CREATING OUR BEST SELVES THROUGH STRENGTHS AND WELLBEING

Discover Your Strengths
Think of a time when you were at your best

- Couldn’t wait to start
- Picked up the skill quickly
- Lost track of time
- Had a moment of unexpected excellence
- Could not wait to do it again
Line up by number years you have worked in higher education
Share a story about a time you were at your best ...

Share as many details as you can
WRITING CHALLENGE
The Truth About You

Marcus Buckingham
The Truths

As you grow you become more of who you already are
The Truths

You grow and develop the most in your areas of strength
The Truths

What your team needs most is for you to bring your strengths deliberately.
Positive Psychology:
The Root of Strengths
Deficit Based

Grade and Progress Reports

Performance Evaluations
Donald Clifton
Gallup Organization

- Two million interviews
- Thoughts, Feelings and Behaviors \(\rightarrow\) Success
- Over 400 talents
- Validated
CLARIFYING THE LANGUAGE

Talents
Themes
Strengths
Talents

- **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 can not **not** do it
- Talents are **potential strengths!**
Signature Themes

Consistency  Restorative  Harmony
Belief  Futuristic
Discipline
Strategic
Focus
Activator
Input
Context
Deliberative
Analytical
Significance
Achiever
WOO
Learner
Empathy
Ideation
Maximizer
Competition
Developer
Strengths

Talent
(a natural way of thinking, feeling, or behaving)

Investment
(time spent practicing, developing your skills, and building your knowledge base)

Strengths
Talents Used Productively

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Identify Talent

- Underline or highlight the phrases in your strengths report that resonate with you
- Cross out those that don’t
- The highlighted are your talents
Identify how your talents work

- Instinctively, you generally expect to be given free rein over how you do your job or approach your studies. *(My need for Autonomy)*
- Domineering people usually impede your progress, especially when you want to work alone on assignments. *(Why I struggle with Self Assurance)*
- Others trust that you won’t play games. They can take what you say at face value, and they can be confident that you won’t change your stripes once they’ve left the room. This directness builds trust, and trust builds relationships.
- Because you call it like you see it, others seek you out when they feel they can handle the truth. They might turn to others for support, but they go to you for an honest assessment of what they can and can’t do, or should and shouldn’t do.
- You don’t shy away from offering advice
- You are a self-reliant person who needs time alone to think and work.
- You generate innovative ideas and propose systematic programs of action.
- You identify recurring configurations in the behavior of people, the functioning of processes, or the emergence of potential problems.
- Because of your strengths, you automatically generate numerous ways to enhance, upgrade, revise, correct, or revamp a process, action plan, or itinerary.
- Your suggestions often influence how a project will unfold in the coming months, years, or decades.
- You tend to find fault with your own and even other people’s talents, skills, and/or knowledge.
- Fixing people or things ranks high on your favorite activities.
- Instinctively, you work diligently to invent alternative courses of action.
- You notice new as well as unusual configurations in facts, evidence, or data.
- You are fascinated by problems that puzzle, confound, or frustrate most people.
- Driven by your talents, you may see solutions before other people know there is a problem and start formulating answers before your teammates or coworkers understand.
NAME IT!  
Who am I?

AIM IT!  
What makes me successful?

CLAIM IT!  
How am I unique?
Clarifying the Language

**Talent**
(a natural way of thinking, feeling, or behaving)

**Investment**
(time spent practicing, developing your skills, and building your knowledge base)

**Strengths**
talents used productively
“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
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Parker Palmer
Let Your Life Speak

Thrive!
My boss doesn’t care if I’m thriving, or energized by my work…

she just wants the job done.
How do we THRIVE?

Energy

Outcomes

Expectations
What Gives You Energy?
You're expected to attend a gathering
There will be 50 people there
You won't know anyone

Wow, 50 new friends!

Really??
You want me to meet a bunch of strangers?
What Gives You Energy?

There is a place for everything and I love to put everything is in its place!

Why waste time putting stuff away that I may never need!
What Gives You Energy?

I love to pick out the perfect card or gift!

It's your birthday? Really?
Let me get the next card out of the box and sign it
Strengths are the lens that energizes you.
Different Paths
Valuing Talent

- Valuing
- Appreciating
- Respecting
- Understanding
- Judging
Your Greatest Talents

What was your first reaction to your Clifton 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?
Treasure Hunt

• Talk to other 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.
Weakness

Something that gets in your way or in the way of others' success
2 Minute Drill

• Identify a weakness that you believe is currently getting in your way of achieving excellence?

• Pair up with someone you don’t regularly work with and describe the weakness and how it impedes you

• Switch and repeat
Define the Weakness

- lack of skill or knowledge
- non-strength
- overused strength
- underused strength
Mitigate the Weakness

1. Open communication/transparency
2. Get the RIGHT training
3. Leverage other talents
4. Use support systems
5. Form complementary partnerships
6. Adjust/Change role
Overall StrengthsQuest Database

1. Achiever
2. Relator
3. Learner
4. Responsibility
5. Strategic

5,166,449 respondents
Welcome to your gateway to activities, workshops, resources and information about strengths and wellbeing at SMCC.

