



## StrengthsFinder 2.0 Report

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# Strengths Insight and Action-Planning Guide

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## Your Top 5 Themes

Ideation  
Strategic  
Adaptability  
Activator  
Belief

## 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

### 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?*

Instinctively, 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. It's very likely that you engage life with gusto. Bursting with creativity, you approach assignments, tasks, projects, opportunities, or problems. You like to take the innovative path rather than follow the traditional and tried-and-true ways of doing things. By nature, you usually take a creative route to your desired objective. Rather than have just one goal to consider, you explore alternatives. You value innovation. You dare to think differently. Timelines and other restrictions probably stifle your creativity. You prefer to let the thinking process pace itself in terms of time. Because of your strengths, you often experience satisfaction with your life when someone asks you to scrutinize, assess, examine, or evaluate things such as people, processes, plans, or mechanisms. Chances are good that you are an original and innovative thinker. Others frequently rely on you to generate novel concepts, theories, plans, or solutions. You refuse to be stifled by traditions or trapped by routines. You probably bristle when someone says, "We can't change that. We've always done it this way."

#### 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?

## Strategic

### Shared Theme Description

People who are especially talented in the Strategic theme create alternative ways to proceed. Faced with any given scenario, they can quickly spot the relevant patterns and issues.

### Your Personalized Strengths Insights

*What makes you stand out?*

It's very likely that you customarily pinpoint the core problems and identify the best solutions. You artfully and skillfully eliminate distractions. This helps people gain a clear understanding of what is happening and why it is happening. You frequently identify ways to transform an obstacle into an opportunity. Because of your strengths, you have a knack for identifying problems. You spontaneously generate alternatives for solving them. You probably consider the pros and cons of each option. You often factor into your thinking prevailing circumstances and available resources. You feel life is good when you sense you are choosing the best course of action. Driven by your talents, you occasionally marvel at your ability to vividly express your thoughts and feelings. By nature, you analyze the lessons of the past to find clues for handling future situations. Piecing together the causes and effects of historical events allows you to discover alternate routes to your goal. You are seldom taken by surprise. Why? You probably have studied your options and crafted innovative solutions. Chances are good that you invent original ideas of your own. Your imagination is typically stimulated when you collaborate — that is, team up — with future-oriented thinkers.

### 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?

## 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?*

Chances are good that you feel that life is good when you take time to envision how you will react to future situations. Forethought usually helps you adjust to unexpected problems. It also permits you to take advantage of new opportunities by altering your plans. It's very likely that you perform quite well in situations where shifting priorities and changing plans are the norm. You have a gift for reacting in the moment rather than delaying action. Driven by your talents, you might prefer to spend time with people who know how to take life easy. Perhaps unraveling the mystery of what makes someone unique cannot be rushed, in your estimation. This partially explains why you try to avoid people who are harried, hurried, stressed, or tense. By nature, you surround yourself with lovely things. These have the power to soothe, calm, energize, and inspire you. The arts or nature itself enhances your sense of well-being. You probably pay attention to your environment because you choose to live each moment to its fullest. Instinctively, you attribute your upbeat outlook on life to an ability to take things as they come. This flexibility probably enables you to embrace change rather than resist 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?

## Activator

### Shared Theme Description

People who are especially talented in the Activator theme can make things happen by turning thoughts into action. They are often impatient.

### Your Personalized Strengths Insights

*What makes you stand out?*

Because of your strengths, you have a gift for raising a person's self-esteem. You notice something special he or she said. Then you formally or informally acknowledge the individual's most interesting ideas. By nature, you routinely spark the enthusiasm of individuals. Your own job, studies, or life becomes much more exhilarating when you help others more fully experience their lives. Driven by your talents, you generate innovative ideas. You offer unique perspectives on events, people, and proposals. You probably inspire people to start projects and launch initiatives. You tend to identify a goal, devise numerous ways of reaching it, then choose the best alternative. This explains why you see opportunities, trends, and solutions before your teammates, classmates, or peers see them. It's very likely that you sometimes make choices or judgments when no one else seems willing to do so. Once you take charge, you may be eager to launch initiatives, present proposals, or solve problems. Chances are good that you strive to energize people. You are determined to generate a lot of enthusiasm around various projects, events, or activities.

### 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?

## Belief

### Shared Theme Description

People who are especially talented in the Belief theme have certain core values that are unchanging. Out of these values emerges a defined purpose for their life.

