made with Gephi as a basis and later been edited. The basis for the analysis is the Gallup Strengthsfinder Pairing information (as seen for example at this [link](#))