



SOUTH MOUNTAIN COMMUNITY COLLEGE

A **MARICOPA** COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Creating our Best Selves through Strengths and Wellbeing

A Strengths Essentials workshop to help employees
Discover, Develop and Apply their Strengths

Learning Objectives:

After this seminar, participants will be able to:

- Define talent, theme, and strength.
- Discuss the foundation of the strengths philosophy.
- Discuss the role that talent and strengths play in the success of top achievers.
- Identify and describe their themes of talent.
- Discuss their themes of talent with others.
- Define, in basic terms, the 34 themes of talent.
- Recognize the value of the unique talents of others.
- Recognize the role of their themes of talent in their behavior.
- Define weakness and discuss mitigation techniques.
- Identify how their themes of talent have contributed to past success.
- Identify ways to develop talents into strengths.
- Describe how themes of talent work together.
- Value their themes of talent and the role they play in their lives.
- Identify knowledge and skills useful in transforming their talents into strengths.
- Identify and demonstrate ways in which their talents can help them achieve success.
- Build relationships with others mindful of their own talents and strengths and the talents and strengths of others.
- Communicate more effectively with others in light of their own talents and the talents of others.
- Work effectively by partnering with others with complementary themes of talent.
- Identify the characteristics and value of strengths-based teams.
- Discuss how to identify the strengths and weaknesses of a team.
- Define and discuss the value of employee engagement.
- Discuss the impact of strengths development on employee engagement.

NAMING AND CLAIMING YOUR STRENGTHS

ACTIVITY: Writing Challenge

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

The Truths

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

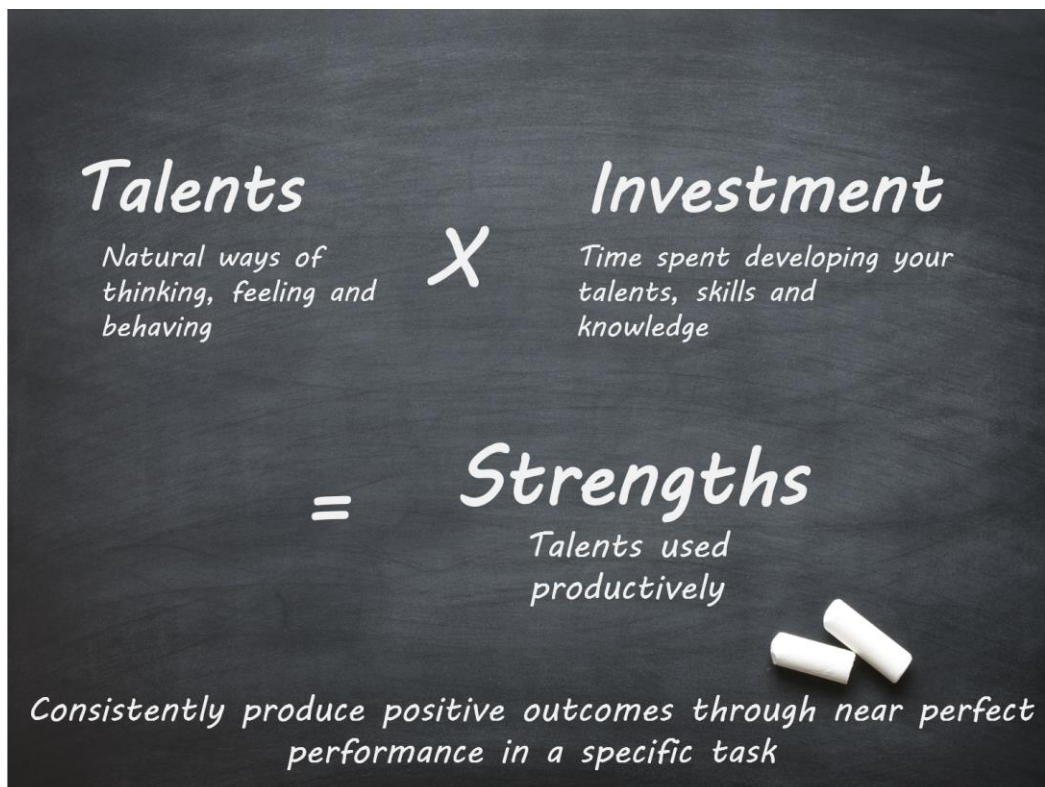
- As you grow you become more of who you already are
- You are going to grow and develop the most in your areas of strength
- What your team needs of you most of all is for you to bring your strengths deliberately