### Your Personalized Strengths Insights

*What makes you stand out?*

Instinctively, you are naturally inclined to make sacrifices that benefit someone else. You enjoy being generous with your time, knowledge, skills, experiences, resources, or possessions. Chances are good that you might refuse to live a meaningless existence. Perhaps you seek a vocation that allows you to express certain values every day. Work or school may provide you with the opportunity to enrich or deepen the quality of your life. Sometimes you want to do what you love doing. This partially explains why your job or studies need to be much more than a means to an end — that is, a paycheck or a diploma. By nature, you place more importance on the purpose and value of what you do than on the monetary rewards that accompany success. It's very likely that you refuse to be blinded by others' enthusiasm about what is possible. You are hardwired to isolate the issues that lie ahead. Working with overly optimistic people is difficult for you. You have seen them accidentally derail more than one promising project or unwittingly sabotage more than one inventive, yet undeveloped, idea. Because of your strengths, you tend to be zealous — that is, fervent and enthusiastic — about solving problems that affect the quality of your life. You have been known to devote all your time and energy to a worthy cause. Your core values explain why you participate in various social, political, educational, religious, judicial, or environmental activities.

### 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

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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

### 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.

## Strategic

### Ideas for Action:

- Take the time to fully reflect or muse about a goal that you want to achieve until the related patterns and issues emerge for you. Remember that this musing time is essential to strategic thinking.
- You can see repercussions more clearly than others can. Take advantage of this ability by planning your range of responses in detail. There is little point in knowing where events will lead if you are not ready when you get there.
- Find a group that you think does important work, and contribute your strategic thinking. You can be a leader with your ideas.
- Your strategic thinking will be necessary to keep a vivid vision from deteriorating into an ordinary pipe dream. Fully consider all possible paths toward making the vision a reality. Wise forethought can remove obstacles before they appear.
- Make yourself known as a resource for consultation with those who are stumped by a particular problem or hindered by a particular obstacle or barrier. By naturally seeing a way when others are convinced there is no way, you will lead them to success.
- You are likely to anticipate potential issues more easily than others. Though your awareness of possible danger might be viewed as negativity by some, you must share your insights if you are going to avoid these pitfalls. To prevent misperception of your intent, point out not only the future obstacle, but also a way to prevent or overcome it. Trust your insights, and use them to ensure the success of your efforts.
- Help others understand that your strategic thinking is not an attempt to belittle their ideas, but is instead a natural propensity to consider all the facets of a plan objectively. Rather than being a naysayer, you are actually trying to examine ways to ensure that the goal is accomplished, come what may. Your talents will allow you to consider others' perspectives while keeping your end goal in sight.
- Trust your intuitive insights as often as possible. Even though you might not be able to explain them rationally, your intuitions are created by a brain that instinctively anticipates and projects. Have confidence in these perceptions.
- Partner with someone with strong Activator talents. With this person's need for action and your need for anticipation, you can forge a powerful partnership.
- Make sure that you are involved in the front end of new initiatives or enterprises. Your innovative yet procedural approach will be critical to the genesis of a new venture because it will keep its creators from developing deadly tunnel vision.

### Questions

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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

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## Activator

### Ideas for Action:

- Seek work in which you can make your own decisions and act on them. In particular, look for start-up or turnaround situations.
- At work, make sure that your manager judges you on measurable outcomes rather than your process. Your process is not always pretty.
- You can transform innovative ideas into immediate action. Look for creative and original thinkers, and help them move their ideas from conceptual theory to concrete practice.
- Look for areas that are bogged down by discussion or blocked by barriers. End the stalemate by creating a plan to get things moving and spur others into action.
- You learn more from real experience than from theoretical discussions. To grow, consciously expose yourself to challenging experiences that will test your talents, skills, and knowledge.
- Remember that although your tenacity is powerful, it may intimidate some. Your Activator talents will be most effective when you have first earned others' trust and loyalty.
- Identify the most influential decision makers in your organization. Make it a point to have lunch with each of them at least once a quarter to share your ideas. They can support you in your activation and provide critical resources to make your ideas happen.
- You can easily energize the plans and ideas of others. Consider partnering with focused, futuristic, strategic, or analytical people who will lend their direction and planning to your activation, thereby creating an opportunity to build consensus and get others behind the plan. By doing this, you complement each other.
- Give the reasons why your requests for action must be granted. Otherwise, others might dismiss you as impatient and label you a 'ready, fire, aim' person.
- You possess an ability to create motion and momentum in others. Be strategic and wise in the use of your Activator talents. When is the best time, where is the best place, and who are the best people with whom to leverage your valuable influence?

