



YOUR STRENGTHS AT WORK

Know what you bring. Spot it in others. Use it
every day - at work and at home.

Peak Positive · Michelle Winn

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What strengths actually are

Most of us have never been properly introduced to our own strengths. Let alone those of the people we work alongside every day. This guide changes that.

Skills

Learned capabilities. You can be good at something without it costing you nothing. A skilled accountant who drains after every spreadsheet is working from competence, not strength.

Strengths

A strength is something that comes naturally and doesn't drain you to do. Other people often notice it long before you do.

Personality tells us who we are.
Strengths tell us what we do with it.

Why It Matters

The evidence base

Using your strengths is linked to higher engagement, better performance, lower stress and measurable improvements in wellbeing and mental health, at work and beyond it.

6x

more likely to be engaged at work when using strengths daily

Gallup

73%

improvement in overall work performance

Strengthscope



higher vitality and lower depression when strengths are used regularly

Wood et al., 2011



Spotting strengths in yourself and others

Use these four signals to identify when a strength is present.

S

Seek

Look for what this person gravitates toward. What do they volunteer for? What problems do they want to solve?

E

Excel

Spot where they perform with ease and quality. Output seems almost effortless compared to others.

E

Energise

Notice what lights someone up. A change in pace, posture, voice, engagement. That shift is a signal.

N

Notice

Pay attention to patterns over time. A single moment might be circumstance. What do others notice?

The 24 strengths and what happens when you dial too high

Every strength has an overdrive mode. Like an audio dial, the sweet spot is in the green. Push too far and it distorts. Knowing your overdrive patterns is as important as knowing your strengths.



Strength	Description	
Creativity	Original thinking and novel approaches	Eccentricity, impracticality
Curiosity	Interest in exploring and learning	Nosiness, intrusiveness
Judgement	Thinking things through carefully	Cynicism, paralysis by analysis
Love of Learning	Mastering new skills and topics	Know-it-all, ivory tower
Perspective	Seeing the bigger picture wisely	Detachment, over-advising
Bravery	Acting on conviction despite fear	Recklessness, foolhardiness
Perseverance	Finishing what you start	Obsessiveness, rigidity
Honesty	Being authentic and genuine	Bluntness, tactlessness
Zest	Approaching life with energy	Hyperactivity, exhausting others
Love	Valuing close relationships	Emotional dependence, smothering
Kindness	Doing good for others	Intrusiveness, people-pleasing
Social Intelligence	Reading people and situations	Over-analysing, manipulation
Teamwork	Working well as part of a group	Groupthink, losing identity
Fairness	Treating people equally	Detachment, inability to prioritise
Leadership	Organising and motivating others	Controlling, micromanaging
Forgiveness	Letting go of grudges	Doormat, enabling bad behaviour
Humility	Letting achievements speak	Self-deprecation, invisibility
Prudence	Being careful about choices	Stuffiness, risk-aversion
Self-Regulation	Managing impulses and emotions	Rigidity, emotional suppression
Appreciation of Beauty	Noticing excellence and wonder	Perfectionism, snobbery
Gratitude	Being thankful and expressing it	Indebtedness, false positivity
Hope	Expecting the best and working for it	Pollyanna thinking, naivety
Humour	Seeing the lighter side	Deflection, not taking things seriously
Spirituality	Connecting to meaning and purpose	Zealotry, self-righteousness

Using SEEN with others

SEEN works anywhere there are people. Colleagues, friends, family.

Spot the strength

When someone shares a story, listen for SEEN signals. Name what you notice: I noticed curiosity in how you approached that. You kept asking questions until it made sense.

Have one conversation this week

Pick one person: a colleague, friend, or someone at home. Tell them one strength you have observed in them and what specifically showed it. Most people have never heard this said plainly.

Look for the strength under the behaviour

When someone is struggling or being difficult, look underneath. Overwhelm often looks like a strength in overdrive, not a character flaw.

Cover gaps through collaboration

Rather than fixing weaknesses, look for complementary strengths. Build partnerships that cover gaps naturally, at work and at home.



01

Know it

Identify the strength. What is it actually called? Use the VIA list as your starting point.

02

See it

Where does it already show up? In your work, at home, in how you approach challenges.

03

Use it

Where could you deliberately bring more of it? To a challenge, a relationship, a task that drains you.

BUILD ON WHAT YOU HAVE

Using and developing your strengths

USING STRENGTHS

Notice when you are in flow: complete absorption, time disappearing, effortless performance. That is a strength in action.

Ask yourself: how could I use this strength more. At work, at home, in how I approach challenges?

Build more of your day around your strengths where you can. Small deliberate shifts in how you approach tasks or volunteer for work build energy and engagement over time.

Use strengths to manage weaknesses: pair up with someone whose strength covers your gap; reframe a difficult task through a strength you do have; recognise that what looks like a weakness is often a strength pushed too far.

DEVELOPING STRENGTHS

Strengths grow with use. Find new contexts to apply them, at work and outside it.

Stretch your strengths into harder situations rather than saving them for easy tasks.

Get feedback from someone who knows you at your best. Ask what they notice in you when you are fully in your element.

Notice what you are drawn to. Curiosity about a topic is often a signal that a strength is nearby.



Your Strengths in a Changing World

What stays constant when everything changes

The world of work keeps shifting. Technology, restructures, new demands, AI. What doesn't shift is what you bring. Your particular combination of strengths is yours alone. Knowing that clearly matters more in uncertain times, not less.

AI is fast, consistent, tireless.

What it cannot do:

Notice when someone in the room has gone quiet

Tell when honesty is needed more than reassurance

Make the call that depends on reading people rather than data

Know which idea is worth pursuing, not just which ones are plausible

Those are not gaps waiting to be filled. They are your strengths.

Accentuate

Use AI to take on the work that drains you, freeing more time and energy for work that uses your strengths. If drafting exhausts you but shaping doesn't, let AI write the first version.

Supplement

Nobody has all 24 strengths firing all the time. AI can quietly cover some of the gaps. If generating ideas doesn't come naturally, use AI to produce options, then bring your Judgement to which ones are worth pursuing.

Your strengths matter more, not less,
when more of the work is changing around you.

At work

When roles change, teams restructure, or new tools arrive, the people who know their strengths know what they bring. That confidence is not arrogance. It is clarity.

At home

When life changes, relationships, family, transitions, your strengths are the constant. They don't depend on a job title or a particular role. They're just you.



Your strengths matter more,
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is changing around you.

Find out your strengths

The free VIA Character Strengths Survey takes 10 to 15 minutes and gives you a ranked profile of all 24 strengths.

viacharacter.org



Work with Michelle

Individual strengths profiling and coaching, team strengths mapping, and organisational development in Guernsey.

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