
Taylor Bookout

Strengths Insight and Action-Planning Guide

SURVEY COMPLETION DATE: 08-29-2016



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YOUR TOP 5 THEMES

1. Analytical
2. Learner
3. Achiever
4. Discipline
5. Focus

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

Analytical

SHARED THEME DESCRIPTION

People who are especially talented in the Analytical theme search for reasons and causes. They have the ability to think about all the factors that might affect a situation.

YOUR PERSONALIZED STRENGTHS INSIGHTS

What makes you stand out?

Chances are good that you sometimes reason through things carefully to arrive at a reasonable conclusion. Driven by your talents, you may figure out what sequence of events, decisions, problems, or factors created the current situation. You repeatedly find reasonable explanations for how and why things turned out the way they did. Instinctively, you may be an individual performer who occasionally pauses to evaluate challenges in your life. Perhaps you weigh the pros and cons. Perhaps you assess the facts to determine which ones are important. Perhaps you can identify superfluous — that is, extra or unnecessary — information and discard it. It's very likely that you occasionally enjoy devoting your mental energy to certain types of activities. Perhaps these tasks force you to rely on reason and rational thinking. By nature, you occasionally emphasize facts or point others in the direction of truth. You may wake up those who are deluded — that is, easily misled, deceived, or tricked. Perhaps your honest, direct, and plainspoken approach cuts through individuals' delusions so they can begin seeing specific things clearly. Maybe your matter-of-fact style helps a few people identify common ground. Now and then, consensus — that is, complete agreement — might occur.

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?

Learner

SHARED THEME DESCRIPTION

People who are especially talented in the Learner theme have a great desire to learn and want to continuously improve. In particular, the process of learning, rather than the outcome, excites them.

YOUR PERSONALIZED STRENGTHS INSIGHTS

What makes you stand out?

Instinctively, you may want to acquire additional knowledge or gain new skills. Why? Perhaps you are naturally curious. Now and then, you work alone to help yourself commit information to memory. You might have a solitary place where you can practice a particular art, craft, sport, or science. Chances are good that you might have extra energy to work hard when you are acquiring information to broaden your knowledge base. Perhaps you want to deepen your understanding of certain topics, opportunities, problems, solutions, situations, events, or people. By nature, you show some signs of wanting to acquire new knowledge or skills in particular areas of interest. Perhaps you rely on conversations with a few intelligent people to complement — that is, complete — what you have already gained through classes or reading. Because of your strengths, you might direct your mental and physical energy to required tasks, while optional tasks receive less attention. Under these circumstances, your ability to work or study for hours at a time may work to your advantage. Your biological makeup might determine when you are most alert, efficient, or productive. Driven by your talents, you might be a rational thinker. That is, you sometimes exhibit good judgment and exercise sound reasoning. These thought processes may serve you well when you set out to acquire true knowledge and/or gain skill. Perhaps you school yourself by reading, investigating, examining, experiencing, or receiving instruction in specific subjects.

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?

Achiever

SHARED THEME DESCRIPTION

People who are especially talented in the Achiever theme have a great deal of stamina and work hard. They take great satisfaction from being busy and productive.

YOUR PERSONALIZED STRENGTHS INSIGHTS

What makes you stand out?

Driven by your talents, you may approach your job or your studies with a no-nonsense, businesslike attitude. This partially explains why people think you have a strong work ethic. It's very likely that you sometimes expend energy helping people embrace their accomplishments or revel in their successes. Perhaps you acknowledge their ability to attain wealth, be elevated to celebrity status, maintain health, win honors, earn bonuses, reach goals, or gain power. Because of your strengths, you may be known for your sound work ethic. Perhaps your dependability and/or commitment to excel set you apart as a no-nonsense, trustworthy, and exceptionally mature individual. By nature, you might toil with a bit more intensity in the morning. Perhaps this awareness allows you to increase your productivity, improve the quality of your outcomes, enhance your efficiency, or better manage your priorities. Instinctively, you sometimes work industriously to finish your daily assignments. Perhaps you derive satisfaction from reaching goals individuals have set for you. Meeting their expectations for the day might be one of your top priorities.

QUESTIONS

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2. Out of all the talents in this insight, what would you like for others to see most in you?

Discipline

SHARED THEME DESCRIPTION

People who are especially talented in the Discipline theme enjoy routine and structure. Their world is best described by the order they create.

