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# Strengths Insight and Action-Planning Guide

SURVEY COMPLETION DATE: 08-31-2016



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## YOUR TOP 5 THEMES

1. Positivity
2. Empathy
3. Includer
4. Adaptability
5. Woo

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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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### Positivity

#### SHARED THEME DESCRIPTION

People who are especially talented in the Positivity theme have an enthusiasm that is contagious. They are upbeat and can get others excited about what they are going to do.

#### YOUR PERSONALIZED STRENGTHS INSIGHTS

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

Driven by your talents, you mix, mingle, and chat with people when the situation clearly calls for socializing. Afterward, you are pleased with yourself. Why? For the duration of the event, you managed to move way outside your comfort zone. Chances are good that you inspire your teammates with words that bolster their confidence. You repeatedly remind them they have the abilities needed to attain their goals. It's very likely that you usually appear enthusiastic about life. Most people are energized by your vim and vigor. Often you have thought, "What is there not to like about life?" You are undoubtedly puzzled by people who see life as a struggle or seldom experience its joys. Instinctively, you characteristically are the cheerful optimist in your group. Your upbeat style and easygoing attitude usually have a favorable effect on many of your teammates. Because of your strengths, you can help others easily fit into groups. You quickly establish good relationships with just about everyone you encounter. How? You spontaneously notice people's good qualities. When others hear your favorable comments about an individual, they are much more likely to make the person feel welcome.

#### 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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# Empathy

## SHARED THEME DESCRIPTION

People who are especially talented in the Empathy theme can sense the feelings of other people by imagining themselves in others' lives or others' situations.

## YOUR PERSONALIZED STRENGTHS INSIGHTS

### What makes you stand out?

By nature, you have the ability to cheer up your teammates. You want them to see the good qualities in one another as well as in the situations they face. Few things please you as much as defusing people's frustration, apathy, or anger. It's very likely that you know how to brighten others' lives when you sense they are feeling low or despondent. You probably have a hard time ending a conversation or a visit when the other person is still sad, grieving, or anxious. Chances are good that you are sensitive to the fluctuating moods of individuals. This is why you strive to show no favoritism. You want each person to have the same opportunities, access to information, and resources. Dealing with people impartially probably is one of your core values. Driven by your talents, you can ease the tension, anger, and agitation people experience in their dealings with others. You soothe the frayed nerves of individuals. This enables them to act more reasonably. In the process, you affirm their humanity and their dignity. You help numerous people find ways to handle problems without sacrificing their self-respect or eroding the confidence others have in them. Because of your strengths, you help individuals feel safe enough to risk sharing their most personal thoughts and feelings. They trust you will keep this information to yourself. You probably sense when someone is vulnerable — that is, easily hurt by criticism, rejection, or betrayal.

## 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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# Includer

## SHARED THEME DESCRIPTION

People who are especially talented in the Includer theme are accepting of others. They show awareness of those who feel left out, and make an effort to include them.

## YOUR PERSONALIZED STRENGTHS INSIGHTS

### What makes you stand out?

It's very likely that you naturally harbor feelings of good will toward almost everyone you meet. From the start, you probably pose questions that reveal to you another person's strengths, interests, or goals. Knowing as much as you do about an individual allows you to appreciate him or her more than others can. People often turn to you for insights about strangers or newcomers to the group. Your knowledge usually helps them to accept these outsiders sooner rather than later. Because of your strengths, you spontaneously look for ways to involve everyone in group-related activities. You really sense what not belonging feels like to the person who is intentionally left out, overlooked, or ignored. Driven by your talents, you prefer being with groups or individuals rather than spending time alone. This explains why you routinely introduce yourself to outsiders or newcomers. You quickly begin searching for common interests you can discuss. Chances are good that you notice that life is a lot better for you when people accommodate your biological need to work in the evening. You customarily produce optimal — that is, most satisfactory — results in the evening or the hours after midnight. Instinctively, you probably harbor tender feelings for individuals who are quite different from you. Your openhearted — that is, kind and generous — nature compels you to reach out and draw into your life many different kinds of people.

## 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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# Adaptability

## SHARED THEME DESCRIPTION

People who are especially talented in the Adaptability theme prefer to “go with the flow.” They tend to be “now” people who take things as they come and discover the future one day at a time.