South Mountain Community College is committed to supporting students, staff, administrators and faculty in their efforts to become their best selves by developing their strengths and wellbeing. Strengths discovery, development, application, and relationship building leads to employee engagement and wellbeing. Gallup research has found that as an employee:

- When you use your strengths you are more engaged and more likely to feel energized.
- When engaged you have greater physical wellbeing and are less likely to be diagnosed with depression.
- Strengths based managers can contribute in very strong positive ways to an employee’s career wellbeing.
- You need 6 hours of social time to have a thriving day leading to social wellbeing.
- Strengths based teams support a sense of community wellbeing.

With Clifton Strengths Finder results and the StrengthsQuest program, students will be provided with the tools to:

- Increase engagement in college.
- Get more out of their education.
- Discover their passions.
- Be more successful in their careers.
- Live a more fulfilling life.
NAME IT!
Who am I?

AIM IT!
What makes me successful?

CLAIM IT!
How am I unique?
Fireworks and Space Shuttle

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v
Create or find a message (picture, drawing, poem, song, dance etc) that represents you and your 5 signature themes.

- What is your personal brand?

HOMEWORK: Model your Strengths
CREATING OUR BEST SELVES THROUGH STRENGTHS AND WELLBEING

Develop and Apply Your Strengths
What part of a person can you change?
How Can All Of This Help You?

Strengths Awareness
  ↓
Confidence
  ↓
Self Efficacy
  ↓
Hope
  ↓
Motivation to excel
  ↓
Engagement - an emotional commitment

Long Legs Long Lashes
Why Strengths Are Important

Engagement

- Engaged: 33%
- Not Engaged: 49%
- Actively Disengaged: 18%
Are You One Of The 2 Out Of 10?
What “Active Disengagement” Looks Like…
Students in strength development programs are more likely to:

- have higher feelings of hope
- be more engaged
- have higher GPA’s
- complete more credits
- have more persistence
- have higher completion rates

than students who are not.
The Truth About You

Where does passion fit in?

Marcus Buckingham
## Talent Connection

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>What this allows me to do</th>
<th>When / Where I recently used this theme</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Restorative</strong></td>
<td>I listen well and can provide suggestions that help solve problems.</td>
<td>A co-worker was having a hard time finding a solution for a problem a student was having. I was able to understand the situation and offer the input on how the situation could be solved.</td>
</tr>
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</table>
How do you talk about your strengths?
Applying your Talents

My Themes

- Adaptability
- Individualization
- Empathy
- Responsibility
- Consistency

Critical Tasks

- Answer phone questions
- Organize student records
- Meet with a student one on one
Dynamic Themes

Pick 2 of your Signature Themes

- Think about how you utilize each theme.
- Write a description of how the two themes you selected described together

Examples:

Learner + Individualization =
I love to learn about what makes people tick

Focus + Maximizer =
I need to focus on projects that I can help make excellent
CREATING OUR BEST SELVES THROUGH STRENGTHS AND WELLBEING

Building Teams and Relationships through Strengths
Learning To Value Others Through Strengths

- Valuing
- Appreciating
- Respecting
- Understanding
- Judging
When I was 14, my father was so ignorant I could hardly stand to have the old man around. But when I got to be 21, I was astonished at how much he had learned in seven years.”

-Mark Twain
Social Wellbeing

Connections with others and the strength of those relationships:
- Quality of supportive relationships
- Trust and belonging
Balconies and Basements
Form Complementary Partnerships

Do you have someone in your life who can gently remind you when you are not using your talent productively?
Complementary Partnerships

“make up” for a lesser talent.

“take over” where one person leaves off.

“enhance” what one person already possesses.

Tenzing Norgay and Edmund Hillary
Complementary Partnerships

Partner with someone in the group
Each of you pick one of your Signature Themes
• Individually think about how you utilize your theme.
• Write a description of how the two themes selected could complement each other in a project

Examples:
Command + Harmony = We find just the right balance when communicating with others in difficult situations

Strategic + Ideation = Together we create unique solutions and action steps to implement them.
How do I deal with People who Weaken me?
Strength Based Teams

Productive teams have a variety of strengths represented and a balance of strengths and weaknesses
What Strong Teams Have in Common

• Conflict doesn’t destroy strong teams because strong teams focus on results

• Strong teams prioritize what’s best for the organization and then move forward

• Strong teams embrace diversity

• Strong teams manage for talent
What **Energizes** You Most on a Team?  
**Brainstorming Session**

- I like working in a group of people!
- I like making to-do list with deadlines
- I have an idea!
- I would love to facilitate the session!
What **Energizes** You Most on a Team?
A team responsible for designing a college wide event

- I like to plan
- I like to show others why it is important
- I always remember the event is about people
- I would like us to slow down just a little and be careful.
Different Paths to the Same Destination

New Team Member

What would you tell them, ask them and give them to do?

• prior to the first meeting
• intended to increase engagement
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<th>Execute</th>
<th>Influence</th>
<th>Relate</th>
<th>Think</th>
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The Truths

What your team needs most is for you to bring your strengths deliberately.

People need not be well-rounded but teams do!
Example Strengths Matrix

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How this theme affects your ability to execute and make things happen?

How this theme affects how you influence others?

How this theme affects your relationships?

How does this theme affect how you think about and analyze information and situations?
How To Get a Code for Someone Else

GallupStrengthsCenter.com
NAME IT!
Who am I?

AIM IT!
What makes me successful?

CLAIM IT!
How am I unique?
Live Your Strengths Every Day!

- Know your top 5
- Be proud of your top 5
- Post your top 5
- Develop your top 5
- Build a relationship with your top 5
- Donate your top 5