

STRENGTH SWITCH

Glossary of Strength Terms



The VIA Classification of Character Strengths and Virtues

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Virtue of Wisdom and knowledge

Cognitive strengths that entail the acquisition and use of knowledge:

Creativity [originality, ingenuity]:

- Thinking of novel and productive ways to conceptualize and do things; includes artistic achievement but is not limited to it.

Curiosity [interest, novelty-seeking, openness to experience]:

- Taking an interest in ongoing experience for its own sake; finding subjects and topics fascinating; exploring and discovering.

Judgment [open-mindedness; critical thinking]:

- Thinking things through and examining them from all sides; not jumping to conclusions; being able to change one's mind in light of evidence; weighing all evidence fairly.

Love of learning:

- Mastering new skills, topics, and bodies of knowledge, whether on one's own or formally; related to the strength of curiosity but goes beyond it to describe the tendency to add systematically to what one knows.

Perspective [wisdom]:

- Being able to provide wise counsel to others; having ways of looking at the world that make sense to oneself/others.

- **Virtue of Courage**

Emotional strengths that involve the exercise of will to accomplish goals in the face of opposition, external or internal.

Bravery [valor]:

- Not shrinking from threat, challenge, difficulty, or pain; speaking up for what's right even if there's opposition; acting on convictions even if unpopular; includes physical bravery but is not limited to it.

Perseverance [persistence, industriousness]:

- Finishing what one starts; persevering in a course of action in spite of obstacles; “getting it out the door”; taking pleasure in completing tasks.

Honesty [authenticity, integrity]:

- Speaking the truth but more broadly presenting oneself in a genuine way and acting in a sincere way; being without pretense; taking responsibility for one's feelings and actions.

Zest [vitality, enthusiasm, vigor, energy]:

- Approaching life with excitement and energy; not doing things halfway or halfheartedly; living life as an adventure; feeling alive and activated.

Virtue of Humanity

- Interpersonal strengths that involve tending and befriending others:

Love (capacity to love and be loved):

- Valuing close relations with others, in particular those in which sharing & caring are reciprocated; being close to people:

Kindness [generosity, nurturance, care, compassion, altruistic love, “niceness”]:

- Doing favors and good deeds for others; helping them; taking care of them.

Social intelligence [emotional intelligence, personal intelligence]:

- Being aware of the motives/feelings of others and oneself; knowing what to do to fit into different social situations; knowing what makes other people tick.

Virtue of Justice

- Civic strengths that underlie healthy community life:

Teamwork [citizenship, social responsibility, loyalty]:

- Working well as a member of a group or team; being loyal to the group; doing one's share.

Fairness:

- Treating all people the same according to notions of fairness & justice; not letting feelings bias decisions about others; giving everyone a fair chance.

Leadership:

- Encouraging a group of which one is a member to get things done and at the same time maintain good relations within the group; organizing group activities and seeing that they happen.

Virtue of Temperance

- Strengths that protect against excess:

Forgiveness [mercy]:

- Forgiving those who have done wrong; accepting others' shortcomings; giving people a second chance; not being vengeful.

Humility [modesty]:

- Letting one's accomplishments speak for themselves; not regarding oneself as more special than one is.

Prudence:

- Being careful about one's choices; not taking undue risks; not saying or doing things that might later be regretted.

Self-regulation [self-control]:

- Regulating what one feels and does; being disciplined; controlling one's appetites and emotions.

Virtue of Transcendence

- Strengths that forge connections to the universe & provide meaning:

Appreciation of beauty and excellence [awe, wonder, elevation]:

Noticing and appreciating beauty, excellence, and/or skilled performance in various domains of life, from nature to art to mathematics to science to everyday experience.

Gratitude:

- Being aware of and thankful for the good things that happen; taking time to express thanks.

Hope [optimism, future-mindedness, future orientation]:

- Expecting the best in the future and working to achieve it; believing that a good future is something that can be brought about.