Clarifying the Language

- **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:** Talents refined with knowledge and skills and used productively.

Themes of Talent

EXECUTING	INFLUENCING	RELATIONSHIPS	THINKING
Achiever	Activator	Adaptability	Analytical
Arranger	Command	Developer	Context
Belief	Communication	Connectedness	Futuristic
Consistency	Competition	Empathy	Ideation
Deliberative	Maximizer	Harmony	Input
Discipline	Self-Assurance	Includer	Intellection
Focus	Significance	Individualization	Learner
Responsibility	Woo	Positivity	Strategic
Restorative		Relator	

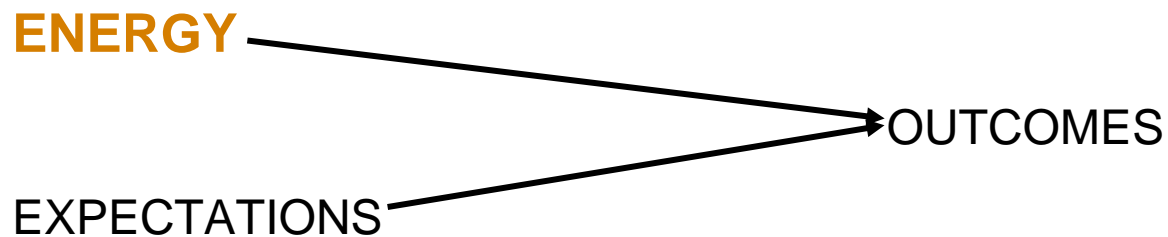


ACTIVITY: What Gives You Energy?

“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



DISCUSSION: Your Greatest Talent

What was your first reaction to your CliftonStrengths Assessment results?

What new discovery have you made about yourself?

What, if anything, surprised you about your results?

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

ACTIVITY: Talent Connection

- Below, place your five Signature Themes in the first column.
- Then, think about what those Signature Themes allow you to do.
- Identify one specific example of when you have recently used each theme. An example is provided for you.

Theme	What This Allows Me to Do	When / Where I Recently Used This Theme
Restorative	I instinctively provide suggestions that help solve problems.	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.

ACTIVITY: 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.

Name	Theme	One Benefit of the Theme

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?

Weakness

A weakness is something that gets in your way or in the way of others.

Is there a talent or lack of talent that is currently getting in your way or in the way of others' success?

Is there something that you aren't very good at that isn't a weakness? Is it a non-strength?

Define a weakness:

- lack of skill or knowledge
- non-strength
- overused strength
- underused strength

Mitigating weakness

- Open communication/transparency
- Get the RIGHT training
- Leverage other talents
- Use support systems
- Form complementary partnerships
- Adjust/change role

"A talent is like a precious jewel. It can be covered by dirt, yet it is unchanged by the dirt. Through the process of development, we bring the jewel into the light where it can shine." -Donald Clifton

AIMING YOUR STRENGTHS

Activity: Talents and Goals

- In the circle below, describe a specific goal or challenge or project you will be working on in the near future.
- In each box, write the name of one of your top five themes you feel will help you with this goal, challenge, or project.
- Below each theme, explain how you will use this theme productively (as a strength) to achieve the goal, meet the challenge, or accomplish the project.
- In the box at the bottom, identify how you will know when you have met the challenge or achieved the goal.

