

# STRENGTHSFINDER®

## START WITH TALENT; FINISH WITH STRENGTH

A Brief Overview of Talent Discovery and Strengths Development

**Strength.** Sounds good, doesn't it?

Who wouldn't want strength?

As you might expect, strength is the desired outcome of strengths development. But exactly what *is* a strength? What are we striving toward?

When you see a strength in action, you see a person's ability to consistently provide near-perfect performance in a specific activity.

When you see him or her perform that activity, you think, "She makes it look so easy!" or "He's a natural!"

How can that be? How can they so consistently perform with such excellence? The answer is simple: It *is* easy for her. He *is* a natural.

Each is performing at such a high level simply by building upon how he or she most naturally thinks, feels, and behaves: their greatest **talents**.

As unique individuals, we each have our own special ways of successfully approaching the people and events in our lives. And our greatest talents are always there for us. We instinctively use them in almost any situation.

*An inner drive to compete,*

*sensitivity to the needs of others,*

*an inclination to notice patterns, and*

*the tendency to be outgoing at social gatherings are good examples of talents.*

For some of us, our talents make us great Relators or Arrangers. Others have tremendous talents in Adaptability or Belief. Look closely at your friends, family, and coworkers. You will see exceptional Learners, Activators, and Includers, and amazing talents in Ideation, Responsibility, and Developer.

Within our natural selves, we each hold extraordinary potential.

Of course, the first step toward fulfilling that potential is to discover our greatest talents. That's where the Clifton StrengthsFinder comes in.

You've probably already sensed that this assessment is not just another personality test. That difference is certainly no accident. In fact, the idea behind the assessment is quite contrary to the focus-on-negatives approach that has long prevailed in our society.

In the early 1950s, Donald O. Clifton, who would go on to be named the "Father of Strengths Psychology," noticed a major problem: The field of psychology was based almost entirely on the study of *what is wrong* with people. He wondered if it would be more important to study *what is right* with people.

## YOUR TOP 5

- Activator
- Strategic
- Connectedness
- Individualization
- Achiever

See page 8 for full theme descriptions

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So, over the next five decades, Don and his colleagues at The Gallup Organization took a very close look at the talents of highly successful people, focusing on the positive instead of the negative. Millions of in-depth interviews were conducted to determine the most natural thoughts, feelings, and behaviors of "the best of the best."

They quickly discovered that our talents do more than make us unique individuals. When we follow our talents - the ways in which we naturally think, feel, and behave - they also serve as our best opportunities for true excellence.

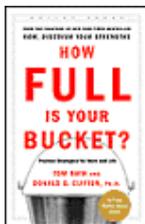
To help you discover your greatest talents and build toward strengths, Don and his colleagues created the Clifton StrengthsFinder.

During your assessment, you gave top-of-mind responses to a wide variety of paired statements. Those instantaneous responses are valuable information. Why? Because they are clues to your talents in 34 areas directly connected to success in any role, whether at work, at home, or in the community.

The Clifton StrengthsFinder has measured your talents in those 34 areas, or "themes." Now, to point you in the right direction, it presents you with a report of the five areas in which your greatest talents are found. And to help you further discover your talents, it provides full descriptions of those areas, along with "sounds likes," which are examples of what people with talents similar to yours might say. You will find your personal top five report and brief descriptions of the 34 talent areas measured by the assessment in the pages following this introduction.

Of course, your "top five" are just a starting point as you move from the potential of talent to the excellence of strength in action. Along the way, you can find many opportunities for discovery and development in your relationships with family members, friends, and colleagues.

If want to share that experience with the most important people in your life, or if you simply want to learn more, consider the latest book from the coauthor of *Now, Discover Your Strengths*. The book, **How Full Is Your Bucket?** reveals how even the briefest interactions affect your relationships, productivity, health, and longevity, and it includes **a one-time-use Clifton StrengthsFinder ID code.**



**NEW: How Full is Your Bucket?**

*Positive Strategies for Work and Life*  
(Gallup Press, 2004)