## YOUR PERSONALIZED STRENGTHS INSIGHTS

### What makes you stand out?

Instinctively, you need to have time to rest and unwind. Rushing from one activity or assignment to another can take a toll on you mentally, physically, or emotionally. So, rather than do the opposite of what everyone else is doing, you prefer to move in the same direction as they are. Typically you choose to use the processes they are using. In your opinion, being cooperative is not only sensible and efficient, but also less exhausting. Driven by your talents, you handle whatever tasks come your way in the course of the day. Mind-numbing routines, processes, paperwork, or production lines eventually bore you. On the other hand, you thrive in environments where you must deal with unexpected requests, unanticipated problems, or changing priorities. Being flexible by nature, you enjoy creating solutions as needs arise. Actually, you think better and accomplish more when your ability to respond to situations on a moment's notice is acknowledged, used, and appreciated. Because of your strengths, you effortlessly adjust to the shifting challenges of the day. You enjoy variety and change. You are comfortable allowing each day to unfold on its own terms. You feel little stress when predetermined timelines must be scrapped. You probably regard rigidly organized plans and routines as barriers rather than helpful tools. By nature, you labor tirelessly on whatever needs to be accomplished today. You likely are willing to change your plans when the people around you change theirs. You ordinarily remain quite calm when others reverse their decisions, modify their schedules, or cancel their appointments. Chances are good that you make plans as you move into and through your day. Not being bound to a strict timeline or action plan frees you to deal with problems or take advantage of opportunities at the moment they arise.

## 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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## Woo

### SHARED THEME DESCRIPTION

People who are especially talented in the Woo theme love the challenge of meeting new people and winning them over. They derive satisfaction from breaking the ice and making a connection with another person.

### YOUR PERSONALIZED STRENGTHS INSIGHTS

#### What makes you stand out?

Chances are good that you repeatedly place yourself in situations where your friendly and outgoing nature is appreciated. You really enjoy being the first person to talk with newcomers, strangers, or outsiders. Not surprisingly, you have a knack for asking them general questions and listening to their responses. You freely offer compliments. You are quick to tell someone you have a common interest. It's very likely that you enjoy the companionship of others and relish social activities. You are apt to be the person who moves around the room getting acquainted and reacquainted with people. You typically do not spend all your time huddled in the corner with one or two best friends. Instinctively, you really enjoy being a member of a team. You are eager to be the first person to engage newcomers or outsiders in small talk as well as serious dialogue. In the process, you generally figure out what each individual can contribute to the group. Because of your strengths, you are sometimes unreserved. Perhaps you share personal information and stories with first-time acquaintances as easily as with old friends. Driven by your talents, you want to acquire additional knowledge. Your desire to study enables you to talk about a variety of topics with newcomers or outsiders. Knowing more increases the likelihood of your having something in common to talk about with a stranger.

### 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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### Positivity

#### IDEAS FOR ACTION:

You probably will excel in any role in which you are paid to highlight the positive. A teaching role, a sales role, an entrepreneurial role, or a leadership role will make the most of your ability to make things dramatic.

You tend to be more enthusiastic and energetic than most people. When others become discouraged or are reluctant to take risks, your attitude will provide the impetus to keep them moving. Over time, others will start to look to you for this “lift.”

Plan highlight activities for your friends and colleagues. For example, find ways to turn small achievements into events, plan regular celebrations that others can look forward to, or capitalize on the year’s holidays and festivals.

Explain that your enthusiasm is not simple naivety. You know that bad things can happen; you simply prefer to focus on the good things.

You may get your greatest joy by encouraging people. Freely show your appreciation of others, and make sure that the praise is not vague. Consistently seek to translate your feelings into specific, tangible, and personal expressions of gratitude and recognition.

As you share your Positivity talents, be sure to protect and nurture them. As necessary, insulate yourself from chronic whiners and complainers, and intentionally spend time in highly positive environments that will invigorate and feed your optimism.

Don’t pretend that difficulties don’t concern you. Other people need to know that while you find the good in virtually every situation, you are not naïve. Recognize challenges, and communicate the reasons for your optimism. Your positive approach will be most powerful when others realize it is grounded in reality.

Because people will rely on you to help them rise above their daily frustrations, arm yourself with good stories, jokes, and sayings. Never underestimate the effect that you can have on people.