Theme:	
How I can use this theme:	

Upcoming/Goal/Challenge/Project

Theme:	
How I can use this theme:	

Theme:	
How I can use this theme:	

What will a successful outcome look like?

ACTIVITY: Bring and Need

Talents drive the thoughts, feelings and behaviors that energize you. Likewise, knowing what you **bring** and **need** from others and the environment helps you to feel engaged and energized. As an employee, you bring yourself to the college through the way you do your job, serve on teams and interact with your colleagues. To fully thrive and be your best, consider what you bring and need to your work environment.

- List your Signature Themes.
- In one column write a short phrase that represents what behaviors of this theme you **bring** to your role as a Gateway employee.
- In the other column write a short phrase that represents what you **need** to thrive and be your best as an employee.

THEME	BRING	NEED
Activator	A catalytic sense of urgency	Efficient, fast-paced meetings
Ideation	Fresh and new ways of doing things	Freedom to try out new ideas about how to best complete tasks

ACTIVITY: Weaving your Themes

Select two of your Signature Themes.

Write a description of how the two themes you selected are best described when woven together.

Note: It might help to review the Talent Connection activity you completed earlier in the session.

Theme A	Theme B	Describe themes woven together
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.

Using your understanding of your themes, write a strong statement, using the strengths language in this exercise that you would consider using as a response if asked, “What do you do at work?”

This language can be used in a resume or cover letter or even in that dreaded job interview when interviewers ask, “What are your Strengths?”

Domains of Talent

EXECUTING	INFLUENCING	RELATIONSHIPS	THINKING
Achiever	Activator	Adaptability	Analytical
Arranger	Command	Developer	Context
Belief	Communication	Connectedness	Futuristic
Consistency	Competition	Empathy	Ideation
Deliberative	Maximizer	Harmony	Input
Discipline	Self-Assurance	Includer	Intellection
Focus	Significance	Individualization	Learner
Responsibility	Woo	Positivity	Strategic
Restorative		Relator	

Executing

- Knows how to make things happen
- Works tirelessly to get it done
- Has the ability to “catch” an idea and make it a reality
- May establish a quality process, work tirelessly toward a goal help determine the optimal configuration of people needed to complete a task

Influencing

- Helps the team reach a much broader audience
- Sells the team’s ideas inside and outside the organization
- Speaks up and makes sure your group is heard
- May win followers with confidence or by helping individuals feel comfortable and connected to the issue at hand

Relationships

- The essential glue that holds a team together
- Has the unique ability to create groups and organizations that are much greater than the sum of their parts
- May keep the team's collective energy high and people involved while pushing others toward bigger and better achievements

Thinking

- Absorbs and analyzes information to help the team make better decisions
- Continually stretches thinking for the future
- May help understand how past events influenced present circumstances or navigate the best route for future possibilities analyzing countless opportunities and information collected

ACTIVITY: Donate Your Strengths

Contributing to the work of your department or team requires you to use your strengths in many ways. Your strengths do not put you in a box or limit what you are capable of doing, so always look for new ways to use your strengths.

Consider how you use all of your Strengths to help you:

