



What is the Sweet Spot in your career? Part I - Discover Your Strengths

The Sweet Spot is when we are doing what we love to do, using our strengths and innate core energies toward our purpose or mission in life. For some of us we don't recognize what that sweet spot is and for others, we aren't using it to our advantage.

We have strengths and weaknesses (areas that de-motivate or challenge us). We are human and therefore not perfect. In the world of business, it can be difficult to show vulnerability, flaws, or areas of weakness. Consider how you chose to show up.

Which makes a better first impression? Exhibiting a positive attitude about fixing a problem or making excuses over what's going wrong? The first shows a strength – optimism, and the other shows weakness, limitation or fear. How do you want to be seen by your boss, colleagues, team, customer or potential client?

There are many tools to discover your strengths; such as StrengthsFinder or StandOut by Marcus Buckingham, VIA Strengths by Dr. Martin Seligman, and my personal favorite is the Core Values Index by Taylor Protocols, which measures our innate energies and how we are wired for success. Here are some tips to discover your strengths and to analyze the way you perform in certain business situations.

First, think back to a time when you were at your best. What were the circumstances? What did you do, how did you feel, what characteristics did you draw upon, how were you being? Mining for our values and our strengths can be as easy as thinking of our successes and when we felt at our best or as I call it our Peak Performance.

Second, look at your past experiences. Pull out that resume or performance review and think back to the different jobs and accomplishments you've achieved. Which roles, tasks did you like? What were you good at? What energized you? Which tasks or jobs de-motivated you? What did you learn from each?

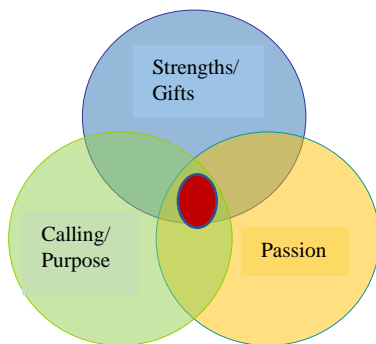
What would someone say about you? How would your colleagues, boss, customers, partners describe you? What would they say you are really good at? What would they say you need to improve upon? What did your leaders tell you during your performance reviews? What were the projects you excelled at the most and why? What did clients like / dislike most about you?

Next, find your strengths from your successes and failures. When you review both your successes AND failures, you'll probably start to see a pattern. What strengths lead to your successes? What strengths helped you survive your failures? What strength over used became a detriment in certain situations? It's through reflecting on the learnings from our mistakes and failures that help us grow. We become strong, developing our best self, building our resilience and capability.

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.

Finally, come up with your dream job. Imagine the ideal role or job that energizes you, fulfills your desires; such as learning, money, collaboration, recognition or any that are important to you. What activities and things do you get to do which draw upon your strengths? What makes you shine and light up as you think about the day to day activities of that role? With this in mind, and knowing your strengths, research the types of roles or projects that will allow you to use your strengths most of the time. Keep in mind that we all have tasks we aren't excellent at or de-motivate us, the key is to apply the 80/20 rule and find a role that allows us to use our strengths 70-80% of the time. When you are playing in your sweet spot, being authentic (naturally and genuinely conveying your optimism and confidence) and using your strengths that make you stand out - you'll be amazed at the level of fulfillment, happiness and success you will achieve.

Have you found your sweet spot in your career yet?



The first step to success in our careers and in life is to know our true self. There is plenty of advice out there, but unless we take the time to truly understand who we are, how we are innately wired, our strengths and limitations, and align our decisions with our values, the advice will be short lived and we won't be our best self. This is a journey and you don't need to go it alone. Find a trusted friend, mentor, peer or a professional coach. Be willing to look at yourself and make the transformation, then success and fulfillment will be yours.

This is the first part of a three-part series. See Part II-Finding your Passion and Part III-Finding your Calling, Purpose, Mission, to support the process in finding your Sweet Spot!

For a free Core Values Index assessment please go to www.strategictalent.ca/resources

Michelle Scott is a professional coach that uses a strength based approach to facilitate the transformation and growth her clients are seeking to achieve continued success and peak performance.