

---

# Strengths Insight and Action-Planning Guide

SURVEY COMPLETION DATE: 09-15-2015

justin miller

---

## Your Top 5 Themes

Adaptability  
Maximizer  
Competition  
Includer  
Self-Assurance

## 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

### 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?*

Driven by your talents, you react to situations as they occur. You rely on your intuition to make the right choices. Instinctively, you are the group member who moves through the day handling unexpected situations as they arise. Some are important. Others are not so important. You probably have earned a reputation for changing plans to deal with surprises. By nature, you enjoy reading. It allows you to gather information to expand your storehouse of knowledge. When surrounded by individuals who cannot sit still, giving your full attention to the printed word is apt to be difficult, if not impossible. You have a habit of avoiding the company of restless people when you want to give your undivided attention to a book, magazine article, newspaper account, personal correspondence, or official document. Chances are good that 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. Because of your strengths, you are quite comfortable letting the day’s events and people’s demands determine what really deserves your attention.

#### 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?*

It's very likely that you have identified your talents and strengths. You know the things you do quite well. You waste very little time mulling over your limitations, shortcomings, or failures. Your strengths allow you to capture first-place honors again and again. You refuse to concentrate much energy on areas where you must struggle just to be average. "What's the point?" you ask yourself. Chances are good that you regularly spend time pondering what you have an aptitude for doing very well. In the process, you probably discover things you need to do even better. Instinctively, you normally devote your energies to pinpointing what makes people special and unique. This knowledge probably permits you to inspire many individuals to do their finest work. Driven by your talents, you are hardwired to pay attention to your most recent accomplishments. You usually savor your moments of excellence. This is likely to enhance your understanding of what you do well. By nature, you combine your fascination for reading with your ability to figure out what sets individuals apart from everyone else. You are likely to discover things that interest someone. Then you read more about those topics. You aim to collect insights that can inspire the person to take advantage of his or her one-of-a-kind talents, knowledge, and/or skills.

### 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?

## Competition

### Shared Theme Description

People who are especially talented in the Competition theme measure their progress against the performance of others. They strive to win first place and revel in contests.

### Your Personalized Strengths Insights

*What makes you stand out?*

Chances are good that you are hardwired to compare your performance to that of others. You always want to know the score. You are exhilarated when you realize you have triumphed over all other contenders. Driven by your talents, you want many individuals to follow you. You hope they automatically regard you as the person in charge. After your results are compared to the outcomes of others, you want it to be clear to them that you are the very best. This probably is reason enough for them to give you their full allegiance. It's very likely that you are driven to be the very best. This explains why your thoughts turn to what you need to do better. As a result, you usually decide you need to acquire more skills and knowledge. Because of your strengths, you yearn to capture the top prize and be named the best. This explains why you reflect on what you need to do better to outperform, outproduce, or outscore everyone else. By nature, you routinely choose to participate in selected tournaments, games, rivalries, or matches. Why? They provide you with ample opportunities to compare your results to those that others produce. You customarily aim for the top award from the outset. You have no interest in secondary titles or prizes.

### 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?

## 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?*

Chances are good that you sometimes enjoy surrounding yourself with companions rather than being alone. Instinctively, you might find something likeable in just about every person you meet. Perhaps you go out of your way to surround yourself with an array of people. Some represent different backgrounds, interests, cultures, economic strata, races, nationalities, religions, or levels of education. Maybe you argue there is always room for one more person at a meeting, in a group, on a trip, or at a meal. Your pleasant, friendly, and cordial disposition may attract many interesting individuals. Driven by your talents, you work with much more intensity in the evening. This awareness probably allows you to increase your productivity, improve the quality of your outcomes, enhance your efficiency, and better manage your priorities. Because of your strengths, you make no claims of being a “morning person.” You need time to transition from sleeping to waking and from waking to working. You tend to gain physical energy and mental sharpness later in the traditional workday. Depending on your biological clock, your peak performance period can occur during mid-to-late afternoon, in the early evening, during the hours before midnight, or in the hours after midnight. By nature, you derive much joy from teaming with people to accomplish things. You view work, study, and play as opportunities to socialize and be productive. This explains why you need to interact with others on a regular basis. People probably energize you.

### 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?

## Self-Assurance

### Shared Theme Description

People who are especially talented in the Self-Assurance theme feel confident in their ability to manage their own lives. They possess an inner compass that gives them confidence that their decisions are right.

### Your Personalized Strengths Insights

*What makes you stand out?*

Instinctively, you have an ability to influence people to fix processes, situations, or even personal traits that you believe limit them. Chances are good that you are known for being realistic and unsentimental. Nonetheless, there are times when you wish you did a better job of expressing your own feelings and allowing others to voice theirs. The moment people start getting too emotional, you tend to redirect their attention to practical matters or objective facts. Because of your strengths, you keep a tight rein on your emotions. You are cautious and reserved. Rather than add to the drama of a situation, you simply study the facts. You waste little time discussing your own and others' feelings. Instead, you consider the evidence. You weigh the consequences of whatever is said and done. People realize you need time to think. They know your judgment is rarely clouded by personal feelings or opinions. It's very likely that you earnestly apply yourself to seeing things as they really are. You bring a practical, matter-of-fact, and unsentimental outlook to various discussions, projects, or planning meetings. Driven by your talents, you often choose to work with members of the group who dare to do things that most people would not risk doing. You have the confidence to venture out on your own. You do not need guarantees of success. When you know ahead of time you can accomplish something, you probably are less interested in doing 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?

