

## HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

The quality of our relationships at work is largely impacted by our level of awareness about ourselves and others, as well as how we choose to use our strengths, skills and behaviours in dealing with co-workers, customers, and other stakeholders.

A good awareness of your strengths using the Strengthscope™ profiler can help you improve your relationships by better understanding:

- How you perform at your best and approach relationships.
- The strengths others have and how you can work in complementary, productive partnerships with people different from yourself to achieve individual and team goals and higher levels of engagement.
- People with whom you are likely to identify strongly with and have a strong initial connection or rapport. These people are typically those who are likely to have strengths similar to your own.
- People who might annoy or irritate you. These people are typically those who have weaknesses/non-strengths in areas which are your strengths or sources of energy.
- People who might feel particularly annoyed or frustrated when your strengths are too “loud” or overplayed. These people are typically those who are very different from you and are less energised by areas where you have natural strengths.

To improve and enhance your relationships consider the following questions, referring to your “significant seven” strengths in the tables that follow:

1. How can I use my strengths to get the most out of my relationships at work? Which strengths are particularly appreciated by my co-workers, customers and other stakeholders?

2. What type of people really energise me at work and why? How can I spend more time with these people?
3. How do I deal with those people who have very different strengths from my own? What do I appreciate about these people? What annoys me about them? How can I ensure I build better understanding of these people and what makes them 'tick' through active listening, questioning and observation? How can I work with these people in a more complementary, collaborative way to ensure that performance and positive energy is optimised?
4. What strengths do I have that might annoy others when they come over too strongly or are overplayed? What are the consequences? How can I "dial back" and better manage these strengths in these situations so they don't become sources of potential conflict and damage my relationships?

## IMPROVING AND ENHANCING RELATIONSHIPS USING STRENGTHS

Strength	People whose qualities you identify with	People who might annoy you	What might annoy others about you
<b>Collaboration</b>	People who are open to collaboration and look for win-win solutions.	People who focus on their own agenda and argue too strongly to defend their point of view/interests without seeking to work cooperatively with others to achieve their aims.	Decisive and results-focused people will get annoyed if you spend too much time trying to collaborate with others when this is unnecessary or inappropriate, specifically where a quick or straightforward decision is required.
<b>Common Sense</b>	People who appear “down to earth” and make pragmatic judgements based on practical thinking and well-proven approaches.	People who come up with ideas you regard as too radical, idealistic or not sufficiently grounded in common sense logic. In communicating with you and others, their approach may also lack pragmatism and realism; they may either over-simplify or overcomplicate explanations to others.	Creative, visionary and strategic minded people might find you too dismissive of ideas and solutions that don’t fit with conventional logic. They might see you as someone who stifles creative and inspirational ideas and initiatives.
<b>Compassion</b>	People who share your deep and genuine concern for the wellbeing and welfare of others.	People who don’t respond appropriately to the emotional needs of others. They might show indifference, lack of concern or clumsiness with regard to their feelings and wellbeing.	Analytical and task-based people may see you as weak and unnecessarily caring when dealing with people’s feelings and personal problems. They could see you as allowing yourself to be taken advantage of, an “agony aunt” who people become dependent on.

## IMPROVING AND ENHANCING RELATIONSHIPS USING STRENGTHS

Strength	People whose qualities you identify with	People who might annoy you	What might annoy others about you
<b>Courage</b>	People who are gutsy, they take on challenges, appear confident when faced with risks and stand up for what they believe in.	People who avoid taking risks, following a more cautious and restrained path instead. They back down easily, avoiding confrontation and difficult challenges.	People who are more cautious and risk-averse may see you as someone who takes on unnecessarily high levels of risk and challenge. They may perceive you as reckless, overly direct or extreme in defending your beliefs.
<b>Creativity</b>	People who generate new ideas and original solutions; they like brainstorming and exploring new possibilities and opportunities to do things in untested, original ways.	People who conform too easily to the status quo or fail to look for innovative solutions, alternatives and opportunities to improve products/services, processes and outcomes.	Pragmatic and more cautious people who like well-proven, more obvious approaches and solutions. They might see your ideas as unworkable and even eccentric, taking little account of the realities of the organisation, its context and customer needs.
<b>Critical Thinking</b>	People who like analysing information in a detailed, systematic way, breaking it down and evaluating it objectively to find the best solution. They can spot flaws and weaknesses in arguments and data quickly and rarely get sidetracked by emotions/feelings attached to a decision.	People who appear to accept and offer arguments and solutions too quickly, without dissecting and analysing them to assess their true value.	Creatives and decisive people who are more comfortable with making decisions based on new or limited data are likely to get frustrated with your time-consuming and systematic approach to decisions. More optimistic, "glass half full" people are also likely to find your continuous questioning of proposed solutions and ability to spot flaws quickly frustrating. This may result in them perceiving you as negative, pessimistic or over-critical.

