Creating Our Best Selves
Through Strengths and Wellbeing

*Discover Your Strengths*

**Strengths Quest:** Helping Students, Staff, and Faculty Achieve Academic, Career, and Personal Success

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Learning Objectives:

After completing this section, students will be able to:

• Define talent, theme, and strength.
• Discuss the role that talent and strength play in the success of top achievers.
• Identify and define, in basic terms, their own themes of talent.
• Discuss their themes of talent with significant others.
• Define, in basic terms, the 34 themes of talent.
• Recognize the unique, but different, talents of others.

Activity: Writing Challenge

1. 
2. 
3. 
4. 
5. 
   1. 
   2. 
   3. 
   4. 
   5.
Activity: A Time at Your Best - Five Clues to Talent

**YEARNING**
What activities can you not wait to start?

**RAPID LEARNING**
What kinds of activities do you seem to pick up quickly?

**FLOW**
In what activities did you get “lost in the moment”?&

**SATISFACTION**
What activities make you think, “When can I do that again?”

**GLIMPSES OF EXCELLENCE**
During what activities have you had moments of excellence, when you thought, “How did I do that?”
DVD: The Truth About You

The truths that allow you to play to your strengths most of the time

- As you grow you become more of who you already are
- You are going to grow and develop the most in your areas of strength
- What your team needs of you most of all is for you to bring your strengths deliberately

Notes:

Teach a person grammar and she will write a sentence, Inspire her to channel her strengths and she will write poetry.

-Marcus Buckingham
Roots of the Strengths Movement

- Positive Psychology
- Donald Clifton
- Gallup
- Clifton Strengths Finder
- Marcus Buckingham

✓ Do you have the opportunity to do what you do best every day?
  Your talents can help you develop personally and professionally.

✓ Strengths Quest can deepen your relationships by helping you see and value talent in others.

✓ Strengths Quest helps managers understand what energizes and engages people and how maximizing talent can create a great working environment for their staff on campus.

✓ Effective and productive teams meet their goals and achieve meaningful outcomes by capitalizing on the diverse talents of their members.

Notes:
What are Strengths and Weaknesses?

- **Strength**: The ability to provide consistent, near-perfect performance in a specific activity.

- **Talent**: A natural way of thinking, feeling, behaving.
  - Behavior patterns that make you effective
  - Thought patterns that make you efficient
  - Beliefs that empower you to succeed
  - Attitudes that sustain your efforts toward achievement and excellence
  - Motivations that propel you to take action and maintain the energy needed to achieve
  - You cannot not do it
  - Talents are potential strengths!

- **Theme**: A group of similar talents.

- **Skill**: The capacity to perform the functional steps of an activity.

- **Knowledge**: What you know, either factually or through awareness gained by experience.

- **Strength**: Produced when talents are refined with knowledge and skill
### Is it strength or is it a weakness?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>If</th>
<th>It is a strength</th>
<th>It is a weakness</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thinking...</td>
<td>- I can’t wait to start.</td>
<td>- I hate to have to do this.</td>
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<td>- This is fun.</td>
<td>- When will this end?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- I could do this forever.</td>
<td>- This is going to take forever.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- This is my calling</td>
<td>- Thank goodness this is nearly over.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Just try and stop me.</td>
<td>- Can I sit this one out?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feeling</td>
<td>- Powerful</td>
<td>- Frustrated</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Passionate</td>
<td>- Fragmented</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Euphoric</td>
<td>- Disoriented</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Natural</td>
<td>- Awkward</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Authentic</td>
<td>- Drained</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Confident</td>
<td>- Distracted</td>
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<tr>
<td>Want to</td>
<td>- Find a way to do more of it.</td>
<td>- Hope I never have to do it again.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Learn more about it</td>
<td>- Get the new guy to do it.</td>
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<td>- Find role models to learn from.</td>
<td>- Shove it to the right side of the desk</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Look for people who are really good at it</td>
<td>and forget it.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Confident</td>
<td>- Do anything else instead.</td>
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“One should waste as little effort as possible on improving areas of low competence. It takes far more energy to improve from incompetence to mediocrity than it takes to improve from first-rate performance to excellence.”

-Peter Drucker
What Gives You Energy?

“Despite the American myth, I cannot be or do whatever I desire – a truism, to be sure, but a truism we often defy.

Our created natures make us like organisms in an ecosystem: There are some roles and relationships in which we **thrive** and others in which we wither and die.”

-Parker Palmer, Let Your Life Speak
Activity: First Glance

What was your first reaction to your Strengths Finder results?

What new discovery have you made about yourself?

What, if anything, surprised you about your results?

Have you shared your “Top 5” with anyone? What was their reaction?
Strengths Themes

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

**ACTIVATOR** People especially talented in the Activator theme can make things happen by turning thoughts into action. They are often impatient.

**ADAPTABILITY** People especially talented 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 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.

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

**COMMAND** People especially talented in the Command theme have presence. They can take control of a situation and make decisions.

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

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

**CONNECTEDNESS** People especially talented 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 especially talented 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.

**CONTEXT** People especially talented in the Context theme enjoy thinking about the past. They understand the present by researching its history.

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

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

**EMPATHY** People especially talented in the Empathy theme can sense the feelings of other people by imagining themselves in others’ lives or others’ situations.
FOCUS People 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.

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

HARMONY People especially talented in the Harmony theme look for consensus. They don’t enjoy conflict; rather, they seek areas of agreement.

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

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

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

LEARNER People 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.

MAXIMIZER People especially talented in the Maximizer theme focus on strengths as a way to stimulate personal and group excellence. They seek to transform something especially talented into something superb.

POSITIVITY People especially talented 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 especially talented in the Relator theme enjoy close relationships with others. They find deep satisfaction in working hard with friends to achieve a goal.

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

STRATEGIC People especially talented 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 especially talented 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.
How unique are you?

5,166,449 respondents

Strengths Development Framework

Strengths Awareness → Confidence → Self Efficacy → Motivation to excel → Engagement

Apply strengths to areas needing improvement → Greater likelihood of success

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**Homework: Treasure Hunt**

- Talk to co-workers who have at least one Signature Theme different than your own.
- Jot down the theme you discussed, and at least one benefit of that theme.

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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>One Benefit of the Theme</th>
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Which theme or themes did you gain a greater appreciation for as a result of this conversation?

What did you learn about yourself as a result of this activity?
Activity: Answer the question
Utilizing Strengths language, find a partner and introduce yourself in response to this greeting: “Nice to meet you. What do you do at South Mountain Community College?”

WHY CAN’T THIS LAST FOREVER?

Live Your Strengths!
- Know your top 5
- Be proud of your top 5
- Post your top 5
- Donate your top 5! Donate them every day!

Commitments:
- One of my Signature Theme that I want to learn more about and consciously apply more often

- One of my Signature Themes I will donate to my work more often than I do now:

- One thing I will do differently starting tomorrow:
References:

Web Sites of Interest

http://strengths.org  The Clifton Strengths School
https://www.strengthsquest.com  The Strengths Quest home page
http://strengths.gallup.com  The Gallup Strengths home page
https://www.strengthsfinder.com  The Strengths 2.0 Web site
http://gmj.gallup.com  The Gallup Management Journal
http://strengths.ning.com  Strengths Social Site
http://tmbc.com  The Marcus Buckingham Company

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