List price: \$19.95

**Other books that include a StrengthsFinder ID code:**

**Discover Your Sales Strengths:** *How the World's Greatest Salespeople Develop Winning Careers*  
(Warner Books, 2003)

List price: \$26.95

**Living Your Strengths:** *Discover Your God-Given Talents, and Inspire Your Community*  
(Gallup Press, 2003)

List price: \$24.95

**Now, Discover Your Strengths:** *The Revolutionary Program That Shows You How to Develop Your Unique Talents and Strengths - and Those of the People You Manage*  
(Free Press, 2001)

List price: \$26.00

**StrengthsQuest:** *Discover and Develop Your Strengths in Academics, Career, and Beyond*  
(Gallup Press, 2002)

List price: \$35.00

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The Gallup Organization also offers advanced development programs that provide individuals and organizations the chance to explore their entire sequences of the 34 areas of talent. In addition to helping you develop strengths within your top 10 to 15 areas, these programs can help you learn to manage your areas of lesser talent - normally the last 2 to 5 in your sequence of 34. These opportunities are available in a wide range of options:

The **Great Manager Program** teaches managers and executives strategies based on the Four Keys to Great Management and builds on the concepts presented in the best-selling book, *First, Break All the Rules* (Simon & Schuster, 1999).

**Executive performance coaching** helps senior leaders and managers increase their effectiveness - and their organization's effectiveness.

**Building the Strengths-Based Organization** helps executives and managers create strategies to develop and sustain a high-performance culture. This course expands on the concepts presented in the best-selling book, *Now, Discover Your Strengths* (Free Press 2001).

**Integrated, organization-wide programs** provide employees with the tools, education, and coaching needed to develop a strengths-based culture.

**Certification programs** teach individuals to serve as strengths consultants in their organizations.

Studies have shown that organizations that participate in these programs can dramatically increase employee engagement, productivity, and profitability. Several Fortune 500 companies now pride themselves on being "strengths-based organizations" built upon the natural talents of each employee. The aforementioned development programs have been used in more than 48 countries and across a wide variety of industries.

Each learning opportunity is designed to help you find new ways to improve your individual performance and your organization's financial outcome measures.

For more information on these opportunities, visit the Gallup University area at [www.gallup.com](http://www.gallup.com).

## Top Five Report for John G Swart (JGSWART)

### Activator

"When can we start?" This is a recurring question in your life. You are impatient for action. You may concede that analysis has its uses or that debate and discussion can occasionally yield some valuable insights, but deep down you know that only action is real. Only action can make things happen. Only action leads to performance. Once a decision is made, you cannot not act. Others may worry that "there are still some things we don't know," but this doesn't seem to slow you. If the decision has been made to go across town, you know that the fastest way to get there is to go stoplight to stoplight. You are not going to sit around waiting until all the lights have turned green. Besides, in your view, action and thinking are not opposites. In fact, guided by your Activator theme, you believe that action is the best device for learning. You make a decision, you take action, you look at the result, and you learn. This learning informs your next action and your next. How can you grow if you have nothing to react to? Well, you believe you can't. You must put yourself out there. You must take the next step. It is the only way to keep your thinking fresh and informed. The bottom line is this: You know you will be judged not by what you say, not by what you think, but by what you get done. This does not frighten you. It pleases you.

### 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 140 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 \$100,000 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 \$70,000 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 \$30,000, we will try to release the well,' they said. 'If you don't want us to, we'll just cap the well, take your \$70,000, and go home.' So I gave them the final \$30,000 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.' "

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## Strategic

The Strategic theme enables you to sort through the clutter and find the best route. It is not a skill that can be taught. It is a distinct way of thinking, a special perspective on the world at large. This perspective allows you to see patterns where others simply see complexity. Mindful of these patterns, you play out alternative scenarios, always asking, "What if this happened? Okay, well what if this happened?" This recurring question helps you see around the next corner. There you can evaluate accurately the potential obstacles. Guided by where you see each path leading, you start to make selections. You discard the paths that lead nowhere. You discard the paths that lead straight into resistance. You discard the paths that lead into a fog of confusion. You cull and make selections until you arrive at the chosen path-your strategy. Armed with your strategy, you strike forward. This is your Strategic theme at work: "What if?" Select. Strike.

### 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 down it. Lo and behold, they did continue down 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 jink one way, then another, planning and reacting, planning and reacting."

