
Your Online Workbook for Your Workplace Insights™ Report

Working From Your Strengths

www.WorkplaceInsights.com

WORKING FROM YOUR STRENGTHS YOUR ONLINE WORKBOOK FOR YOUR WORKPLACE INSIGHTS™ REPORT

This workbook is designed to help you ask important questions about who you are based on your report. Working through these questions can give you added insights into your own strengths, how to blend your differences with those in your workplace and within the closer confines of your immediate work-group.

How to get the most from this workbook:

- Have your Workplace Insights Report on hand as this workbook will walk you through each major section of your report.
- Commit to taking at least 1/2 hour of uninterrupted time to go through these questions. By investing the time it takes to sit through one television program, you can gain tremendous insights into your strengths as well as how to blend your differences with others at work.
- ***We highly recommend that you share highlights of what you've learned from your report and this workbook with another person within 24 hours of completing it.*** Clinical studies have shown that if you don't act on the insights you receive within 48 hours, you'll tend to put what you've learned on the shelf—not into practice. Sharing your insights with others at work or home, or even having them take the report and discussing their findings can set the stage for important, positive changes and growth.

How do I go even deeper than this workbook?

Perhaps you're a Lion who needs to work on sensitivity or communication skills, an Otter who needs to get better organized, a Golden Retriever who wants to learn how to say hard things in a soft way, or a Beaver, who would benefit from adding more laughter or flexibility to your style.

Whether you want to grow in your workplace or family relationships, after you've gone through your workbook, we urge you to visit our website. There, you'll find outstanding additional resources and contact information if you need to let us know how to assist you in using the Workplace Insights Report. You may also purchase additional assessments and reports online.

We're committed to providing outstanding tools and customer service to each person who takes our reports. Let us know how we can help you!

John Trent, Ph.D.
Chairman and CEO,
www.WorkplaceInsights.com

Working From Your Strengths
Your Online Workbook for Your Workplace Insights Report

GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS

Please turn to the “*General Characteristics*” section of your report.

From paragraph 1, pick three statements that in particular, cause you to nod your head and say to yourself, “That’s me!”

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

From paragraph 2, pick three statements that describe problem-solving and decision-making talents that seem to “fit” who you are.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

How do you see yourself “living out” these strengths at work?

Are there situations in which you’re “holding back” using some of your strengths on the job? Why?

GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS (CON'T.)

From paragraph 3, list three statements that describe the way you tend to communicate with others.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

What seems like “positive” feedback from this “General Feedback” section?

In what areas of this section can you see a need for personal/professional growth?

Who are two people, (friends, coworkers or supervisor) that by sharing this information, could better understand whom you are and how to relate to you?

At what time will you talk to them in the next 48 hours? _____

VALUE TO THE TEAM

Please turn to the “*Value to the Team*” section of your report.

Read and list four statements that describe your strengths from this section.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

In your work environment, how aware do you feel others are of your strengths?

On a “1 to 10” scale, (1 meaning very little, 10 meaning a great deal), how much do you feel you are using your current talents and strengths?

What is one of your strengths that is not being expressed as much as it could? How could it make a positive difference in your work setting?

As you look at your list of strengths, which ones seem to apply more to your personal or family life as opposed to your professional life? Why?

Who in your personal or professional life needs to understand your strengths and talents better?

CHECKLIST FOR COMMUNICATING WITH _____

Please turn to the “*Checklist for Communicating with _____*” section of your report.

This section identifies the best ways to communicate with you.

Read and list four statements that you feel are most descriptive of your style of communication.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

What insight(s) into your communication style could help you in your career or an important relationship?

List the most important communication keys from the list that others on your team should keep in mind when communicating with you.

Identify and list some of the people who you would like to share this “communication assessment” information.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

DON'TS ON COMMUNICATING WITH _____

Please turn to the “*Don'ts on Communicating with _____*” section of your report.

Do you tend to communicate forcefully, without elaborating? Or do you like drawing out a story and going into detail? Do you make sure you ask about person's family or feelings in a conversation? Most of us tend to expect others to communicate with us just like we converse with them. However, different people use different styles of communicating. Understanding a person's natural communication style is a powerful way to “join” or “connect” with him or her. It's also a tremendous way to head off potential communication problems. With that in mind,

Read and list four statements from your report that describe possible communication problems you might face with others.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

How could sharing the information found in this section help your communication with someone in your personal life? Try to be specific.

How could your relationships improve at work by sharing this information?

What are the most important statements from this section for others to follow?

COMMUNICATING WITH OTHERS

Please turn to the “*Communicating with Others*” section of your report.