## IMPROVING AND ENHANCING RELATIONSHIPS USING STRENGTHS

Strength	People whose qualities you identify with	People who might annoy you	What might annoy others about you
<b>Decisiveness</b>	People who make quick, confident and clear decisions, even when faced with limited information.	People who have a habit of putting off or deferring decisions, even when all the relevant information is available to them. They appear unable or unwilling to reach definite decisions or conclusions about issues.	People who are more cautious and systematic in the way they make decisions might regard you as overly hasty or rash in your approach to decision-making. They are likely to be uncomfortable with the little time that you appear to spend considering various options, particularly when decisions haven't worked out well in the past.
<b>Detail Orientation</b>	People who pay attention to the detail in order to ensure high quality output, no matter what the pressures.	People who pay little attention to the detail of a task or project. They might appear careless or "sloppy" to you in the way they conduct their work and don't appear to work to the same high standards of quality which you value.	People who are strategic, big picture thinkers and pay little attention to the detail. They are energised by operating at the 30,000 foot level rather than the 3 foot level. These people might see you are spending too much time in the detail at the expense of the bigger picture. Results focused, decisive people who want to get things done quickly might also see you as too much of a perfectionist who struggles to work fast under pressure.
<b>Developing Others</b>	People who value and spend time promoting other people's learning and development. They enjoy seeing others develop towards their personal and professional goals and fulfil their potential.	People who ignore or pay little attention to other people's growth or personal development needs.	People who are more task-focused and place little value on others' longer-term development. They might see you as spending excessive time helping people "get on" at the expense of short-term demands and activities.

## IMPROVING AND ENHANCING RELATIONSHIPS USING STRENGTHS

Strength	People whose qualities you identify with	People who might annoy you	What might annoy others about you
<b>Efficiency</b>	People who take a well-structured and methodical approach to tasks to achieve planned outcomes. They come across as highly organised and work systematically to get things done.	People who appear to be unplanned, unsystematic and spontaneous. They often leave things to the last minute and appear chaotic, inefficient and/or untidy.	People who are more creative and flexible in their approach to work might feel constrained by your focus on organisation and planning. They might feel that your strong emphasis on efficiency leaves little scope to incorporate new information and options as the project or task unfolds.
<b>Emotional Control</b>	People who appear to have good awareness of their emotional triggers and how to control these feelings and emotions to ensure they don't interfere with work. People who are calm and remain productive in the face of stress and pressure.	People who are impulsive, excitable and emotional. They openly share their feelings and emotions with others, without fully considering the impact on others and their work.	People who are more passionate, enthusiastic or emotionally open may see you as dispassionate and aloof as you don't share your emotions and feelings openly with others.
<b>Empathy</b>	People who try to understand and identify with other people's situations; they work hard to see things from others' perspectives as well as their own.	People who really struggle to "walk in others' shoes" – to identify with others' feelings, background and their situation. They might come across as unconcerned, self-centered or insensitive.	People who are very task-focused, analytical or self-sufficient might find your empathy an unnecessary distraction. They might see you as too concerned with others views and feelings rather than having strong independent views and opinions of your own.

## IMPROVING AND ENHANCING RELATIONSHIPS USING STRENGTHS

Strength	People whose qualities you identify with	People who might annoy you	What might annoy others about you
<b>Enthusiasm</b>	People who show passion and energy when communicating their goals, beliefs, interests or ideas. They get excited about things they believe strongly in and demonstrate this passion through their words and actions.	People who never appear to get excited about anything. They remain dispassionate and show little enthusiasm and energy, even when communicating beliefs, ideas or views they feel strongly about. They might come across as apathetic, indifferent or 'cool' to you.	People who are more dispassionate, cautious or cool-headed may find your behaviour too emotional, overwhelming or overzealous at times. Your enthusiasm could also leave them feeling that their views and ideas are being "streamrolled" by the sheer intensity of your emotional energy and drive.
<b>Flexibility</b>	People who are adaptable and flexible in the face of unfamiliar or changing situation. They are good as "going with the flow" when changes in approach and attitude are called for.	People who appear inflexible or uncomfortable with new ways of working or changing circumstances. They prefer greater predictability and stability at work and in their life generally, often resisting attempts to change and move forward.	People who are more planful, organised or have a strong need for security in their career may see you as being too flexible and adaptable. They might regard you as restless and overly optimistic in the face of change.
<b>Initiative</b>	People who take independent action to make things happen and achieve goals; they don't wait to be asked to do something, they simply do it.	People who rely too much on others' direction and guidance in deciding what to do and how to do it. They appear uncomfortable taking independent action, particularly where work outcomes are likely to have an impact beyond their job.	People who are cautious, thorough and need clear direction before taking action may see you as someone who starts too many initiatives or activities without fully considering the consequences. You might also appear too independent, over-zealous and quick to act at the expense of proper consultation and agreement.