YOUR PERSONALIZED STRENGTHS INSIGHTS

What makes you stand out?

Chances are good that you rely on your own exacting standards and methodical routines to ensure things are done with careful attention to all aspects and details. This is especially true when you encounter obstacles. You often decide it is easier to deal with these difficulties on your own. This way you know for sure everything is done right. Driven by your talents, you periodically institute procedures and establish rules that help certain groups of people manage the daily, weekly, monthly, or annual chores that are part of any project. Perhaps you outline a detailed plan. You may work to make sure specific individuals understand it. Possibly these are two ways you maintain healthy relationships with friends who also are your coworkers, teammates, supervisors, peers, direct reports, or study partners. Instinctively, you thrive in settings where you can accomplish things. Of course, you have your own step-by-step way of performing repetitious tasks. As long as you can stick to your preferred plan of action, you usually enjoy handling the details and deadlines related to jobs, chores, projects, hobbies, assignments, or errands. By nature, you sometimes figure out what you need to upgrade, enhance, or do better. Perhaps you are eager to get started once you have established the importance of each task or activity. Maybe you prefer to concentrate your energy and time on one or two areas of opportunity. It's very likely that you occasionally strive to structure events, projects, presentations, or discussions. When a plan lacks sound reasoning, you may halt work to reorganize it. Perhaps you revise outlines until the steps are methodically sequenced. Maybe you eliminate unnecessary tasks in the process.

QUESTIONS

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2. Out of all the talents in this insight, what would you like for others to see most in you?

Focus

SHARED THEME DESCRIPTION

People who are especially talented in the Focus theme can take a direction, follow through, and make the corrections necessary to stay on track. They prioritize, then act.

YOUR PERSONALIZED STRENGTHS INSIGHTS

What makes you stand out?

Instinctively, you sometimes become a bit frustrated with people who have few clear goals. Perhaps these individuals remind you that ill-defined objectives seldom are realized. If this thought crosses your mind, you might decide to concentrate more of your mental or physical energy on reaching specific goals you have set for yourself. Driven by your talents, you may like participating in goal-planning meetings when you can suggest what needs to be perfected, completed, or done better. Perhaps you propose a few specific objectives. You hope your remedies upgrade final outcomes, change people's behavior, or replace outdated procedures. By nature, you may prefer to be an individual performer, especially when you can direct your mental or physical energies to tasks that intrigue you. Because of your strengths, you may work diligently to set weekly performance targets for yourself. Perhaps outlining each day's tasks enables you to ignore distractions so you can stay on schedule. Chances are good that you may be regarded by certain people as realistic or unsentimental. Perhaps there are times when you want to do a better job of expressing your own feelings or allowing others to voice some of theirs. When necessary, you might be the person who brings the conversation back to practical or factual matters.

QUESTIONS

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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

Analytical

IDEAS FOR ACTION:

Choose work in which you are paid to analyze data, find patterns, or organize ideas. For example, you might excel in marketing, financial, or medical research or in database management, editing, or risk management.

Whatever your role, identify credible sources on which you can rely. You are at your best when you have well-researched sources of information and numbers to support your logic. For example, determine the most helpful books, websites, or publications that can serve as references.

Your mind is constantly working and producing insightful analysis. Are others aware of that? Find the best way of expressing your thoughts: writing, one-on-one conversations, group discussions, perhaps lectures or presentations. Put value to your thoughts by communicating them.

Make sure that your accumulation and analysis of information always leads to its application and implementation. If you don't do this naturally, find a partner who pushes you from theory to practice, from thinking to doing. This person will help ensure that your analysis doesn't turn into paralysis.

Take an academic course that will expand your Analytical talents. Specifically, study people whose logic you admire.

Volunteer your Analytical talents. You can be particularly helpful to those who are struggling to organize large quantities of data or having a hard time bringing structure to their ideas.

Partner with someone with strong Activator talents. This person's impatience will move you more quickly through the analytical phase into the action phase.

You may remain skeptical until you see solid proof. Your skepticism ensures validity, but others may take it personally. Help others realize that your skepticism is primarily about data, not people.

Look for patterns in data. See if you can discern a motif, precedent, or relationship in scores or numbers. By connecting the dots in the data and inferring a causal link, you may be able to help others see these patterns.

Help others understand that your analytical approach will often require data and other information to logically back up new ideas that they might suggest.