Avoid negative people. They will bring you down. Instead, seek people who find the same kind of drama and humor in the world that you do. You will energize each other.

Deliberately help others see the things that are going well for them. You can keep their eyes on the positive.

#### 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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## Empathy

### IDEAS FOR ACTION:

Help your friends and colleagues be more aware when one of your peers is having a difficult time. Remember, most people do not have your ability to pick up on sensitive situations.

Act quickly and firmly when others behave in a way that is unhealthy for themselves or others. Understanding someone's emotional state does not mean that you must excuse this behavior. Be aware that when your empathy turns to sympathy, others might see you as a "bleeding heart."

Partner with someone with strong Command or Activator talents. This person will help you take needed action, even though people's feelings might suffer as a result.

Consider serving others as a confidante or mentor. Because trust is paramount to you, people are likely to feel comfortable approaching you with any need. Your discretion and desire to be genuinely helpful will be greatly valued.

At times, your empathy for others may overwhelm you. Create some rituals that you can use at the end of your day to signal that work is over. This will help buffer your emotions and prevent burnout.

Identify a friend who has strong Empathy talents, and check your observations with him or her.

Sensitive to the feelings of others, you readily gauge the emotional tone of a room. Use your talents to forge a bridge of understanding and mutual support. Your empathy will be especially important during trying times because it will demonstrate your concern, thereby building loyalty.

Witnessing the happiness of others brings you pleasure. Consequently, you are likely to be attuned to opportunities to underscore others' successes and positively reinforce their achievements. At each opportunity, deliver a kind word of appreciation or recognition. In doing so, you are likely to make a profound and engaging impression.

Because you are observant of how others are feeling, you are likely to intuit what is about to happen before it becomes common knowledge. Although your intuitions may at times seem nothing more than 'hunches', take conscious note of them. They may turn out to be valuable assets.

Sometimes empathy does not require words at all. A kind gesture may be all someone needs to be reassured. Use your Empathy talents to nonverbally comfort others with a glance, a smile, or a pat

on the arm.

## 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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## Includer

### IDEAS FOR ACTION:

Consider roles in which you can take responsibility for representing voices that are not usually heard. You will derive a great deal of satisfaction from being a spokesperson for these people.

Look for opportunities to bring together people of diverse cultures and backgrounds. You can be a leader in this area.

Help those who are new to an organization or group get to know other people. You will always be adept at quickly making people feel accepted and involved.

An anti-elitist, you may clash with those who feel they have earned the right to perks and power. Rather than disputing their claim, use your Includer insights to help everyone find common ground and value in their contributions.

Acknowledge the dissonance you feel when you must be the bearer of bad news. Look for partners who can help you justify your position so you don't apologize or soften the message too much.

Not every person is lovable or even likeable. While many of your friends or colleagues may be put off by difficult people, you have a natural capacity to truly care for all people. Let others know that if they ever come to the end of their rope with a problematic individual, they can call on you to step in.

Choose roles in which you are continuously working and interacting with people. You will enjoy the challenge of making everyone feel important.

Partner with someone who has dominant Activator or Command talents. This person can help you when you have to deliver news that might hurt someone's feelings.

Realize that people will relate to each other through you. You are a conduit for information. You can interact with all parts and all people in a group and keep them effectively connected to each other.

Explain what we all have in common. Help others understand that to respect the differences among us (our diversity), we must begin by appreciating what we all share (our similarity).

## 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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## Adaptability

### IDEAS FOR ACTION:

Cultivate your reputation as a calm and reassuring person when others become upset by daily events.

Avoid roles that demand structure and predictability. These roles will quickly frustrate you, make you feel inadequate, and stifle your independence.

When the pressure is on, help your hesitant friends, colleagues, and clients find ways to collect themselves and take control of the situation. Explain that adaptability is about more than simply rolling with the punches; it is about calmly, intelligently, and readily responding to circumstances.

Don't let others abuse your inherent flexibility. Though your Adaptability talents serve you well, don't compromise your long-term success by bending to every whim, desire, and demand of others. Use smart guidelines to help you decide when to flex and when to stand firm.

Seek roles in which success depends on responding to constantly changing circumstances. Consider career areas such as journalism, live television production, emergency healthcare, and customer service. In these roles, the best react the fastest and stay levelheaded.