## IMPROVING AND ENHANCING RELATIONSHIPS USING STRENGTHS

Strength	People whose qualities you identify with	People who might annoy you	What might annoy others about you
<b>Leading</b>	People who take responsibility for and appear at ease with influencing and motivating others to contribute to the goals and success of the organisation.	People who stand back and allow others to take the lead; they expect clear guidance and direction from others. When leadership is not forthcoming, they might appear unable or unwilling to act. In these situations, they may complain about a lack of leadership as the reason for inaction or inadequate performance.	People who are strongly independent, specialised in their own field (e.g., R&D or technical professionals) or simply want to control their own work outcomes and approach. They might see your leadership as unnecessary, domineering or controlling. This will be particularly true if someone else is already performing the leadership role effectively or in self-managing teams, where leadership is typically shared among team members.
<b>Optimism</b>	People who remain positive and upbeat about the future and their ability to influence it to their advantage.	People who are overly critical, negative or pessimistic and rarely see the benefits and opportunities arising from new situations and ideas. They express their doubts and gloomy predictions readily and appear to live a “glass half empty” existence.	People who are more pessimistic and/or critically minded may see you as unrealistically positive and upbeat about the future. It might annoy them that your approach is too simplistic and overlooks shortcomings and potential problem areas that should be taken into account to ensure a more balanced and objective analysis of decisions and ideas.
<b>Persuasiveness</b>	People who value and are good at winning agreement and support for a position or desired outcome.	People who are too accommodating of others' views and opinions; they rarely argue their case strongly and fail to change others' views in support of their needs and position.	People who are more passive, accommodating and conflict avoidant in the way they approach tasks and decisions. They might see you as someone who is too forceful and pushy in arguing your position and interests. They might also see you as someone who enjoys debating for debate's sake rather than focusing on relevant outcomes.

## IMPROVING AND ENHANCING RELATIONSHIPS USING STRENGTHS

Strength	People whose qualities you identify with	People who might annoy you	What might annoy others about you
<b>Resilience</b>	People who love the buzz of a challenge and are good at overcoming setbacks and stressful periods at work and in their personal life.	People who approach each setback or challenge as a major problem or insurmountable hurdle. These people are likely to avoid tough challenges or attribute poor performance in these situations to factors outside their control.	People who are more emotionally vulnerable, sensitive and are not good at coping with stressful situations might see you as someone who deliberately challenges yourself for the buzz that comes with it, irrespective of the mission's value. They might see you are reckless or careless, exposing the organisations and others to unnecessary risk and challenge to satisfy your own agenda.
<b>Results Focus</b>	People who focus on results and getting things done, driving tasks and projects to completion.	People who pay little attention to goals and priorities, focusing instead on tasks that have no clear payoff and aren't directly related to results. People who get easily distracted from major priorities and outcomes are also likely to be a source of annoyance.	People who are more creative, people oriented, strategic or focused on personal growth may get frustrated with you as you might miss important aspects of the task/project, e.g., the opportunity to be creative or to reflect on and learn from the tasks or activity.
<b>Self Confidence</b>	People who have a strong belief in themselves and their ability to accomplish their tasks and goals.	People whose low self-belief may undermine their ability to accomplish goals through indecision, procrastination and lack of assertiveness.	People who are less assertive and confident or those who value modesty and humility over confidence may regard you as brash, overconfident or even arrogant. They might see you as someone who is too consumed by your own sense of self-importance to recognise flaws in your thinking and behaviour.

## IMPROVING AND ENHANCING RELATIONSHIPS USING STRENGTHS

Strength	People whose qualities you identify with	People who might annoy you	What might annoy others about you
<b>Self-improvement</b>	People have a strong growth or learning mindset and draw on a wide range of people and resources to further their self-development and learning.	People who have a fixed mindset and don't believe they can grow and develop significantly. They may demonstrate a dismissive or complacent approach to new knowledge and learning, which might narrow their perspective and knowledge on issues.	People who are task-oriented and don't value lifelong learning strongly might be annoyed by your focus on accumulating knowledge and learning for its own sake, rather than to achieve specific outcomes. People who are more practical doers and haven't experienced a lot of qualifications and training might also be somewhat daunted by your passion for learning and knowledge.
<b>Strategic Mindedness</b>	People who like to focus on future possibilities and take a more strategic, big picture perspective on issues and challenges.	People who are so focused on the "here and now" or the detail in a task that they rarely step back to see the big picture.	People who are detailed oriented, take a common sense approach or spend most of their time in the present might be frustrated by your lack of attention on the detail, what's worked in the past and current realities.