Humor [playfulness]:

- Liking to laugh and tease; bringing smiles to other people; seeing the light side; making (not necessarily telling) jokes.

Spirituality [religiousness, faith, purpose]:

- Having coherent beliefs about the higher purpose & meaning of the universe; knowing where one fits within the larger scheme; having beliefs about the meaning of life that shape conduct and provide comfort.

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Gratitude: Strengths of Heart.

- Gratitude is the appreciation for the benefits we receive from others, and the desire to reciprocate.

Social/Emotional Intelligence: Strengths of Heart.

- Social/Emotional Intelligence is understanding feelings and using them to inform actions.

Purpose: Strengths of Heart.

- Having a purpose means being driven by something larger than yourself.

Self-Control: Strengths of Heart, Strengths of Mind.

- Self-control is controlling one's own responses so they align with short- and long-term goals.

Curiosity: Strengths of Mind.

- Curiosity is a strong desire to learn or know something- a search for information for its own sake.

Grit: Strengths of Will.

- Grit is perseverance and passion for long-term goals.

Zest: Strengths of Mind.

- Zest – also referred to as vitality – is an approach to life that is filled with excitement and energy.

Growth Mindset: Strengths of Will.

- Having a growth mindset means understanding that intelligence can be developed.

Optimism: Strengths of Will.

- Optimism is being hopeful about future outcomes combined with the agency to shape that future.

The Gallup Organization Strengths Finder

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(<http://www.strengthstest.com/strengthsfinderthemes/strengths-themes.html>)

Achiever:

- People strong in the Achiever theme have a great deal of stamina and work hard. They take great satisfaction from being busy and productive.

Activator:

- People strong in the Activator theme can make things happen by turning thoughts into action. They are often impatient.

Adaptability:

- People strong 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 strong in the Analytical theme search for reasons and causes. They have the ability to think about all the factors that might affect a situation.

Arranger:

- People strong in the Arranger theme can organize, but they also have a flexibility that complements this ability. They like to figure out how all of the pieces and resources can be arranged for maximum productivity.

Belief:

- People strong in the Belief theme have certain core values that are unchanging. Out of these values emerges a defined purpose for their life.

Command:

- People strong in the Command theme have presence. They can take control of a situation and make decisions.

Communication:

- People strong in the Communication theme generally find it easy to put their thoughts into words. They are good conversationalists and presenters.

Competition:

- People strong in the Competition theme measure their progress against the performance of others. They strive to win first place and revel in contests.

Connectedness:

- People strong in the Connectedness theme have faith in the links between all things. They believe there are few coincidences and that almost every event has a reason.

Consistency:

- People strong in the Consistency theme are keenly aware of the need to treat people the same. They try to treat everyone in the world with consistency by setting up clear rules and adhering to them.

Context:

- People strong in the Context theme enjoy thinking about the past. They understand the present by researching its history.

Deliberative:

- People strong in the Deliberative theme are best described by the serious care they take in making decisions or choices. They anticipate the obstacles.

Developer:

- People strong in the Developer theme recognize and cultivate the potential in others.
- They spot the signs of each small improvement and derive satisfaction from these improvements.

Discipline:

- People strong in the Discipline theme enjoy routine and structure. Their world is best described by the order they create.

Empathy:

- People strong in the Empathy theme can sense the feelings of other people by imagining themselves in others' lives or others' situations.

Focus:

- People strong 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 strong in the Futuristic theme are inspired by the future and what could be. They inspire others with their visions of the future.

Harmony:

- People strong in the Harmony theme look for consensus. They don't enjoy conflict; rather, they seek areas of agreement.

Ideation:

- People strong in the Ideation theme are fascinated by ideas. They are able to find connections between seemingly disparate phenomena.

Includer (formerly Inclusiveness):

- People strong in the Includer theme are accepting of others. They show awareness of those who feel left out, and make an effort to include them.