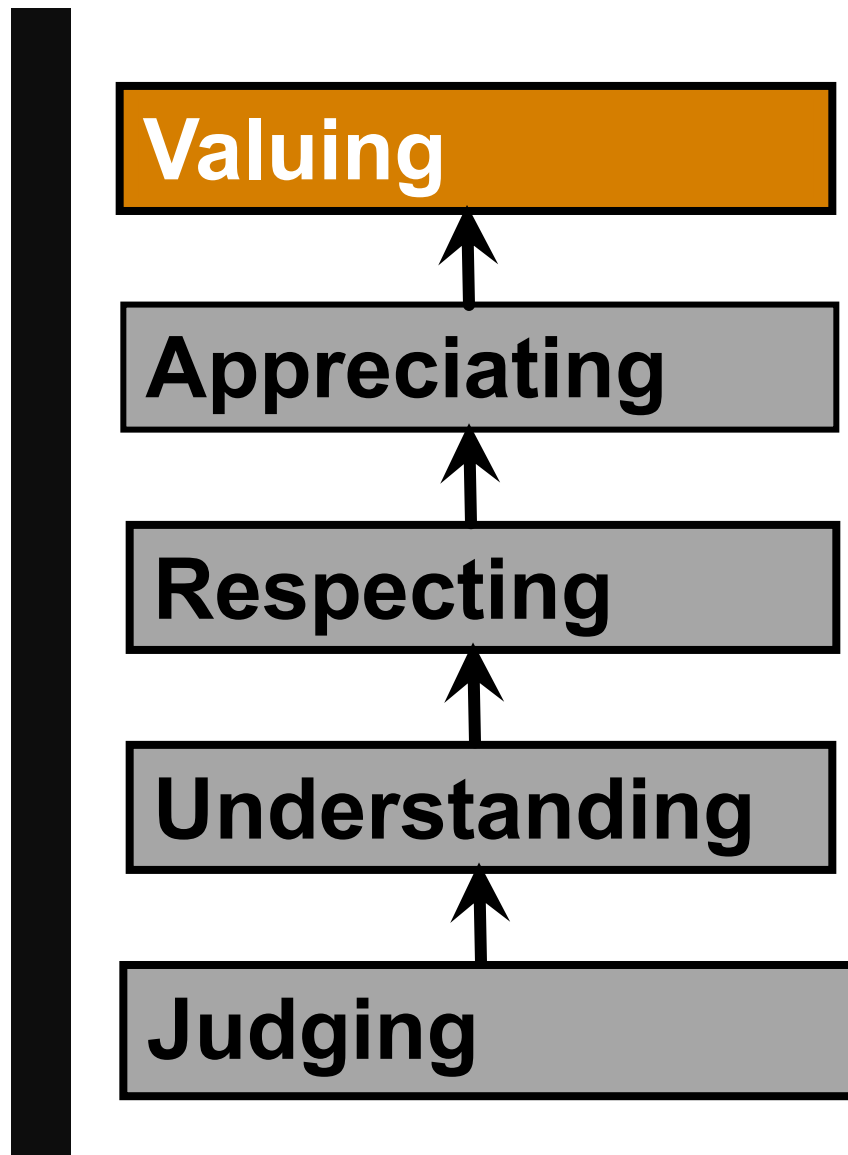
- Execute and get things done?
- Influence others?
- Build and support relationships?
- Think about and analyze information and situations?

	THEMES:			
How do your Strengths help you execute and make things happen?				
How do your Strengths help you influence others?				
How do your Strengths help you build and support relationships?				
How do your Strengths help your think about and analyze information and situations?				

BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS THROUGH STRENGTHS

"We don't see things as they are. We see them as we are."
-Anais Nin

Valuing Others through Strengths



ACTIVITY: Balconies and Basements

- Choose one of your Signature Themes and fill in the words that you have heard used to describe that theme.
- The Balcony descriptors are those that sound like compliments.
- The Basement descriptors are the barrier labels – terms used when a talent is devalued, dismissed, or understood as a weakness.

Balcony

Strengths Theme

Basement

What could you do to ensure that others know the balcony impact of your talents versus the basement moments?

Are there moments where the basement descriptions are accurate? If so, how could you manage that talent differently so that it is not viewed as a weakness?

Do you use basement language when talking about talents other than your own?

ACTIVITY: Complementary Partnerships

Partnerships are forming all around us every day. They are formed for a variety of reasons. For example:

- To **“make up”** for a lesser talent
 - To **“take over”** where one person leaves off
 - To **“enhance”** what one person already possesses
- Partner with someone in the group
 - Each pick one of your Signature Themes
 - Write a description of how the two themes selected could complement each other in a project

Partner A	Partner B	Describe themes in collaboration
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.