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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Learner

IDEAS FOR ACTION:

Refine how you learn. For example, you might learn best by teaching; if so, seek out opportunities to present to others. You might learn best through quiet reflection; if so, find this quiet time.

Develop ways to track the progress of your learning. If there are distinct levels or stages of learning within a discipline or skill, take a moment to celebrate your progression from one level to the next. If no such levels exist, create them for yourself (e.g., reading five books on the subject or making three presentations on the subject).

Be a catalyst for change. Others might be intimidated by new rules, new skills, or new circumstances. Your willingness to soak up this newness can calm their fears and spur them to action. Take this responsibility seriously.

Seek roles that require some form of technical competence. You will enjoy the process of acquiring and maintaining this expertise.

As far as possible, shift your career toward a field with constantly changing technologies or regulations. You will be energized by the challenge of keeping up.

Because you are not threatened by unfamiliar information, you might excel in a consulting role (either internal or external) in which you are paid to go into new situations and pick up new competencies or languages quickly.

Research supports the link between learning and performance. When people have the opportunity to learn and grow, they are more productive and loyal. Look for ways to measure the degree to which you and others feel that your learning needs are being met, to create individualized learning milestones, and to reward achievements in learning.

At work, take advantage of programs that subsidize your learning. Your organization may be willing to pay for part or all of your instructional coursework or for certifications. Ask your manager for information about scholarships and other educational opportunities.

Honor your desire to learn. Take advantage of adult educational opportunities in your community. Discipline yourself to sign up for at least one new academic or adult learning course each year.

Time disappears and your attention intensifies when you are immersed in studying or learning. Allow yourself to “follow the trail” by scheduling learning sessions during periods of time that will not be interrupted by pressing engagements.

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.

Achiever

IDEAS FOR ACTION:

Select jobs that allow you to have the leeway to work as hard as you want and in which you are encouraged to measure your own productivity. You will feel challenged and alive in these environments.

As an achiever, you relish the feeling of being busy, yet you also need to know when you are “done.” Attach timelines and measurement to goals so that effort leads to defined progress and tangible outcomes.

Remember to build celebration and recognition into your life. Achievers tend to move on to the next challenge without acknowledging their successes. Counter this impulse by creating regular opportunities to enjoy your progress and accomplishments.

Your drive for action might cause you to find meetings a bit boring. If that’s the case, appeal to your Achiever talents by learning the objectives of each meeting ahead of time and by taking notes about progress toward those objectives during the meeting. You can help ensure that meetings are productive and efficient.

Continue your education by attaining certifications in your area or specialty in addition to attending conferences and other programs. This will give you even more goals to achieve and will push your existing boundaries of accomplishment.

You do not require much motivation from others. Take advantage of your self-motivation by setting challenging goals. Set a more demanding goal every time you finish a project.

Partner with other hard workers. Share your goals with them so they can help you to get more done.

Count personal achievements in your scoring “system.” This will help you direct your Achiever talents toward family and friends as well as toward work.

More work excites you. The prospect of what lies ahead is infinitely more motivating than what has been completed. Launch initiatives and new projects. Your seemingly endless reserve of energy will create enthusiasm and momentum.

Make sure that in your eagerness to do more at work, you do not skimp on quality. Create measurable outcome standards to guarantee that increased productivity is matched by enhanced quality.

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.

Discipline

IDEAS FOR ACTION:

Don't hesitate to check as often as necessary to ensure that things are right. You feel an urge to do it anyway, and soon others will come to expect it from you.

Accept that mistakes might depress you. Precision is a core part of who you are; however, you must find ways to move through these moments of annoyance to prevent becoming discouraged.

Recognize that others may not be as disciplined as you are. More than likely, their clumsy process will frustrate you, so try to look beyond it, and focus on their results, not on their process.

Exactitude is your forté; you enjoy poring over details. Seek opportunities to peruse contracts, important communications, or financial documents for errors. You can save yourself and others from making costly mistakes and looking foolish.

Increasing efficiency is one of your hallmarks. You are a perfectionist at heart. Discover situations in which time or money is being wasted because of inefficiency, and create systems or procedures to improve efficiency.

You not only create order, you probably also crave it in the form of a well-organized space. To

completely free your Discipline talents, invest in furniture and organization systems that enable you to have “a place for everything and everything in its place.”

