

# Strengths Analysis Tool

Understanding and leveraging your strengths is a crucial step towards achieving professional success and satisfaction. In general, you should focus your development areas on discovering and utilizing your strengths. Many times, people will focus more on what they would consider weaknesses or opportunities. While it is important to be aware of areas that are not your strengths, your time will be better spent developing your natural talents. This guide is designed to help you discover your strengths and provide practical strategies to integrate them into your employee development plan and/or your PDP.

Follow these steps to work with your strengths:

## 1. Self-Assessment:

### a. Reflect on Past Successes:

- i. Identify instances where you felt confident and accomplished in your work.
- ii. List big projects you have completed or other accomplishments. You can refer to past PDPs, if available, to remind you of some of the accomplishments you have achieved.
- iii. Review your resume to look for specific skills and accomplishments as well as patterns you might identify that point to strengths.
- iv. Analyze the tasks and skills involved in each of these past successes.

### b. Personality and Strengths Assessments:

- i. Take personality and strengths assessments.
  1. Myers Briggs Type Assessment – Contact HRD for more information about this assessment and the cost. Career Services has some assessments available such as TypeFocus that will also give you similar results as the Myers Briggs assessment (link). You can also take a free assessment at <https://www.16personalities.com/>
  2. Gallup offers a StrengthFinder assessment that will identify your top strengths. You can buy an an assessment online through the Gallup website, or by buying the StrengthFinder book.
  3. There are many other assessments you can choose from such as DiSC, emotional intelligence, and 6 Types of Working Genius. These and other assessments are easily found through an Internet search. If you have questions, you are welcome to contact HRD for more information.
- ii. Reflect on the results to gain insights into your natural inclinations and talents.

- c. **Feedback from Others:**
  - i. Seek constructive feedback from colleagues, supervisors, and mentors.
  - ii. Ask others who know you and your work to share their observations about your strengths and areas where you excel.
  - iii. Conduct a formal 360 degree evaluation, which asks you to score yourself on questions and then asks your supervisor, direct reports and colleagues for similar ratings as well as written feedback.
    - 1. HRD can help connect you to 360 degree evaluations. There are varying fees associated with these assessments depending on the vendor.
  - iv. Use the information you gather from others to list and reflect on your strengths and how you could best use those moving forward.
- 2. **Identify Core Strengths:**
  - a. **Strengths Inventory:**
    - i. List the skills and attributes that come naturally to you.
    - ii. Categorize them into technical, interpersonal, and leadership strengths.
  - b. **Passion and Purpose:**
    - i. Identify tasks or projects that genuinely excite and engage you.
    - ii. Align your strengths with your passion to define your professional purpose.
- 3. **Set Professional Goals:**
  - a. **Alignment with Strengths:**
    - i. As you work in the employee development plan, work to align your goals with your identified strengths as much as possible.
    - ii. Identify opportunities that allow you to leverage and further develop your strengths.
    - iii. You may identify skills or abilities that fall outside of your strengths, but they may also either be necessary to advance to where you want to go, or you realize you will need to develop these further because they are holding you back. In these cases, it may be advisable to work to get those things to a point where they will no longer inhibit your long-term goals. You will not need to make them full strengths, but it will be important to make some effort to get to an acceptable proficiency.
  - b. **SMART Goals:**
    - i. As you move into the Plan stage, you will want to set Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound goals.
    - ii. Break larger goals into smaller, manageable tasks that will move you forward in your development.
- 4. **Skill Development:**
  - a. **Identify Skill Gaps:**
    - i. Recognize areas where you can enhance your skills.

- ii. Prioritize skills that complement your strengths.
  - b. **Training and Development:**
    - i. Attend workshops, webinars, and training programs.
    - ii. Seek mentorship or coaching to refine and develop specific skills.
- 5. **Networking and Collaboration:**
  - a. **Identify Complementary Strengths:**
    - i. Build relationships with colleagues who possess complementary strengths.
    - ii. Collaborate on projects to leverage collective strengths for mutual success.
  - b. **Networking Events:**
    - i. Attend industry events, conferences, and workshops.
    - ii. Connect with professionals who share similar strengths or can provide guidance.
- 6. **Regular Reflection:**
  - a. **Assess Progress:**
    - i. Regularly evaluate your professional development journey with your supervisor in the Review portion of the employee development program.
    - ii. Celebrate achievements and reassess goals as needed.
  - b. **Adapt and Evolve:**
    - i. Be open to adapting your goals and strategies based on your evolving strengths and the changing professional landscape.
- 7. **Seek Feedback Continuously:**
  - a. **Feedback Loops:**
    - i. Establish regular feedback loops with your supervisor, colleagues, and mentors.
    - ii. Use feedback as a tool for continuous improvement.
- 8. **Celebrate Achievements:**
  - a. **Acknowledge Successes:**
    - i. Celebrate both small and large achievements.
    - ii. Recognize the impact of leveraging your strengths on your professional growth.

This is just one approach you could take in looking at your strengths. Other approaches might include doing a SWOT or Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats analysis. You could think of this in terms of a Stop, Start, Continue approach, or even do a Johari Window analysis. Some sample forms are included below. You can find more on each of those by searching for those online. Any method that helps you to reflect and identify your strengths will be useful. You can then take that information to align your professional development with those strengths.

Remember, the journey of discovering and using your strengths is ongoing. Embrace the process, stay curious, and continuously evolve to unlock your full professional potential.

# Sample Strengths Worksheet

Use the worksheet below to help you think about your strengths. Start by listing them below and then answer the questions. You may have several items on your list but only work on a few at a time. You want to focus your development efforts.

## **Strength 1**

What is it?

How can you best use this strength?

Are there any new ways you can use this strength?

What can you do to get even better at this strength?

## **Strength 2**

What is it?

How can you best use this strength?

Are there any new ways you can use this strength?

What can you do to get even better at this strength?

## **Strength 3**

What is it?

How can you best use this strength?

Are there any new ways you can use this strength?

What can you do to get even better at this strength?

Did you also learn about any areas of opportunity you may have?

Are there any career stoppers in there? The idea here is that you will primarily focus on the strengths unless you have something that is limiting your career growth. If, for instance, you have

# Sample Forms and Strengths Activities

Use these to spark ideas about how to identify your strengths. Remember that these are all working to help you identify areas of focus and ultimately goals for your development plan.

## SWOT *career analysis*

<b>STRENGTHS</b> WHAT ARE MY CURRENT STRENGTHS? WHAT AREAS OF MY JOB DO I DO WELL?	<b>WEAKNESSES</b> WHAT ARE MY WEAKNESSES? WHAT SKILLS DO I NEED TO IMPROVE?	<b>OPPORTUNITIES</b> WHERE CAN I EXCEL OR GROW IN THIS JOB? WHAT STRENGTHS CAN I TURN INTO OPPORTUNITIES?	<b>THREATS</b> WHAT IS A DEMOTIVATING FACTOR WHEN LEARNING AND TRYING NEW THINGS? WHAT MIGHT PREVENT ME FROM IMPROVING?

<b>Start</b>	<b>Stop</b>	<b>Continue</b>

**Stop Start Continue**

Think of the things that you are doing or should be doing in your job. Write them down in the appropriate colored notepads and place them under the appropriate column.

○ ○ ○ ○

**1** Spend a minute in reflection