What did you learn from this activity?
 Can you think of complementary partners with other themes you now wish to seek out?

BUILDING TEAMS THROUGH STRENGTHS

Strengths-Based Teams

A Strengths-based team is a group of imperfect but talented contributors who are valued for their strengths and who need one another to realize individual and team excellence.

Great teams are made up of team members who:

- ✓ Share a mission and purpose.
- ✓ Understand the work of the team and have a clear and compelling performance goal or challenge.
- ✓ Understand and appreciate that he or she is great at some things and not very good at others.
- ✓ Are aware of each other's talents.

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

People need NOT be well rounded, Teams DO

Strength Domains

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ACTIVITY: Strengths Theme Matrix

Below is a matrix of a Strategic Planning Team.

When will the team likely perform best and when will they find themselves in need of support?

	Executing								Influencing						Relationship Building							Strategic Thinking														
	Achiever	Arranger	Belief	Consistency	Deliberative	Discipline	Focus	Responsibility	Restorative	Activator	Command	Communication	Competition	Maximizer	Self-Assurance	Significance	Woo	Adaptability	Developer	Connectedness	Empathy	Harmony	Includer	Individualization	Positivity	Relator	Analytical	Context	Futuristic	Ideation	Input	Intellection	Learner	Strategic		
	5																		3						4				2						1	
	3																	4								5									1	2
	3	5																													2	4	1			
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			4					2																		5			3						1	
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			4					3																			2							5	1	
				5																						2	3		4							1

What are the strengths and weaknesses of this team?

- What does this Team's Matrix say about this team?
- Is one of the domains dominant?
 - What does that tell you about the team's ability to perform?
- Is one of the domains underrepresented?
- Does the matrix expose any blind spots or gaps?
- Do any of the individual themes stand alone or are in dominance?
 - How could this impact the Team's dynamics and ability to communicate?
- How could this team use its knowledge of Strengths and Talents to achieve it goals?

ACTIVITY: I.A.M

Insight

What does the theme mean to you?

Application

In what ways have you specifically applied this theme to your role recently?

Meaningful Impact

What were the positive results of this application?

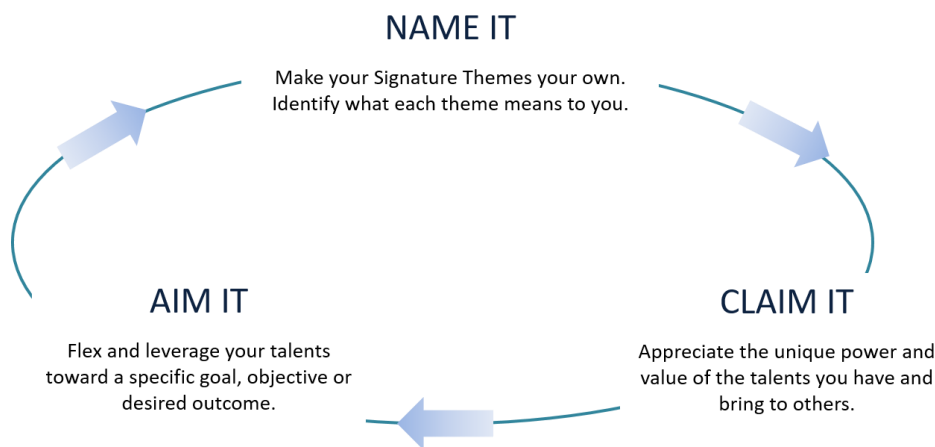
List your top 5 signature themes and complete the statement

SIGNATURE THEMES	I AM AN EMPLOYEE WHO...
Command	builds trust by giving candid and heartfelt feedback

Now using the thoughts from this activity complete the statement
 "I am a South Mountain Community College employee who..."

Live Your Strengths...Every Day!

- ✓ Know your strengths
- ✓ Be proud of your strengths
- ✓ Post your strengths
- ✓ Develop your strengths
- ✓ Build a relationship with your strengths
- ✓ Donate your strengths! Donate them every day!



