

Career Kickstarter

WEEK 2



Amazing if



Welcome back. Hopefully you've spent some time reflecting over the last week about the things that make you really happy at work. This is at the core of making better career decisions over the long run and not being swayed by short-term shiny objects!

This week, we're moving onto your strengths and focusing on getting more awareness of the things that you are great at.

We've trained thousands of people on Amazing If courses and one thing that we repeatedly see is people struggling to articulate what they are great at. There are a few reasons for this; some people haven't really considered it before, some people are too modest to articulate what they do really well and some people can't connect what they do to how it creates a positive impact for others. The result of all of this is that people don't know and don't talk confidently about the things they are great at and as a result, they get fewer opportunities to use those strengths in their job and this has a big impact on their career.

Gallup, a global consulting company, conducted a research study which showed people who use their strengths every day are three times *more likely to report having an excellent quality of life, six times more likely to be engaged at work, 8% more productive and 15% less likely to quit their jobs.*¹

This week, we're going to start the process of working out your strengths by using our 'Strengths Seeker' tool, then we'll use your thoughts about what you're not so good at in our 'Weakness Converter' exercise. We'll pull these insights together in our 'Impact Translator', which will help you to think through how you start meaningful talking about the things you're best at with people at work.

As ever in our Toolkits, we finish-up with a Reflect and Action Plan, designed to help you focus in on the actions that are most meaningful to you and your career right now and we'll share 3 resources which we think will help you learn even more about strengths beyond the Career Kickstarter programme.

Right, let's get started!

Helen & Sarah



¹ <https://www.gallup.com/workplace/236561/employees-strengths-outperform-don.aspx>

Strengths Seeker – Part 1

In this exercise, we're reflecting on when you've done your best work over the last year and what talents, behaviours and skills you were using to make it happen.

First, reflect on when you've done your best work in the last week, the last month and the last year.

Then, write down what strengths you were using to make it happen. Think about **behaviours** you were using, any areas of **knowledge** or **expertise** that you utilised or **talents** that come naturally to you.

Best Work
LAST WEEK

Best Work
LAST MONTH

Best Work
THIS YEAR

What skills or behaviours did you use?

What skills or behaviours did you use?

What skills or behaviours did you use?

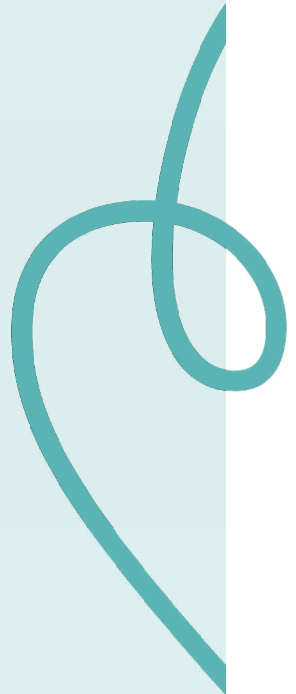
Strengths Seeker – Part 2

In this exercise, we're reflecting on when you've done your best work over the last year and what talents, behaviours and skills you were using to make it happen.

Finally, look across the different words you have written. Can you see any consistent themes that might be showing up repeatedly when you are at your best? These are great clues to help spot your Super Strengths.

Write down any consistent themes you have spotted here:

YOUR SUPER STRENGTHS



Weakness Converter

Sometimes, in working out what we are great at, it can be easier to start with the things we are not so good at. In this exercise, we'll use your thoughts about your 'weaknesses' and think about the hidden strengths they can reveal.

INSTRUCTIONS

Use the worksheet on the next page to note down 3 things you think you're not so good at.

Then, for each of the things you have written down, think about what the opposite might be.

EXAMPLES

If you're not great at analytics maybe it's because you're more creative.

Or, if you're not good at presenting to large groups of people, maybe you're better in 121 conversations

FEELING STUCK?

Sometimes, these things aren't always direct opposites. For example, Helen sometimes struggles to listen effectively because she starts to come up with ideas to help people before they have finished speaking! In this example, Helen's weakness would be listening, but the hidden strengths might be 'ideas', 'helping people' or 'solving problems'.

Some people find the conversion process a bit tricky, so we've listed some of the most common ones we've seen to help you.

Weakness

Strength

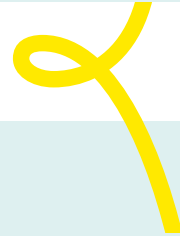
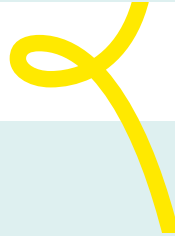
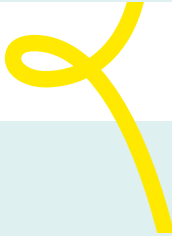
Creativity	→	Logic
Attention to detail	→	Big Picture Thinking
Conflict	→	Collaboration
Presenting	→	Listening
Confidence	→	Modesty
Saying 'yes' to everything	→	Enthusiasm
Asking for Help	→	Working Independently

Weakness Converter

WORKSHEET

WEAKNESS

STRENGTH



Impact Translator

Knowing what you're great at is only part of being your best at work. We also need to make sure other people know that to enable them to connect you with opportunities to use that strength more.

This means you need to talk clearly and confidently about what you do well and how it creates value for your manager, your team or your company. We need to get to the 'so what'. If we don't connect what you're great at to how it adds value, there is a risk that people don't see the benefit enough to help you to use that strength more.

In order to get to this insight, start with four of the strengths you identified in the previous exercises and write them on the left below.

Next, for each strength, think about how this creates value in the context of the job you're in right now. Or if you're between jobs, think about your last role.

How did this strength make a positive difference?

The hardest part comes next.

Practice talking about your strengths and your impact out loud.

For example "One of my strengths is starting new projects, this is valuable because I can take a very early idea and develop it quickly into a plan so that we can move forward quickly and respond to customer trends before our competitors."

STRENGTH	VALUE
STRENGTH	VALUE
STRENGTH	VALUE
STRENGTH	VALUE

As awkward as it might feel, practicing saying it will increase your confidence and help you to find a more natural way of talking about what you're great at and why it matters.

The more confident you get, the more you'll end up talking about it, which is exactly where we want to get you to.

Reflect /Action Plan

What would you like to spend more time on?

What action am I going to take before next week's course?

Resources

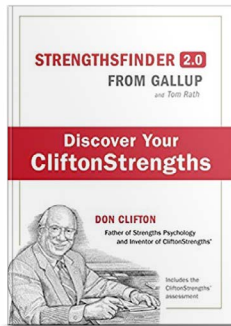
If you'd like to spend more time thinking about what makes you happy at work, here are some things you might like to explore.



WATCH

'Want to bring out the best in people? Start with strengths'

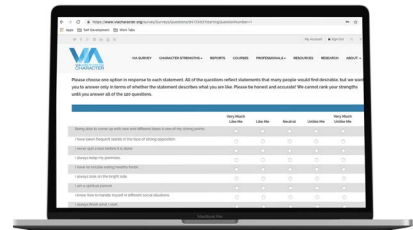
TED Talk, Chris Wejr



READ

'Strengths Finder 2.0: A New and Upgraded Edition of the Online Test from Gallup's Now Discover Your Strengths'

Don Clifton



ENGAGE

Character Strengths Survey

VIA Institute on Character