Timelines motivate you. When you have a task to complete, you like to know the deadline so you can plan your schedule accordingly. Apply your Discipline talents by outlining the step-by-step plan you will use. Others will appreciate your cues because they will help keep everyone “on task.”

Others may confuse your Discipline talents with rigidity. Help them understand that your discipline helps you pack more effectiveness into a day — often because you prioritize your time. When working with others who are not as disciplined, ask them to clarify deadlines so you can adjust your workload to accommodate their requests.

Seek out roles and responsibilities that have structure.

Create routines that require you to systematically follow through. Over time, people will come to appreciate this kind of predictability.

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.

Focus

IDEAS FOR ACTION:

When you set goals, discipline yourself to include timelines and measurements. These will provide regular proof that you are indeed making progress.

Seek roles in which you can function independently. With your dominant Focus talents, you will be able to stay on track with little supervision.

Your greatest worth as a team member might be helping others set goals. At the end of meetings, take responsibility for summarizing what was decided, for defining when these decisions will be acted on, and for setting a date when the group will reconvene.

Others will think, act, and talk less efficiently than you do. Pay attention. Sometimes their “detours” will lead to discoveries and delights.

Stretch your goal setting beyond work. If you find yourself becoming too focused on work goals, set goals for your personal life. They will give weight to your personal priorities and thereby help create balance in your life.

Hours can disappear when you are intent on a task; you lose track of time. Make sure that all of your objectives are met and all of your priorities are followed by scheduling your efforts and sticking to that schedule.

You function best when you can concentrate on a few well-defined initiatives and demands. Give yourself permission to reject projects or tasks that do not align with your overall mission. This will help you concentrate your efforts on your most important priorities — and will help others appreciate your need for focus.

Take the time to write down your aspirations, and refer to them often. You will feel more in control of your life.

At work, be sure to tell your manager your mid-term and short-term goals. This might well give your manager the confidence to give you the room you need.

Make sure that the focus points you set for yourself take into consideration both quantity and quality. The integrity of your objectives will ensure that the application of your Focus talents leads to solid and long-lasting success.

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.

ANALYTICAL SOUNDS LIKE THIS:

Jose G., school system administrator: “I have an innate ability to see structures, formats, and patterns before they exist. For instance, when people are talking about writing a grant proposal, while I’m listening to them, my brain instinctively processes the type of grants that are available and how the discussion fits into the eligibility, right down to the format of how the information can fit on the grant form in a clear and convincing way.”

Jack T., human resources executive: “If I make a claim, I need to know that I can back it up with facts and logical thinking. For example, if someone says that our company is not paying as much as other companies, I always ask, ‘Why do you say that?’ If they say, ‘Well, I saw an ad in the paper that offers graduates in mechanical engineering five grand more than we are paying,’ I’ll reply by asking, ‘But where are these graduates going to work? Is their salary based on geography? What types of companies are they going for? Are they manufacturing companies like ours? And how many people are in their sample? Is it three people, and one of them got a really good deal, thus driving the overall average up?’ There are many questions I need to ask to ensure that their claim is indeed a fact and not based on one misleading data point.”

Leslie J., school principal: “Many times, there are inconsistencies in the performance of the same group of students from one year to the next. It’s the same group of kids, but their scores are different year to year. How can this be? Which building are the kids in? How many of the kids have been enrolled for a full academic year? Which teachers were they assigned to, and what teaching styles were used by those teachers? I just love asking questions like these to understand what is truly happening.”

LEARNER SOUNDS LIKE THIS:

Annie M., managing editor: “I get antsy when I am not learning something. Last year, although I was enjoying my work, I didn’t feel as though I was learning enough. So I took up tap dancing. It sounds strange, doesn’t it? I know I am never going to perform or anything, but I enjoy focusing on the technical skill of tapping, getting a little better each week, and moving up from the beginners’ class to the intermediate class. That was a kick.”

Miles A., operations manager: “When I was seven years old, my teachers would tell my parents, ‘Miles isn’t the most intelligent boy in the school, but he’s a sponge for learning, and he’ll probably go

really far because he will push himself and continually be grasping new things.’ Right now, I am just starting a course in business-travel Spanish. I know it is probably too ambitious to think I could learn conversational Spanish and become totally proficient in that language, but I at least want to be able to travel there and know the language.”