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## Connectedness

Things happen for a reason. You are sure of it. You are sure of it because in your soul you know that we are all connected. Yes, we are individuals, responsible for our own judgments and in possession of our own free will, but nonetheless we are part of something larger. Some may call it the collective unconscious. Others may label it spirit or life force. But whatever your word of choice, you gain confidence from knowing that we are not isolated from one another or from the earth and the life on it. This feeling of Connectedness implies certain responsibilities. If we are all part of a larger picture, then we must not harm others because we will be harming ourselves. We must not exploit because we will be exploiting ourselves. Your awareness of these responsibilities creates your value system. You are considerate, caring, and accepting. Certain of the unity of humankind, you are a bridge builder for people of different cultures. Sensitive to the invisible hand, you can give others comfort that there is a purpose beyond our humdrum lives. The exact articles of your faith will depend on your upbringing and your culture, but your faith is strong. It sustains you and your close friends in the face of life's mysteries.

### Connectedness Sounds like this:

Mandy M., *homemaker*: "Humility is the essence of Connectedness. You have to know who you are and who you aren't. I have a piece of the wisdom. I don't have much of it, but what I do have is real. This isn't grandiosity. This is real humility. You have confidence in your gifts, real confidence, but you know you don't have all the answers. You start to feel connected to others because you know they have wisdom that you don't. You can't feel connected if you think you have everything."

Rose T., *psychologist*: "Sometimes I just look at my bowl of cereal in the morning and think about those hundreds of people who were involved in bringing me my bowl of cereal: the farmers in the field; the biochemists who made the pesticides; the warehouse workers at the food preparation plants; even the marketers who somehow persuaded me to buy this box of cereal and not a different one sitting next to it on a shelf. I know it sounds strange, but I give thanks to these people, and just doing that makes me feel more involved with life, more connected to things, less alone."

Chuck M., *teacher*: "In life I tend to be very black and white about things, but when it comes to understanding the mysteries of life, for some reason I am much more open. I have a big interest in learning about all different religions. I am reading a book right now that talks about Judaism versus Christianity versus the religion of the Canaanites. Buddhism, Greek mythology-it's really interesting how all of these tie together in some way."

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## Individualization

Your Individualization theme leads you to be intrigued by the unique qualities of each person. You are impatient with generalizations or "types" because you don't want to obscure what is special and distinct about each person. Instead, you focus on the differences between individuals. You instinctively observe each person's style, each person's motivation, how each thinks, and how each builds relationships. You hear the one-of-a-kind stories in each person's life. This theme explains why you pick your friends just the right birthday gift, why you know that one person prefers praise in public and another detests it, and why you tailor your teaching style to accommodate one person's need to be shown and another's desire to "figure it out as I go." Because you are such a keen observer of other people's strengths, you can draw out the best in each person. This Individualization theme also helps you build productive teams. While some search around for the perfect team "structure" or "process," you know instinctively that the secret to great teams is casting by individual strengths so that everyone can do a lot of what they do well.

### Individualization Sounds like this:

Les T., *hospitality manager*: "Carl is one of our best performers, but he still has to see me every week. He just wants that little encouragement and checking in, and he gets fired up a little bit after that meeting. Whereas Greg doesn't like to meet very often, so there's no need for me to bother him. And when we do meet, it's really for me, not for him."

Marsha D., *publishing executive*: "Sometimes I would walk out of my office and-you know how cartoon characters have those balloons over their head?-I would see these little balloons over everyone's head telling me what was in their mind. It sounds weird, doesn't it? But it happens all the time."

Giles G., *sales manager*: "I'm fairly new to this role, but I can remember a particular meeting very early on when we got stuck on one subject and kept going around and around. I got frustrated and suddenly thought, 'These people have never seen me get angry. Let me throw this out and see how each one reacts to it.' So I got angry, and it was interesting to see how certain people accepted it, some took it as a challenge, and others went into a big shell. Each one's reactions told me something useful about them, something I could use moving forward."

Andrea H., *interior designer*: "When you ask people what their style is, they find it hard to describe, so I just ask them, 'What is your favorite spot in the house?' And when I ask that, their faces light up, and they know just where to take me. From that one spot I can begin to piece together the kind of people they are and what their style is."

