

Discover Your Strengths

As an appendix to the Article “*Finding your sweet spot – discovering your strengths*”, the following are a few ways you may want to explore further to help identify your strengths. Identifying your strengths and being aware of who we truly are and how we are unique, is a significant way that contributes to improved performance as well as success in our careers.

In addition to many assessments such as StrengthsFinder or StandOut by Marcus Buckingham, VIA Strengths by Dr. Martin Seligman, and the Core Values Index by Taylor Protocols, the following is a way in which you can discover the awareness of your strengths for yourself.

- 1. What was your Peak Performance/experience?** Think back to a time when you were at your best. What were the circumstances when you were operating most powerfully and successfully and felt good about your contribution? What did you do? What strengths did you exhibit? What characteristics did you draw upon? What actions, behaviours, feelings attitudes and strengths did you use? Write a list of key words and phrases.
- 2. Think of a time when you tackled an exhilarating challenge.** What strengths did you draw upon? NOTE: you may come up with the same list as in #1 above, and that’s fine, write down the list.
- 3. What comes easily and naturally to you?** What strengths do you enjoy developing and refining and what seems natural? Add this to your list.
- 4. What do you do consistently?** What role and task do you consistently seem attracted to no matter what the environment or context? What do you end up doing no matter where you start? What does this tell you about your strengths?
- 5. Ask others** (that you trust) what they view your strengths and strong points are. Is there a consistent pattern or strength that they notice? This takes courage to ask and listen to other’s feedback. Ask for clarity and specificity if needed. Say thank you rather than argue if their observations differ than yours.
- 6. Review your list.** What are the top 4 - 6 items that you seem to use in these examples? Now rate these to come up with the top three to five strengths that you love to use the most. Which ones energize and inspire you as you use them? How has this changed over the years? Has your passion or joy for a set of strengths increased or decreased over time?
- 7. What patterns do you notice?** Of the strengths identified what is the common thread or theme? What intuitively feels natural and truly an integral part of you who are?

Apply your strengths consciously and intentionally every day to recognize how you can overcome challenges or situations that may pull you off course. Your particular combination of strengths is unique to you. Be aware of this and how you can intentionally use these strengths to make them work for you and contribute to your leadership and success.

An important aspect of improved performance, fulfillment and success in our careers and in life is to know our true self. Taking the time to truly understand who we are, how we are innately wired, our strengths and limitations, and then align our actions and decisions with our values, is how we can achieve our peak performance and best self.