Identify and list some of the people in your life who can be described as “**Lions**”—ambitious, forceful, decisive, strong-willed, independent, and goal oriented.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

Do you currently use the tips listed in the report?

Do you consistently do any of the things that create tension with these people?

What would be the benefit of adapting your communication style?

COMMUNICATING WITH OTHERS (CONT.)

Identify and list some of the people in your life who can be described as “**Otters**”—enthusiastic, friendly, demonstrative and political.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

Do you currently use the tips listed in the report?

Do you consistently do any of the things that create tension with these people?

What would be the benefit of adapting your communication style?

COMMUNICATING WITH OTHERS (CONT.)

Identify and list some of the people in your life who can be described as “**Golden Retrievers**”—patient, predictable, reliable, steady, relaxed and modest.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

Do you currently use the tips listed in the report?

Do you consistently do any of the things that create tension with these people?

What would be the benefit of adapting your communication style?

COMMUNICATING WITH OTHERS (CONT.)

Identify and list some of the people in your life who can be described as “**Beavers**”—conservative, perfectionist, careful and compliant.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

Do you currently use the tips listed in the report?

Do you consistently do any of the things that create tension with these people?

What would be the benefit of adapting your communication style?

IDEAL ENVIRONMENT

Please turn to the “*Ideal Environment*” section of your report.

Read and list at least four statements that seem to best describe the ideal work environment for you.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

How much time per day do you spend in your ideal work environment?

Are more elements of your ideal environment found at work or at home?

Do you spend enough time a day in your ideal environment? What adjustments can you make to get your environment “more ideal”?

KEYS TO MOTIVATING

Please turn to the “*Keys to Motivating*” section of your report.

Common sense says that the things we treasure, we’ll tend to move toward. People are motivated by what they desire most. Read and list four desires that are important to you.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

In your personal life, what tends to motivate you the most?

Are others aware of the areas that tend to motivate you? _____

Who are people in your life who need to see this section of your report?

Are you on the way to achieving your desires and goals? _____

If not, what’s holding you back, and what do you need to change to get back on track?

KEYS TO LEADING

Please turn to the “*Keys to Leading*” section of your report.

Who is (or was) the best leader you worked for or alongside?

How did you feel about what you were doing during that time?

Who was the worst leader you’ve ever worked with? (use code letters if needed!)

How did you feel during that time?

List three statements from this section that describe how you want to be managed:

1.

2.

3.

If you’re working for someone right now, share three things you’ve learned from this report that you feel he or she should know about you:

1.

2.

3.

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

Please turn to the “*Areas for Improvement*” section of your report.

Limitations provide opportunities for growth and improvement. List three areas for improvement that may be keeping you from getting what you want. Under each list three specific actions you can take to minimize these limitations.

Limitation: _____

Action: _____

Action: _____

Action: _____

Limitation: _____

Action: _____

Action: _____

Action: _____

Limitation: _____

Action: _____

Action: _____

Action: _____

Every person has a basic, core way of dealing with people, problems, the pace of life and procedures. Adapting is part of healthy living. However, if you have to adapt to the point of abandoning your core strengths to get the job done, you will find yourself in a stressful, potentially damaging position over time.

Understanding your strengths and consistently using those strengths in your work and relationships increases the longevity of your work, relational satisfaction.

How much do you feel you have to “adapt” to your “core” style to your present environment?

Perceptions

Please turn to the “*Perceptions*” section of your report.

Read and reflect on this information. The words listed under “self-perception” are words that you would use to describe yourself in a positive light. However, it is natural for us all to display a negative side. We all have days when we are not at our best.

Look at the words others may be using to describe you.

Do you agree with any of these possible perceptions?

Can you think of someone that may have a negative perception of you? Why might he or she have this perception?

Are any of these perceptions a major roadblock to a positive relationship?

If so, what changes can you make that can make a positive difference in this relationship?

ADDITIONAL INSIGHTS

Your Workplace Insights™ report is a personal, comprehensive profile of your “core” strengths with a few challenging suggestions and “keys” to communication, leadership and personal relationship dynamics. Your report will also help you address just how much you feel you need to “adapt” to succeed in your work and relationships. The “Additional Insights” portion of your assessment can help give you visual pictures of your core and adapted styles.

As you finish reviewing your assessment, pay close attention to the distance between your plot points on the Personal Strengths Indicator’s™ Specific Factor Analysis and the Success Insights® Wheel.