Individualization:

- People strong in the Individualization theme are intrigued with the unique qualities of each person. They have a gift for figuring out how people who are different can work together productively.

Input:

- People strong in the Input theme have a craving to know more. Often they like to collect and archive all kinds of information.

Intellection:

- People strong in the Intellection theme are characterized by their intellectual activity. They are introspective and appreciate intellectual discussions.

Learner:

- People strong in the Learner theme have a great desire to learn and want to continuously improve. In particular, the process of learning, rather than the outcome, excites them.

Maximizer:

- People strong 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 strong in the Positivity theme have an enthusiasm that is contagious. They are upbeat and can get others excited about what they are going to do.

Relator:

- People who are strong in the Relator theme enjoy close relationships with others. They find deep satisfaction in working hard with friends to achieve a goal.

Responsibility:

- People strong 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 strong 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 strong in the Self-assurance theme feel confident in their ability to manage their own lives. They possess an inner compass that gives them confidence that their decisions are right.

Significance:

- People strong in the Significance theme want to be very important in the eyes of others. They are independent and want to be recognized.

Strategic:

- People strong 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 strong 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 another person.

R2 Strengths Profiler: Strengths Families

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(<http://www.capeu.com/downloads/R2%20Expert%20Profile%20-%20Sample.pdf>)

Authenticity:

- Whatever you do, you do it with genuine conviction and without pretense.
- You always keep to your own values and beliefs, no matter what other people may want you to do.
- You are proud to stand up for what you believe in, doing things in a way that is right for you.

Centered:

- You have learned to remain grounded in whatever situation you find yourself.
- You have taken time to understand who and what you are, being able to portray a natural sense of self-assurance that you are able to maintain almost always.
- Whatever challenges life throws at you, you have learned to be poised and composed, and are rarely shaken.

Courage:

- While you may well feel afraid sometimes, you never let your fear get in the way of what you want to do.
- You are excited by participating in activities that make you feel nervous or scared.
- You feel the fear and do it anyway.

Curiosity:

- You know that it is important to be open to new ideas.
- You look to seek out new information when you can.
- You often ask questions, or make your own enquiries, to learn more about the topics you come across.

Gratitude:

- You are constantly aware of how fortunate you are and the positive things that you have in your life.
- You naturally notice and appreciate the good things that happen to you.
- You take nothing and nobody for granted.

Humility:

- You are a humble person, never allowing yourself to be bigheaded or boastful.
- When a job is done well, you have learned to ensure credit is given to other people.
- You know that you depend on others for your success. You strive to appreciate and value their support.

Legacy:

- You believe that it is important to consider future generations and to leave a legacy through what you do.
- You have learned how to work on things that will make a difference over the long term.
- You try to ensure that what you do will outlast you and continue to make a positive contribution.

Mission:

- You derive great fulfillment from doing things that give your life meaning and purpose.
- You could be focused on one or many different things that provide purpose.
- How you spend your time, your decisions and your future plans are all aligned to your sense of mission and purpose in life.

Moral compass:

- You are acutely aware of the difference between right and wrong.
- You always act in accordance with what you believe is right.
- Your decisions and your actions are always guided by your ethics and values.

Personal responsibility:

- You are always true to your word, knowing that if you make a promise, then you are sure to keep it.
- You never blame others, but take ownership of everything that you do.
- You are seen as someone who is always prepared to do what you have committed to do.

Pride:

- You take pride in what you do.
- You like to deliver work that is of the highest standard and quality, getting it right first time.
- You tend to set high standards for yourself, and like the recognition of others for the quality of your work.

Self-awareness:

- You enjoy spending time and focusing effort on understanding your behavior, emotions, and responses to different situations.

- You have a deep awareness of your strengths and weaknesses.
- Your behavior never surprises you or catches you off guard.

Service:

- You try to help people as much as you can.
- You have learned that it can be beneficial to go above and beyond what you need to do for people.
- You try to focus on satisfying people's needs and meeting their requirements.