Fine-tune your responsiveness. For example, if your job demands unanticipated travel, learn how to pack and leave in 30 minutes. If your work pressure comes in unpredictable spurts, practice the first three moves you will always make when the pressure hits.

Look to others for planning. People who have strong Focus, Strategic, or Belief talents can help you shape your long-term goals, leaving you to excel at dealing with the day-to-day variations.

Your Adaptability talents give you an even-keel mindset that lets you ride the ups and downs without

becoming an emotional volcano. Your “don’t cry over spilled milk” approach will help you quickly recover from setbacks. Recognize this aspect of your nature, and help your friends and colleagues understand that it is productive flexibility rather than an “I don’t care” attitude.

Avoid tasks that are too structured and stifle your need for variety. If given a list of tasks to complete, try to indulge your desire for flexibility by making a game of that list. See if you can be creative or make the tasks more fun in some way.

Openly use your reassuring demeanor to soothe disgruntled friends or coworkers. Think about the approach you used, and remember to apply it again when the situation presents itself.

## 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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## Woo

### IDEAS FOR ACTION:

Choose a job in which you can interact with many people over the course of a day.

Deliberately build the network of people who know you. Tend to it by checking in with each person at least once a month.

Join local organizations, volunteer for committees, and find out how to get on the social lists of the influential people where you live.

Learn the names of as many people as you can. Create a file of the people you know, and add names as you become acquainted. Include a snippet of personal information — such as their birthday, favorite color, hobby, or favorite sports team.

In social situations, take responsibility for helping put reserved people at ease.

Find the right words to explain that networking is part of your style. If you don’t claim this theme, others might mistake it for insincerity and wonder why you are being so friendly.

Partner with someone with dominant Relator or Empathy talents. This person can solidify the relationships that you begin.

Your Woo talents give you the ability to quicken the pulse of your surroundings. Recognize the power of your presence and how you open doors for an exchange of ideas. By simply starting conversations that engage others and bring talented people together, you will take performance up a notch — or several.

The first moments of any social occasion are crucial to how comfortable people will be and how they will remember the event. Whenever possible, be one of the first people others meet. Your capacity for meeting and greeting new people will help to quickly put them at ease.

Practice ways to charm and engage others. For example, research people before you meet them so you can talk about your common interests.

## 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.

### POSITIVITY SOUNDS LIKE THIS:

Gerry L., flight attendant: “There are so many people on an airplane that I have made it a point over the years to single out one or two on a flight and make it something special for them. Certainly, I will be courteous to everybody and extend to them the kind of professionalism that I would like given to me, but over and above that, I try to make one person or family or small group of people feel particularly special, with jokes and conversation and little games that I play.”

Andy B., Internet marketing executive: “I am one of those people who loves creating buzz. I read magazines all the time, and if I find something fun — some new store, new lip gloss, whatever — I will charge around telling everyone about it. ‘Oh, you just have to try this store. It is so-o-o cool. Look at these pictures. Check them out.’ I am so passionate when I talk about something that people just have to do what I say. It’s not that I am a great salesperson. I’m not. In fact, I hate asking for the close; I hate bothering people. It’s just that my passion about what I say makes people think, ‘Gosh, it must be true.’”

Sunny G., communications manager: “I think the world is plagued with enough negative people. We need more positive people — people who like to zero in on what is right with the world. Negative people just make me feel heavy. In my last job, there was a guy who came into my office every morning just to unload on me. I would purposely dodge him. I’d see him coming, and I’d run to the bathroom or go some other place. He made me feel as if the world was a miserable place, and I hated that.”

### EMPATHY SOUNDS LIKE THIS:

Alyce J., administrator: “Recently, I was in a meeting of trustees where one of the individuals was presenting a new idea that was critical to her and to the life of this group. When she was finished, no one heard her opinion, no one really heard her. It was a powerfully demoralizing moment for her. I could see it in her face, and she wasn’t herself for a day or two afterward. I finally raised the issue with her and used words that helped describe how she was feeling. I said, ‘Something’s wrong,’ and she started to talk. I said, ‘I really understand. I know how important this was for you, and you don’t seem like yourself,’ and so on. And she finally gave words to what was going on inside her. She said, ‘You’re the only one who heard me and who has said one word to me about it.’”