The Success Insights Wheel™

The Success Insights Wheel™ is divided by eight quadrants, each headed by a descriptor (the “Lion’s” descriptor is “conductor”). The outer edge of the wheel corresponds to the vertical graphs earlier in your report. The center of the wheel corresponds with the mid-line of the vertical graphs earlier in the report (see pages 4 and 18 of your report).

A star or dot toward the outer edge indicates a high level of the corresponding strength (descriptor).

A star or dot toward the center of the wheel indicates an influence of the opposite strength and would indicate more “flexibility” of the dominant “core” style. For instance, a solid dot in the Lion (conductor) quadrant that is close to the center indicates an influence of the Golden Retriever (supporter) strength.

A large separation between the dot and the star indicates that the person has to “adapt” his or her behavior to meet the demands of the environment. If the star and dot are in different quadrants, this means that the person is not working in his or her “core” strength area and the demands for this person to work outside his or her natural or “core” style could be creating more stress and dissatisfaction in the daily environment.

If the star and the dot are in close proximity, this indicates that the individual is in an environment that allows him or her to utilize his or her core strengths and natural “style”. This lack of distance between the points indicates a low level of adaptation and thus, a low level of stress to meet environmental demands.

The wheel helps in identifying your core style, and pinpointing the areas in which you have to work outside of your core strengths.

Action Item

Can you identify how many different styles are represented in your group? _____
Your family? _____ Try plotting everyone’s core style dot on the same wheel. What do you see?

RECOGNIZING AND BLENDING STRENGTHS AND DIFFERENCES

(Adapted from Leaving the Light On by John Trent, Ph. D. and Gary Smalley, 1994, Multnomah Press)

First, we're all a combination of these four basic bents (styles represented by the "four animals") to some extent. We know of no "purebreds." Usually, however, one or two basic bents will predominate in a person's interactions with others. Second, these areas of personality strengths can be *developed*. The idea that our personality traits are set in concrete may sell books, but it doesn't square with the facts. We've seen in our own lives – and in the lives of hundreds across the country – that people can achieve a high degree of balance in their lives.

Make Way for the Lion

Lions are strong, aggressive, take-charge types. If you have a child with a large amount of Lion in him, he is basically letting *you* live at home!

We heard a story recently about a five-year-old Lioness who had just started kindergarten. She came home from her very first day and slammed the front door! Her startled dad looked up from his lunch.

"My goodness," he said. "What's the matter?"

The little lady banged her lunchbox down on the kitchen table and said, "Daddy, I am *not* going back to that school!"

"Really? How come?"

"Because that teacher didn't do one thing I told her to!"

There's a Lion cub for you. They grow up being assertive, get-to-the-bottom=line leaders. They're usually doers, and they love to solve problems.

If you're a teacher with Lion kids, they're probably running the class – or *at least trying to*. That attitude tends to carry on in life where they usually end up as the boss at work – or at least they think they are!

Properly balanced, their charge-ahead, take-no-captives mindset can be a tremendous strength. They make fearless Marines, tough managers, and determined, visionary entrepreneurs. Are they decisive? Absolutely. With or without the facts, *let's make a decision!*

Their natural strength at making quick decisions tends to spill over into their conversations. When it comes to meaningful communication, the average Lion wants it like *Reader's Digest*, not *War and Peace*.

As a result, do Lions tend to be great at chit-chat? Usually not. After all, what's the point? An insensitive Lion would be capable of talking to his or her spouse for five or ten minutes, then interrupting and saying, "Honey, this is great, but the next time we talk – try having a point!"

Casual chatter, after all, doesn't have a "purpose." It doesn't *so/lve* anything. (Let's at least get into an argument! Then we can get all our cards on the table.)

What's the common time frame for a Lion? Usually it's NOW. If you have a child who is a Lion, when does he want breakfast? NOW. When does she want to go to the mall? NOW. A Lion boss will slap a project on your desk and say, "I want this done NOW."

"But," you might protest. "You just gave me a project to work on ten minutes ago."

"I know," the Lion will likely reply. "But that was then, this is NOW!"

As you look around the country, you will see Lions in many places of Leadership, whether in business or ministry. Without Lions, there would be a lot more discussed and a lot less accomplished in our world. It's a valuable character trait, but it needs to be held in balance.

What are some things Lions need to learn?

First, they need to accept the fact that *questions are not challenges to their authority*. Most Lions do not like to be questioned. They would rather just be obeyed! In particular, they can resent the close questioning of more detailed personality types who ask things like, "Why are you doing that?" or, "Have you really thought through what this decision means to our family?" To a Lion, words like that can often sound like a challenge or criticism. Yet most often, those who love to ask questions do so out of their strength of being detailed and careful, not from being critical.