Unconditionality:

- You have learned how to accept and respect people for who they are. You try hard not to be judgmental.
- You have learned not to be fazed by the way that people are, or even the things that they do.
- You know that everyone is valuable in their own right.

Communicating — How we give and receive information:

Counterpoint:

- You love to bring an alternative perspective to any situation.
- You see things differently from others, and can present a range of alternatives for any scenario.
- You enjoy bringing things into the discussion that other people have missed.

Explainer:

- You like to simplify things so that a wide range of people can easily understand them.
- You can take a complex idea and express it simply and clearly.
- You enjoy coming up with different ways of explaining the same thing.

Feedback:

- You enjoy giving people both positive and negative feedback.
- You believe people need to know what they have done well, so that they can build on it and progress.
- You give people accurate developmental feedback so that they know where they can improve.

Humor:

- You love making people laugh and look for every opportunity to do so.
- You are able to see the funny side of things and like to share this with others.
- You have the ability to crack a joke or tell a story that lightens the mood and gives enjoyment to others.

Listener:

- You have learned to take an interest in what people have to say.
- You know it is important to listen—not just to the words, but to how those words are used.
- You try to listen to everything that someone says.

Narrator:

- Telling stories comes very naturally to you.
- As ordinary events happen, you picture how they might be spun into an anecdote or story to tell others.
- You see the power of stories to convey morals, insights, values, humor, and many other lessons.

Scribe:

- You enjoy writing and it comes naturally to you.
- You prefer to use the written word over other forms of communication.

Spotlight:

- Whether in a meeting or in a social gathering, you naturally speak up and hold the floor.
- You love capturing people's interest and attention, and find this easy to do.
- You find that you can get people to listen to you and focus on what you're saying or doing, whatever the distractions.

Motivating—Our drive towards action:**Action:**

- You feel compelled to act immediately and decisively.
- You are much more comfortable with forward momentum than you are with careful strategy and reflection.
- Getting started is the only way for you. You will learn as you go along and if it doesn't work, then at least you tried.

Adventure:

- You have learned to deal with risk or the untried.
- You cope with experiences that are outside of your comfort zone.
- You know that putting yourself into new and challenging situations will allow you to test yourself.

Bounceback:

- Whatever setback or disappointment you come up against, it just makes you more determined to succeed.
- You love to pick yourself up very quickly from setbacks, using them as a springboard to spur you on.
- You go on to achieve more than you would have done otherwise, proving your success to yourself and others.

Catalyst:

- You have learned how to mobilize and inspire people to get things done.
- You are able to get new projects off the ground and put ideas into action by involving others.
- You have learned techniques and skills that help to get people motivated and get things moving.

Change Agent:

- You know of the real benefits of change and you are at ease when involved with and bringing about change.
- You have learned how to be an advocate for new developments and are able to do this when required.
- You put others at ease through your ability to deal with change.

Competitive:

- You have learned to measure your abilities and achievements relative to others, in order to gauge your progress and success.
- You know that winning is important, and you try to ensure that you beat the competition in everything you do.
- You feel good when you are first, but if this doesn't happen, you know you need to be better.

Drive:

- You are extremely self-motivated, with an inner drive that pushes you on to achieve more.
- As soon as you complete one task, you don't wait to be told what to do, you move on to the next.
- You love to set stretching goals and targets for yourself.

Efficacy:

- You have learned how to be more confident in your own abilities.
- You try to believe in yourself, knowing that this will help you to achieve your goals.
- You know that if you set your mind to something and work hard, you are more likely to achieve it.

Growth:

- Whatever you are doing, you look for ways to develop yourself further.
- You actively seek out activities, skills, knowledge, or new ways of working that will help you grow.
- You love to invite feedback on your performance, acting on both positive and negative comments.

Improver:

- You have learned to suggest, and seek to make, improvements.
- You try to think of ways to develop systems, processes, and methods so that they are more effective.
- You have learned to keep going even when faced with difficult challenges and frustrations.