## 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

### 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.



## 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.

## Competition

### Ideas for Action:

- Select work environments in which you can measure your achievements. You might not be able to discover how good you can be without competing.
- List the performance scores that help you know where you stand every day. What scores should you pay attention to?
- Identify a high-achieving person against whom you can measure your own achievement. If there is more than one, list all the people with whom you currently compete. Without measurement, how will you know if you won?
- Try to turn ordinary tasks into competitive games. You will get more done this way.
- When you win, take the time to investigate why you won. You can learn a great deal more from a victory than from a loss.
- Let people know that being competitive does not equate with putting others down. Explain that you derive satisfaction from pitting yourself against good, strong competitors and winning.
- Develop a “balanced metric” — a measurement system that will monitor all aspects of your performance. Even if you are competing against your own previous numbers, this measurement will help you give proper attention to all aspects of your performance.
- When competing with others, create development opportunities by choosing to compare yourself to someone who is slightly above your current level of expertise. Your competition will push you to refine your skills and knowledge to exceed those of that person. Look one or two levels above you for a role model who will push you to improve.
- Take the time to celebrate your wins. In your world, there is no victory without celebration.
- Design some mental strategies that can help you deal with a loss. Armed with these strategies, you will be able to move on to the next challenge much more quickly.

### 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.

## 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.

## Self-Assurance

### Ideas for Action:

- Look for start-up situations for which no rulebook exists. You will be at your best when you are asked to make many decisions.
- Seek roles in which you convince people to see your point of view. Your Self-Assurance talents (especially when combined with Command or Activator talents) can be extremely persuasive. Leadership, sales, legal, or entrepreneurial roles might suit you.
- Let your self-confidence show. It can be contagious and will help the people around you grow.
- Realize that sometimes you will find it hard to put your certainty or intuition into words, possibly leading others to see you as self-righteous. Explain that your confidence does not mean that they should withhold their opinions. It might not seem like it to them, but you do want to hear their ideas. Your conviction doesn't mean that you are unwilling to listen to them.
- Your independent streak can leave you standing alone. If this happens, make sure you are out in front, or partner with someone who can help others see how they can benefit from following you.
- Partner with someone with strong Strategic, Deliberative, or Futuristic talents. This person can help you assess the goals to which you commit. You need this help because once you set your sights on a goal, you are likely to stay with it until you achieve it.
- Your exceptionally hard work and long hours are natural products of the passion and confidence you feel about your work. Don't assume that others are similarly wired.
- You can be decisive, even when things get dynamic and distracting. When there is chaos around you, intentionally display and share the calm and certainty within you. This will give others comfort and security.
- Set ambitious goals. Don't hesitate to reach for what others see as impractical and impossible, but what you see as merely bold and exciting — and most importantly — achievable with some heroics and a little luck. Your Self-Assurance talents can lead to achievements that you may not have otherwise even imagined.
- You don't have a great need for direction and support from others. This could make you particularly effective in situations that require independent thinking and action. Recognize and actively contribute the value of your Self-Assurance talents when confidence and self-control are crucial.

### 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.

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.”

### 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.”

### Competition sounds like this:

Mark L., sales executive: “I’ve played sports my entire life, and I don’t just play to have fun — let me put it that way. I like to engage in sports I am going to win and not ones I am going to lose, because if I lose, I am outwardly gracious but inwardly infuriated.”

Harry D., general manager: “I’m not a big sailor, but I love the America’s Cup. Both boats are supposed to be exactly the same, and both crews have top-notch athletes. But you always get a winner. One of them had some secret up their sleeves that tipped the balance and enabled them to win more often than lose. And that’s what I am looking for — that secret, that tiny edge.”

Sumner Redstone, chairman of Viacom (now known as CBS Corporation), on his efforts to acquire that company: “I relished every minute of it because Viacom was a company worth fighting for and I enjoyed a contest. If you get involved in a major competitive struggle, and the stress that inevitably comes with it, you’d better derive some real sense of satisfaction and enjoyment from the ultimate victory. Wrestling control of a company like Viacom was warfare. I believe the real lesson it taught me was that it is not about money, it’s about the will to win.”

**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.”



### Self-Assurance sounds like this:

James K., salesman: “I never second-guess myself. Whether I am buying a birthday present or a house, when I make my decision, it feels to me as if I had no choice. There was only one decision to make, and I made it. It’s easy for me to sleep at night. My gut is final, loud, and very persuasive.”

Pam D., public service executive: “I was raised on a remote farm in Idaho, and I attended a small rural school. One day, I returned home from school and announced to my mother that I was changing schools. Earlier in the day, my teacher had explained that our school had too many kids and that three kids would have to move to a different school. I thought about it for a moment, liked the idea of meeting new people, and decided I would be one of them — even though it meant getting up half an hour earlier and traveling farther on the bus. I was five years old.”

Deborah C., ER nurse: “If we have a death in the ER, people call on me to deal with the family because of my confidence. Just yesterday, we had a problem with a young psychotic girl who was screaming that the devil was inside her. The other nurses were afraid, but I knew what to do. I went in and said, ‘Kate, come on, lie back. Let’s say the Baruch. It’s a Jewish prayer. It goes like this: Baruch Atah Adonai, Eloheinu Melech Haolam.’ She responded, ‘Say it slowly so that I can say it back to you.’ I did, and then she said it back to me slowly. She wasn’t Jewish, but this calm came over her. She dropped back against her pillow and said, ‘Thank you. That’s all I needed.’”

## 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?