The second thing Lions need to learn is that *projects are not as important as people*. Lions can get totally wrapped up in the challenge of completing a "task." In the process, they can steamroll people who appear to be "Slowing up the process."

Confronted with the prone figure of a flattened co-worker, a Lion will look down and say, "Hey, I wasn't criticizing YOU, I was just criticizing your WORK." Yet not all of us can make that kind of separation. For some temperaments, if you attack their work, you are attacking *them*.

Great strengths reside in those who possess this temperament. Yet they need the strengths of a second basic personality type, those we call Otters.

Otters: Parties Waiting to Happen

Have you ever seen an Otter that wasn't having fun? Watch a "National Geographic" special, and you'll see them sliding down creek beds and floating on their backs, eating food off their stomachs. In the world of human personalities, Otters tend to exhibit similar characteristics. They tend to be energetic, fun-loving souls. Otter kids love to hang around at their friends' houses, or want their friends over...*constantly*. They wake up with the conviction that life could be, ought or be, or will be *fun*. Ever excitable, otters are enthusiastic cheerleaders and motivators. Their favorite habitat is an environment where they can talk (and talk and talk and talk) and have the opportunity to give lots of input on major decisions. For example, many Otters don't get into carpools to save the environment; they do so because it gives them a captive group to talk to!

Otters' outgoing nature makes them consummate networkers. They usually know people who know people who know people. The only problem is, they can't

remember anyone's name! Everyone is "Old Buddy" or "Sweetheart," but even though they know a thousand people one inch deep, they communicate so much genuine warmth that they are often everyone's best friends. They can be soft and encouraging with others (unless under pressure, when they tend to use their verbal skills to attack). Because of their strong desire to be liked, however, they can often fail to be hard on problems now – which results in problems compounding down the road.

Otters are great motivators and encouragers – but how are they at details? Well, not exactly great. An Otter student will typically wait until the night before the due date to get started on his term paper – only to discover that all the reference books have already been checked out of the library. Does he despair? Not an Otter!

He'll simply pick up a box of donuts, find out who's got some books at home, and drop by for a "term paper party."

What's the time perspective of these fun-loving characters? With the Lion it is LET'S DO IT NOW! With the Otter, it's THE FUTURE! That's one reason they're so optimistic all the time.

For an Otter, all of life's problems can either be relegated to the present or the past. If they're in the past, you can't do anything about them. If they're in the present...hey, things are going to work out great tomorrow! That's why one favorite Otter expression is, "Lighten up!" They have a tremendous ability to put off worrying until another day.

What do Otters need to learn?

At some point in their romp through life, Otters need to be reminded that their happy-go-lucky antics can create not-so-funny problems...for themselves and others. Even though they dislike bothering with details, they need to get used to the idea that actions have consequences – and not all of them pleasant.

Case in point? *Deadlines are not guidelines.* Sometimes the consequences of failing to complete a job on time cannot be shrugged away. Opportunities can be lost – perhaps irretrievably – and people can be hurt or disappointed when an Otter makes a promise, and then doesn't follow through. Otters can benefit from a strong dose of reality on this score. In addition, Otters also need to remember that *it is more critical to be a God-pleaser than a people-pleaser.* Parents must be aware that this type of child is highly susceptible to peer pressure. They want so much to be liked and accepted that they may find themselves tempted to "revise" their standards and principles to get along with their friends.

We've looked at a Lion's strength of character, and at how an Otter just tries to be a character. Now, let's look at the type of person who reflects depth of character.

Golden Retrievers: Loyal and True-Blue

True to their namesake, Golden Retrievers are loyal, supportive, nurturing encouragers. All the Girl Scouts selling cookies within a twenty-mile radius know where these people live, because they have such a difficult time saying no. A Retriever may have already purchased twelve boxes of butterscotch crèmes, but

if he sees a teardrop in a little girl's eye, he'll usually justify buying "just one more box."

To their credit, Retrievers can stoutly absorb a great deal of relational bumps and bruises and yet stay committed. They are listeners and empathizers and make steadfast, be-there-when-you-need-me friends.

Forget telling "dead cat" jokes to these people, however, because you will not find an appreciative audience. In addition, like a Patriot missile battery, they have an incredible radar detection device that God has built within them to sense "hurting" people. Ever-sensitive and natural counselors, Retrievers can somehow locate the one hurting or depressed person in a roomful of noisy people.

With all their skills at people-helping however, there is one word Retrievers need to learn – even if it means practicing it in front of the mirror for half an hour each day. It's a small word, but it can make all the difference in their relationships.

You guessed it. It's the word "no."