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## Achiever

Your Achiever theme helps explain your drive. Achiever describes a constant need for achievement. You feel as if every day starts at zero. By the end of the day you must achieve something tangible in order to feel good about yourself. And by "every day" you mean every single day—workdays, weekends, vacations. No matter how much you may feel you deserve a day of rest, if the day passes without some form of achievement, no matter how small, you will feel dissatisfied. You have an internal fire burning inside you. It pushes you to do more, to achieve more. After each accomplishment is reached, the fire dwindles for a moment, but very soon it rekindles itself, forcing you toward the next accomplishment. Your relentless need for achievement might not be logical. It might not even be focused. But it will always be with you. As an Achiever you must learn to live with this whisper of discontent. It does have its benefits. It brings you the energy you need to work long hours without burning out. It is the jolt you can always count on to get you started on new tasks, new challenges. It is the power supply that causes you to set the pace and define the levels of productivity for your work group. It is the theme that keeps you moving.

### 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 30 points already. I ordered equipment for the ER, I had equipment repaired, I had a meeting with my charge nurse, I brainstormed with my secretary about improving our computerized logbook. So on my list of 90 things I have 30 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 because it can lead me away from a balanced life 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. But 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."

## Brief Descriptions of the 34 Themes of Talent Measured by the Clifton StrengthsFinder

### **Achiever**

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

### **Activator**

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

### **Adaptability**

People strong 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.

### **Analytical**

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

### **Arranger**

People strong in the Arranger theme can organize, but they also have a flexibility that complements this ability. They like to figure out how all of the pieces and resources can be arranged for maximum productivity.

### **Belief**

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

### **Command**

People strong in the Command theme have presence. They can take control of a situation and make decisions.

### **Communication**

People strong in the Communication theme generally find it easy to put their thoughts into words. They are good conversationalists and presenters.

### **Competition**

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

### **Connectedness**

People strong in the Connectedness theme have faith in the links between all things. They believe there are few coincidences and that almost every event has a reason.

### **Consistency**

People strong in the Consistency theme are keenly aware of the need to treat people the same. They try to treat everyone in the world with consistency by setting up clear rules and adhering to them.

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## **Context**

People strong in the Context theme enjoy thinking about the past. They understand the present by researching its history.

## **Deliberative**

People strong in the Deliberative theme are best described by the serious care they take in making decisions or choices. They anticipate the obstacles.

## **Developer**

People strong in the Developer theme recognize and cultivate the potential in others. They spot the signs of each small improvement and derive satisfaction from these improvements.

## **Discipline**

People strong in the Discipline theme enjoy routine and structure. Their world is best described by the order they create.

## **Empathy**

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

## **Focus**

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

## **Futuristic**

People strong in the Futuristic theme are inspired by the future and what could be. They inspire others with their visions of the future.

## **Harmony**

People strong in the Harmony theme look for consensus. They don't enjoy conflict; rather, they seek areas of agreement.

## **Ideation**

People strong in the Ideation theme are fascinated by ideas. They are able to find connections between seemingly disparate phenomena.

## **Includer**

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

## **Individualization**

People strong in the Individualization theme are intrigued with the unique qualities of each person. They have a gift for figuring out how people who are different can work together productively.

## **Input**

People strong in the Input theme have a craving to know more. Often they like to collect and archive all kinds of information.

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## **Intellection**

People strong in the Intellection theme are characterized by their intellectual activity. They are introspective and appreciate intellectual discussions.

## **Learner**

People strong 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.

## **Maximizer**

People strong 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.

## **Positivity**

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

## **Relator**

People who are strong in the Relator theme enjoy close relationships with others. They find deep satisfaction in working hard with friends to achieve a goal.

## **Responsibility**

People strong in the Responsibility theme take psychological ownership of what they say they will do. They are committed to stable values such as honesty and loyalty.

## **Restorative**

People strong in the Restorative theme are adept at dealing with problems. They are good at figuring out what is wrong and resolving it.

## **Self-Assurance**

People strong 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.

## **Significance**

People strong in the Significance theme want to be very important in the eyes of others. They are independent and want to be recognized.

## **Strategic**

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

## **Woo**

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