

# Strengths

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## YOUR RESULTS:

### Your prime strengths

Prime strengths are those skills that are important to your current role or the role you are looking for; they are also skills that you enjoy and are competent or highly proficient in using.

These skills certainly constitute your strengths, and are likely to be the areas in which you are perceived to be a bit of an expert. More than that, however, they are key to your personal brand: they define much of what sets you apart from others and taken together they form a picture of you at your best. Something you should want to talk about.

- *Teamworking*
- *Acting on own initiative*
- *Creativity & innovation*
- *Written communication*
- *Managing projects*
- *Researching*
- *Training*
- *Designing*
- *Planning*
- *Giving feedback*
- *Listening actively*
- *Implementing*
- *Receiving feedback*
- *Solving problems*
- *Decision-making*
- *Using technology*
- *Multi-tasking*
- *Presentation-building skills*
- *Adaptability*
- *Working in uncertainty*
- *Coaching*
- *Troubleshooting*
- *Facilitating*
- *Empathising*
- *Observing*
- *Managing your time*
- *Numerical reasoning*
- *Verbal communication*
- *Leading others*
- *Managing conflict*
- *Crisis management*
- *Quality assessing*
- *Managing change*
- *Analysing*
- *Mentoring*
- *Evaluating*
- *Strategy planning*

### Tips

- Take some time to fully acknowledge these strengths in yourself and use them to identify the areas you should prioritise working in.
- These are the strengths you should promote in your cover letter or CV; they should be the strengths you highlight when discussing career possibilities with your manager, coach or mentor, and you should be confident in drawing attention to these strengths at networking events.
- These are your greatest assets, so keep them up-to-date and seize opportunities to use them.

### Necessary skills

Necessary skills are those skills that are important to your current role or the role you are looking for, but despite being competent or even highly proficient in using them they are not skills you like to use.

Ordinarily something you are good at would be classed as a strength and something you should promote, but if you don't enjoy it, it can become something that weakens your motivation and ambition.

- *Customer service*
- *Budgeting*

### Tips

- Look at the tasks that require these skills and take the time to identify what it is about them that you dislike: is it the tasks rather than the skills, the frequency with which you have to do the tasks, the pressure associated with the tasks, the isolation of the task (because no one else can do it) or the time it takes to complete each task?
- Try discussing our issues with your manager; investigate if there is an opportunity to share the task, do it differently – perhaps a small change could make the task more bearable - or hand it over completely.
- Don't forget to recognise that you are good at this type of work and that people may look to you as an expert in the area. True recognition of your skill can bolster your enthusiasm for it
- Although you may never quite 'find the fun' in these areas, it might help to view them as 'bonus' skills– not something you highlight as a core strength, but something that could help you clinch a new job, role, responsibility or project.
- It is essential to be aware of your necessary skills and ensure conversations and decisions about future roles take that awareness into account.

### Your untapped strengths

Untapped strengths are those skills that you enjoy, are competent or highly proficient in using, but are not important to your current role or the role you are looking for.

Your true potential may be wrapped up in these strengths. It may be that you have acquired these skills in previous roles or perhaps they have only been required in environments you would not consider work and therefore feel that they are not relevant to a working environment. However, skills that you are good at and that you really enjoy could highlight the direction your career should be taking.

- *Working under pressure*

## Tips

- Identify the transferable quality of the skill – don't assume that it can only be used in a specific capacity.
- Discuss these strengths with your manager, coach or mentor and explain that you'd like to find a way to incorporate them into your working life or career – can they provide you with additional challenges that require these skills or even suggest a different role?
- Look at your prime and untapped skills as a whole and assess the picture they present: these are all skills that you are good at and enjoy. Ask friends, family and mentors whether they think this list accurately reflects who you are.
- Don't be afraid to adjust your career course to incorporate your untapped strengths. Look for challenges that these strengths can meet even if they are not in the job description or look for secondments, projects or placements where you can use these strengths.

## Your weaknesses

Weaknesses are those skills that are important to your current role or the role you are looking for that you dislike using and you need to develop.

The chances are that these skills are the ones that eat away at your confidence, motivation, self-esteem and ambition. You may feel stressed to be in an environment that values skills that you don't particularly like, nor are particularly good at.

- *Public speaking*
- *Negotiating*
- *Networking*
- *Motivating others*
- *Commercial awareness*
- *Appraising*
- *Mediating*
- *Questioning*

## Tips

- Firstly, make sure you have some perspective: compare your list of strengths against this list of weaknesses – if this list is much smaller than your strengths, relax. Everyone has areas of weakness.
- If you are in a role and feeling anxious about these weaknesses, talk to your manager, mentor or coach. Perhaps the responsibilities in your role have changed since you started working and some realignment is required. It could be that those tasks in your areas of weakness can be diverted to someone else and you could take on other responsibilities.
- If your weaknesses greatly outweigh your strengths in this particular role career course correction may be the obvious answer, particularly if you are at the application stage. Ask yourself why you are applying for roles that don't match your strengths.
- It may be that you dislike using these skills because you haven't developed them enough. Guidance from someone more experienced or the opportunity to be trained could develop this weakness into a useful skill that you learn to enjoy.
- Remember that it is ok to have some areas that you are less strong in; you just need to be clear on genuinely how important they are to your (potential) role.

## Your underdeveloped skills

Underdeveloped skills are those skills that are important to your current role or the role you are looking for that you enjoy but need to develop.

These are underdeveloped skills because their importance and your enjoyment of them should provide you with the motivation to develop them. They represent a challenge, which may require some effort to rise to.

- *Managing people*
- *Delegating*

## Tips

- Identify what it is about these skills that you enjoy; then identify the specific weakness. Ask friends, colleagues, managers or mentors to point out (constructively) where you need to develop a particular skill.
- Ask for support from those who excel in the particular skill. Watch, listen and learn at every opportunity.

Consider that despite enjoying a skill it may never become a strength and as such looking for opportunities that lend themselves to your strengths may be a more promising option.

## ABOUT THIS ASSESSMENT:

Understanding your skills and strengths is key to your career development.

Being able to categorise your abilities can help you to more clearly define your working role and your career direction, to celebrate what you are good at, accept the things you are not and appreciate others for their strengths in your areas of weakness.

The purpose of this simple assessment is to allow you to easily assess your own strengths from a broad selection of skills using three dimensions: enjoyment, proficiency and importance (to your current or potential role) and to group them into five categories: prime strengths, untapped strengths, necessary skills, underdeveloped skills and weaknesses.