When pushed to an extreme, each of our great strengths can become liabilities. When for the sake of "loyalty" or "adaptability" a Golden Retriever gives in again and again to the relational demands of another – even when that other person desperately needs a firm "no" – it becomes a situation psychologists call "co-dependency." Retrievers need to learn that genuine love has a hard side as well as a soft side.

A Retriever's time frame is THE PRESENT. They're focused on today's conversations and relationships. Put a Lion personality in a mountain cabin for a month – by himself – and when you return to pick him up, he'll have blown out walls, added on five rooms, and mowed down the trees to put in a mini-mart next door. Otters, alone in a mountain cabin, would somehow sneak in a portable phone, fax, and TV. But if you could ever get a Golden Retriever to leave his family for a month and be by himself, he would adapt splendidly. He'd catch up on his correspondence, make gifts for special friends, and basically blend into his surroundings.

Parents of Golden Retrievers will sometimes be surprised to find *themselves* being parented.

"You look sad, Mommy, what's wrong?"

"Is everything going okay at work, Dad? Are you still worried about your boss being angry at you?"

Although these concerned children may seem like welcome and convenient sounding boards on some occasions, parents should exercise caution about "opening up" or "dumping" adult burdens on these willing little listeners. We often talk in counseling with a now grown man or woman who is still suffering from carrying too much, too fast. Golden Retriever kids will quietly step under your load with shoulders that weren't meant to carry that sort of emotional weight.

Lions, Otters, and Golden Retrievers. All are tremendous people with valuable strengths. But our list of personalities and personal strengths wouldn't be complete without another important member of the zoo – our Beaver friends.

Leave It To The Beavers

Of all God's creatures, one of the most special is the beaver. One story I recently heard from a fishing guide in Alaska points out a major characteristic in these animals – and their human counterparts, as we shall see.

Several hours outside Anchorage, near Mt. McKinley, there was a small road with a round culvert built under it to drain away water. A local beaver looked at that pipe and somehow figured out that if he dammed it up, the water would soon collect into a pool behind it. An instant beaver pond!

Without tape measure or yardstick, he managed to gnaw down a tree and bite off the branches so precisely that the log fit perfectly into the pipe – damming up the water flow. The beaver did such a workman-like job that the road service was unable to remove it from the culvert. The log fit so snugly and securely that the road crew was forced to rip out the road, remove the culvert (log still intact), and re-lay a new pipe. That, friends, is attention to detail!

A human Beaver's unshakable motto is LET'S DO IT RIGHT. If we're not going to do it right, then let's not do it! Combine that natural precision with bulldog persistence and you have an unbelievable employee. Just like the Energizer rabbit on the TV commercials, they keep going and going and going.

Detail-oriented, careful, methodic, and thorough to a fault, these are the type of people who actually read instruction books! In fact, one, tremendous strength of a beaver in the average home is that they're the only ones who can figure out how to set the clock on the VCR!

Do all animals in the family zoo slow down like a Beaver to make sure they're following the directions? Nope. Give an Otter a computer at work, and before he reads anything, he'll have the thing out of the box, plugged in, and be searching the menus for a game to play. Give a Beaver a computer at work and he will want to read the instructions before he takes it out of the box.

It's often easy to spot a Beaver. You know you have a Beaver child if she lines her shoes up in straight lines in her closet. Beavers' blouses or shirts are always color coordinated and hung in a row, and they even roll their socks up! (Otters on the other hand have sock *rooms*, not sock drawers!)

These people are God's architects. They tend to think in columns, square corners, and straight lines. Beavers have a strong need to do things "right" and "by the book." They like maps, charts, and organization. Count on them for quality control functions at home or the office.

Michelangelo, an obvious Beaver, spent seven-and-a-half years....blah blah...I don't think this is true...check it out How long would it have taken a Lion to Paint that ceiling?

"We're gonna get a crew in there and we'll knock that sucker out in a week!

An Otter never would have finished! After getting a group of his friends to hang out with him on the scaffolding, the work party would soon degenerate into paint fights. (That is, if he remembered to order the paint.)

A Golden Retriever might not finish because she'd constantly be taking all the worker's emotional temperatures.

“How’s it going today? How’s the family? You have a stiff neck from lying on your back? Hey, you’d better take the day off and see a chiropractor. Let me work your shift for you.”

If you want something done right, and in a way that will last a lifetime – then leave it to Beaver. They don’t stop on a project until the thing is D-O-N-E. Then, they can look back for the rest of their lives with a deep inward glow, remembering that *they did it right*.

For that reason, a Beaver’s time perspective is THE PAST. What counts with them is a consistent track record.