Strengths Reflections

- ✓ What is one of your themes you would like to know more about?
- ✓ What is one theme, different from yours, that you now value more than you did before this workshop?

Strengths Commitments

- ✓ What is one thing you will do, starting tomorrow, to develop your talents into strengths?
- ✓ What is one thing you will do, starting tomorrow, to better use your talents to build strong relationships with others?

South Mountain Community College

Our Vision

South Mountain Community College educates minds, transforms lives, touches hearts, and builds community.

Our Mission

South Mountain Community College provides quality higher education for our diverse community. We create a caring teaching and learning environment that fosters student development and supports productive citizenship in an increasingly global and technological society.

Our Values

We are inspired and guided by our core values:

- **COLLABORATION:** We are inclusive in our relationships with colleagues, departments and community, and respectful of their ideas.
- **COMMUNITY:** We serve our community by recognizing our inter-dependence, celebrating our history, honoring our diverse cultures, and building our future.
- **EXCELLENCE:** We model exemplary teaching, learning, service and leadership through continuous improvement, creativity and innovation.
- **INTEGRITY:** We are accountable to the communities we serve and are truthful, sincere, transparent and responsible for our actions.
- **WELLBEING:** We are a college community that encourages and develops social, physical, career, community and financial wellbeing.



RESOURCE: Brief Strengths Themes

Achiever*	People exceptionally talented in the Achiever theme work hard and possess a great deal of stamina. They take immense satisfaction in being busy and productive.
Activator*	People exceptionally talented in the Activator theme can make things happen by turning thoughts into action. They want to do things now, rather than simply talk about them.
Adaptability*	People exceptionally 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 exceptionally talented in the Analytical theme search for reasons and causes. They have the ability to think about all of the factors that might affect a situation.
Arranger*	People exceptionally talented in the Arranger theme can organize, but they also have a flexibility that complements this ability. They like to determine how all of the pieces and resources can be arranged for maximum productivity.
Belief*	People exceptionally talented in the Belief theme have certain core values that are unchanging. Out of these values emerges a defined purpose for their lives.
Command*	People exceptionally talented in the Command theme have presence. They can take control of a situation and make decisions.
Communication*	People exceptionally talented in the Communication theme generally find it easy to put their thoughts into words. They are good conversationalists and presenters.
Competition*	People exceptionally 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 exceptionally talented in the Connectedness theme have faith in the links among all things. They believe there are few coincidences and that almost every event has meaning.
Consistency*	People exceptionally talented in the Consistency theme are keenly aware of the need to treat people the same. They crave stable routines and clear rules and procedures that everyone can follow.
Context*	People exceptionally talented in the Context theme enjoy thinking about the past. They understand the present by researching its history.
Deliberative*	People exceptionally talented in the Deliberative theme are best described by the serious care they take in making decisions or choices. They anticipate obstacles.
Developer*	People exceptionally talented in the Developer theme recognize and cultivate the potential in others. They spot the signs of each small improvement and derive satisfaction from evidence of progress.
Discipline*	People exceptionally talented in the Discipline theme enjoy routine and structure. Their world is best described by the order they create.
Empathy*	People exceptionally talented in the Empathy theme can sense other people's feelings by imagining themselves in others' lives or situations.