Brian H., administrator: “When my team is making decisions, what I like to do is say, ‘Okay, what will



this person say about this? What will that person say about it?' In other words, put yourself in their position. Let's think about the arguments from their perspective so that we can all be more persuasive."

Janet P., schoolteacher: "I never played basketball because they didn't have it for women when I was a kid, but I believe I can tell at a basketball game when the momentum is changing, and I want to go to the coach and say, 'Get them revved up. You are losing them.' Empathy also works in large groups; you can feel the crowd."

### INCLUDER SOUNDS LIKE THIS:

Harry B., outplacement consultant: "Even as a child, although I was very shy, I always made sure that I was the one inviting others to play. When picking teams or sides in school, I never wanted anyone not to participate with us. In fact, I can remember when I was ten or eleven, I had a friend who was not a member of our church. We were at a church banquet, and he showed up at the door because typically we had our youth activity at the church on that night. Immediately, I got up, brought him over to our family, and sat him down at the table."

Jeremy B., defense lawyer: "When I first started this job, I met people and became fast, furious friends with them almost on day one, only to find out later that, you know, this person's got a lot of issues, and I've already included them in dinner parties and our social circle. My partner, Mark, is like, 'What is it exactly that made you want to include this person?' And then it's a matter of figuring out what pushed my buttons when I first met them, what made me enjoy them so much. And, you know, making sure that this is the aspect of them that Mark and I focus on . . . because once I include someone in my circle, I don't dump them."

Giles D., corporate trainer: "In class, I seem to be able to sense when someone is disengaging from the group discussion, and I immediately draw them back into the conversation. Last week, we got into a lengthy discussion about performance appraisals, and one woman wasn't talking at all. So I just said, 'Monica, you've had performance appraisals. Any thoughts on the subject?' I really think this has helped me as a teacher because when I don't know the answer to something, very often it is the person I pull in who supplies the answer for me."

### ADAPTABILITY SOUNDS LIKE THIS:

Marie T., television producer: "I love live TV because you never know what is going to happen. One minute, I might be putting together a segment on the best teenage holiday gifts, and the next, I will be doing the pre-interview for a presidential candidate. I guess I have always been this way. I live in the moment. If someone asks me, 'What are you doing tomorrow?' my answer is always, 'I don't know. Depends what I'm in the mood for.' I drive my boyfriend crazy because he'll plan for us to go to the antique market on Sunday afternoon, and then right at the last minute, I'll change my mind and say,

‘Nah, let’s go home and read the Sunday papers.’ Annoying, right? Yeah, but on the positive side, it does mean that I’m up for anything.”

Linda G., project manager: “Where I work, I am the calmest person I know. When someone comes in and says, ‘We didn’t plan right. We need this turned around by tomorrow,’ my colleagues seem to tense up and freeze. Somehow that doesn’t happen to me. I like that pressure, that need for instant response. It makes me feel alive.”

Peter F., corporate trainer: “I think I deal with life better than most people. Last week, I found that my car window had been smashed and the stereo stolen. I was annoyed, of course, but it didn’t throw me off my day one bit. I just cleared it, mentally moved on, and went right on with the other things I had to get done that day.”

### WOO SOUNDS LIKE THIS:

Deborah C., publishing executive: “I have made best friends out of people that I have met passing in the doorway. I mean, it’s awful, but wooing is part of who I am. All my taxi drivers propose to me.”

Marilyn K., college president: “I don’t believe I’m looking for friends, but people call me a friend. I call people and say, ‘I love you,’ and I mean it because I love people easily. But friends? I don’t have many friends. I don’t think I am looking for friends. I am looking for connections. And I am really good at that because I know how to achieve common ground with people.”

Anna G., nurse: “I think I am a little shy sometimes. Usually I won’t make the first step out. But I do know how to put people at ease. A lot of my job is just humor. If the patient is not very receptive, my role becomes that of a stand-up comedian. I’ll say to an eighty-year-old patient, ‘Hi, you handsome guy. Sit up. Let me get your shirt off. That’s good. Take your shirt off. Whoa, what a chest on this man!’ With kids, you have to start very slowly and say something like, ‘How old are you?’ If they say, ‘Ten,’ then I say, ‘Really? When I was your age, I was eleven’ — silly stuff like that to break the ice.”

## 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?