Tim S., coach for executives: “One of my clients is so inquisitive that it drives him crazy because he can’t do everything he wants to. I’m different. I am not curious in that broad sense. I prefer to go into greater depth with things so that I can become competent in them and then use them at work. For example, recently one of my clients wanted me to travel with him to Nice, France, for a business engagement. So I started reading up on the region, buying books, and checking the Internet. It was all interesting and I enjoyed the study, but I wouldn’t have done any of it if I wasn’t going to be traveling there for work.”

ACHIEVER SOUNDS LIKE THIS:

Melanie K., ER nurse: “I have to rack up points every day to feel successful. Today I’ve been here only half an hour, but I’ve probably racked up thirty points already. I ordered equipment for the ER, I had equipment repaired, I had a meeting with my charge nurse, and I brainstormed with my secretary about improving our computerized logbook. So on my list of ninety things, I have thirty done already. I’m feeling pretty good about myself right now.”

Ted S., salesperson: “Last year I was salesperson of the year out of my company’s three hundred salespeople. It felt good for a day, but sure enough, later that week, it was as if it never happened. I was back at zero again. Sometimes I wish I wasn’t an achiever because it can lead me away from a balanced life and toward obsession. I used to think I could change myself, but now I know I am just wired this way. This theme is truly a double-edged sword. It helps me achieve my goals, but on the other hand, I wish I could just turn it off and on at will. But, hey, I can’t. I can manage it and avoid work obsession by focusing on achieving in all parts of my life, not just work.”

Sara L., writer: “This theme is a weird one. First, it’s good because you live in pursuit of the perpetual challenge. But in the second place, you never feel as though you’ve reached your goal. It can keep you running uphill at seventy miles an hour for your whole life. You never rest because there’s always more to do. But, on balance, I think I would rather have it than not. I call it my ‘divine restlessness,’ and if it makes me feel as if I owe the present everything I have, then so be it. I can live with that.”

DISCIPLINE SOUNDS LIKE THIS:

Les T., hospitality manager: “The turning point in my career was attending one of those time-management courses some years back. I was always disciplined, but the power grew when I learned how to use that discipline in an organized process every day. This little mobile device means that I call my mom every Sunday rather than letting months go by without calling. It means I take my wife out for

dinner every week without her asking. It means that my employees know that if I say I need to see something on Monday, I will be calling on Monday if I haven't seen it. This mobile device is so much a part of my life that I have lengthened all of my pants pockets so that it fits right there on my hip."

Troy T., sales executive: "My filing system may not look that pretty, but it is very efficient. I write everything by hand because I know that no customer is going to see these files, so why waste time making them look pretty? My whole life as a salesperson is based on deadlines and follow-up. In my system, I keep track of everything so that I take responsibility not only for my deadlines and follow-up but for all of my customers' and colleagues' as well. If they haven't gotten back to me by the time they promised, they're going to receive an e-mail from me. In fact, I heard from one the other day who said, 'I may as well get back to you because I know you're going to call me if you haven't heard from me.'"

Diedre S., office manager: "I hate wasting time, so I make lists — long lists that keep me on track. Today my list has ninety items on it, and I will get through ninety-five percent of them. And that's discipline because I don't let anybody waste my time. I am not rude, but I can let you know in a very tactful, humorous way that your time is up."

FOCUS SOUNDS LIKE THIS:

Nick H., computer executive: "It is very important to me to be efficient. I'm the sort of guy who plays a round of golf in two and a half hours. When I was at Electronic Data Systems, I worked out a set list of questions so that I could conduct a review of each division in 15 minutes. The founder, Ross Perot, called me 'The Dentist' because I would schedule a whole day of these in-and-out, fifteen-minute meetings."

Brad F., sales executive: "I am always sorting priorities, trying to figure out the most efficient route toward the goal so that there is very little dead time, very little wasted motion. For example, I will get multiple calls from customers who need me to call the service department for them, and rather than taking each one of these calls as they come and interrupting the priorities of the day, I group them together into one call at the end of the day and get it done."

Mike L., administrator: "People are amazed how I put things into perspective and stay on track. When people around the district are stuck on issues and caught on contrived barriers, I am able to pole-vault over them, reestablish the focus, and keep things moving."

Doriane L., homemaker: "I am just the kind of person who likes to get to the point — in conversations, at work, and even when I am shopping with my husband. He likes to try on lots of things and has a good time doing it, whereas I try one thing on, and if I like it and it is not horribly priced, I buy it. I'm a surgical shopper."

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?