Focus*	People exceptionally 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 exceptionally talented in the Futuristic theme are inspired by the future and what could be. They energize others with their visions of the future.
Harmony*	People exceptionally talented in the Harmony theme look for consensus. They don't enjoy conflict; rather, they seek areas of agreement.
Ideation*	People exceptionally talented in the Ideation theme are fascinated by ideas. They are able to find connections between seemingly disparate phenomena.
Includer*	People exceptionally talented in the Includer theme accept others. They show awareness of those who feel left out and make an effort to include them.
Individualization*	People exceptionally talented in the Individualization theme are intrigued with the unique qualities of each person. They have a gift for figuring out how different people can work together productively.
Input*	People exceptionally talented in the Input theme have a need to collect and archive. They may accumulate information, ideas, artifacts or even relationships.
Intellection*	People exceptionally talented in the Intellection theme are characterized by their intellectual activity. They are introspective and appreciate intellectual discussions.
Learner*	People exceptionally talented in the Learner theme have a great desire to learn and want to continuously improve. The process of learning, rather than the outcome, excites them.
Maximizer*	People exceptionally talented in the Maximizer theme focus on strengths as a way to stimulate personal and group excellence. They seek to transform something strong into something superb.
Positivity*	People exceptionally talented in the Positivity theme have contagious enthusiasm. They are upbeat and can get others excited about what they are going to do.
Relator*	People exceptionally 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 exceptionally 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 exceptionally 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 exceptionally talented in the Self-Assurance theme feel confident in their ability to take risks and manage their own lives. They have an inner compass that gives them certainty in their decisions.
Significance*	People exceptionally talented in the Significance theme want to make a big impact. They are independent and prioritize projects based on how much influence they will have on their organization or people around them.
Strategic*	People exceptionally 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 exceptionally 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 someone.

NOTES: Bring and Need

THEME	Bring	Need
Achiever	Intensity and stamina of effort	Freedom to work at my own pace
Activator	A catalytic sense of urgency	Less discussion, more action
Adaptability	A willingness to follow the lead of change	Present pressures that demand an immediate response
Analytical	Dispassionate thinking to emotional issues	Time to think
Arranger	Flexibility and interactivity	A dynamic environment
Belief	Values stability, clarity, conviction	A cause or purpose for which to live
Command	Emotional clarity	Challenges and conflicts
Communication	Attention to messages that must be heard	A sounding board, an audience
Competition	An aspiration to be the best	Peers for comparison and motivation
Connectedness	An appreciation of the mystery and wonder of life and all creation	To be part of something bigger than myself: a family, team, or global community
Consistency	Rules and policies that promote cultural predictability	Standard operating procedures
Context	Accurate memories and valuable memorabilia	Relevant background for discussions/decisions
Deliberative	A thorough and conscientious approach	Time to listen and think before being expected to speak
Developer	A commitment (time and energy) to human growth	Someone to invest in
Discipline	Precision and detail orientation	A structured and organized environment
Empathy	Emotional intelligence	Freedom to laugh, cry, vent
Focus	Clarity through concentration and direction	A goal to establish priorities
Futuristic	Previews, predication, forecasts	Opportunities to talk about the foreseen future
Harmony	A peace-loving, conflict-resistant approach	Areas of agreement, common ground
Ideation	New and fresh perspectives	Freedom to explore possibilities without restraints or limits
Includer	A high level of tolerance with and acceptance of diversity	Room for everyone
Individualization	An understanding of people that is valuable for placement	Individual expectations that are created to fit a person

A Strengths Essentials Workshop

THEME	Bring	Need
Input	Tangible tools that can facilitate growth and performance	Space to store the resources I naturally acquire
Intellection	Depth of understanding and wisdom	Time for reflection and meditation
Learner	A learning perspective and excitement for the learning process	Exposure to new information and experiences
Maximizer	A quality orientation	Quality to be valued as much as quantity
Positivity	Contagious energy and enthusiasm	Freedom to experience the joy and drama of life
Relator	Social depth and transparency	Time and opportunities for one-on-one interactions
Responsibility	Dependability and loyalty	Freedom to take ownership
Restorative	Courage and creativity to problematic situations	Problems that must be solved
Self-Assurance	A willingness to take necessary risks	Freedom to act unilaterally and independently
Significance	A desire for wanting and producing more	An appreciative audience that will bring out my best
Strategic	Creative anticipation, imagination, persistence	Freedom to make mid-course corrections
Woo	Energy to social situations	Social variability

Adopted from Gallup StrengthsQuest™