### Questions

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## Belief

### Ideas for Action:

- Clarify your values by thinking about one of your best days ever. How did your values play into the satisfaction that you received on that day? How can you organize your life to repeat that day as often as possible?
- Actively seek roles that fit your values. In particular, think about joining organizations that define their purpose by the contribution they make to society.
- The meaning and purpose of your work will often provide direction for others. Remind people why their work is important and how it makes a difference in their lives and in the lives of others.
- Your Belief talents allow you to talk to the hearts of people. Develop a “purpose statement” and communicate it to your family, friends, and coworkers. Your powerful emotional appeal can give them a motivating sense of contribution.
- Create a gallery of letters and/or pictures of the people whose lives you have substantially influenced. When you are feeling down or overwhelmed, remind yourself of your value by looking at this gallery. It will energize you and revive your commitment to helping others.
- Set aside time to ensure that you are balancing your work demands and your personal life. Your devotion to your career should not come at the expense of your strong commitment to your family.
- Don’t be afraid to give voice to your values. This will help others know who you are and how to relate to you.
- Actively cultivate friends who share your basic values. Consider your best friend. Does this person share your value system?
- Partner with someone who has strong Futuristic talents. This person can energize you by painting a vivid picture of the direction in which your values will lead.
- Accept that the values of other people might differ from your own. Express your beliefs without being judgmental.

### Questions

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### Section III: Achievement

Look for signs of achievement as you read these real quotes from people who share your top five themes.

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.”

### Strategic sounds like this:

Liam C., manufacturing plant manager: “It seems as if I can always see the consequences before anyone else can. I have to say to people, ‘Lift up your eyes; look down the road a ways. Let’s talk about where we are going to be next year so that when we get to this time next year, we don’t have the same problems.’ It seems obvious to me, but some people are just too focused on this month’s numbers, and everything is driven by that.”

Vivian T., television producer: “I used to love logic problems when I was a kid — you know, the ones where ‘if A implies B, and B equals C, does A equal C?’ Still today, I am always playing out repercussions, seeing where things lead. I think it makes me a great interviewer. I know that nothing is an accident; every sign, every word, every tone of voice has significance. So I watch for these clues and play them out in my head, see where they lead, and then plan my questions to take advantage of what I have seen in my head.”

Simon T., human resources executive: “We really needed to take the union on at some stage, and I saw an opportunity — a very good issue to take them on. I could see that they were going in a direction that would lead them into all kinds of trouble if they continued following it. Lo and behold, they did continue following it, and when they arrived, there I was, ready and waiting. I suppose it just comes naturally to me to predict what someone else is going to do. And then when that person reacts, I can respond immediately because I have sat down and said, ‘Okay, if they do this, we’ll do this. If they do that, then we’ll do this other thing.’ It’s like when you tack in a sailboat. You head in one direction, but you jinx one way, then another, planning and reacting, planning and reacting.”

### 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.”

### Activator sounds like this:

Jane C., Benedictine nun: “When I was prioress in the 1970s, we were hit by the energy shortage, and costs skyrocketed. We had a hundred and forty acres, and I walked the acreage every day pondering what we should do about this energy shortage. Suddenly I decided that if we had that much land, we should be drilling our own gas well, and so we did. We spent one hundred thousand dollars to drill a gas well. If you have never drilled a gas well, you probably don’t realize what I didn’t realize: namely, that you have to spend seventy thousand dollars just to drill to see if you have any gas on your property at all. So they dug down with some kind of vibratory camera thing, and they told me that I had a gas pool. But they didn’t know how large the pool was, and they didn’t know if there was enough pressure to bring it up. ‘If you pay another thirty thousand dollars, we will try to release the well,’ they said. ‘If you don’t want us to, we’ll just cap the well, take your seventy thousand, and go home.’ So I gave them the final thirty thousand and, fortunately, up it came. That was twenty years ago, and it is still pumping.”

Jim L., entrepreneur: “Some people see my impatience as not wanting to listen to the traps, the potential roadblocks. What I keep repeating is, ‘I want to know when I am going to hit the wall, and I need you to tell me how much it is going to hurt. But if I choose to bump into the wall anyway, then don’t worry — you’ve done your job. I just had to experience it for myself.’”

**Belief sounds like this:**

Michael K., salesperson: “The vast majority of my nonworking time goes to my family and to the things we do in the community. I was on the countywide Boy Scouts board of directors. And when I was a Boy Scout, I was pack leader. When I was an Explorer, I was junior assistant leader for the Boy Scouts. I just like being with kids. I believe that’s where the future is. And I think you can do a whole lot worse with your time than investing it in the future.”

Lara M., college president: “My values are why I work so hard every day at my job. I put hours and hours into this job, and I don’t even care what I get paid. I just found out that I am the lowest paid college president in my state, and I don’t even care. I mean, I don’t do this for the money.”

Tracy D., airline executive: “If you are not doing something important, why bother? Getting up every day and working on ways to make flying safer seems important to me, purposeful. If I didn’t find this purpose in my job, I don’t know if I could work through all the challenges and frustrations that get in my way. I think I would get demoralized.”

## Questions

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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?