Persistence:

- You have learned to keep going even when faced with difficult challenges and frustrations.
- You know that success in the face of adversity requires extra effort and determination.
- You have learned never to give up, even if you find it tough going.

Resilience:

- You have a tremendous ability to overcome adversity and take setbacks in your stride.
- You find the resources you need and pick yourself back up, even in difficult circumstances.
- You know that you have the strength to cope with, and recover from, anything that life throws at you.

Work Ethic:

- You are an extremely hard worker, putting a lot of effort and energy into your work and everything you do.
- You enjoy putting in extra hours. You are well used to working long hours over a long period of time.
- You work much harder than others, and you enjoy doing so.

Relating—How we relate to others:**Compassion:**

- You want the best for everyone and offer sympathy and support to others.
- When people are unhappy, you tend to look for the right thing to say.
- You often take action to help people in whatever way you can.

Connector:

- You have learned how to make connections between the people that you meet.
- You notice when people have shared interests or something in common, and you make links between them.
- You have acquired strategies that help you to bring people together effectively for their mutual benefit.

Emotional Awareness:

- You have learned how to gauge people's emotions and feelings.
- You try to sense how people feel, by picking up on the subtle clues and messages they give.
- You have learned how to interpret people's emotions accurately, so that what they are feeling is clear to you.

Empathic Connection:

- You tend to have a natural connection with other people.
- You are tuned in to others and can feel what they are feeling.
- You like to put yourself "in another person's shoes," so you can see things from their point of view.

Enabler:

- You have learned how to help people to do things for themselves.
- You are able to provide support and encouragement, while giving people tasks and challenges that will stretch them.
- You know it is important to help others grow and develop by encouraging them out of their comfort zone.

Equality:

- Being fair and equitable is at the heart of who you are.
- You consider everyone to be your equal, giving great attention to issues of fairness and equality.
- Your own actions and decisions are as fair and equitable as possible.

Esteem Builder:

- Your words and actions help people to build their self-confidence and self-esteem.
- You clearly see the potential and possibility in people, helping people to recognize it for themselves.
- You love to help others to believe in themselves, helping them to achieve what they are capable of achieving.

Personalization:

- You have learned to notice the subtle differences in people that make everyone unique.
- You know how to recognize people's different motivations, as well as their likes, dislikes, preferences and strengths.
- You understand that what is right for one person might be wrong for another.

Persuasion:

- You are extremely effective at convincing others and bringing them around to your point of view.
- You love to make a good case for what you want.
- You choose your language, words and methods carefully, in order to win agreement from others.

Rapport Builder:

- You have learned how to start conversations with people quickly and easily.
- You are comfortable meeting people for the first time.
- You are able quickly to find something that is of interest to you both, helping to establish a relationship.

Relationship Deepener:

- You have learned how to build deep relationships with people that will last over time.
- You know that it can be beneficial to really get to know someone, and for them to really know you.
- You have learned to allow time for your relationships to develop slowly.

Thinking—Our approach to situations:**Adherence:**

- You are the sort of person who is motivated by carefully following guidelines, rules and guidelines.
- You are comfortable completing tasks that have clear steps and stages.

Creativity:

- You like to be creative.
- You enjoy coming up with or combining existing ideas, images, colors, tastes or concepts.
- You like trying things that have not been tried before, linking things in novel and imaginative ways.

Detail:

- You have a natural ability to focus on the smallest detail.
- You get a buzz from spotting inaccuracies. Errors just seem to jump out at you.

- You would never submit anything yourself that contained a mistake.

Incubator:

- You know that it can be beneficial to ponder and reflect when necessary.
- You have learned to take moments out of your day so that you can think things through.
- You are able to allow time and space to be absorbed in your own thoughts.

Innovation:

- You are highly driven to want to invent things that are better than what has been done before.
- You look at things from a different perspective to others and think “out of the box.”
- You look beyond what exists when coming up with new ideas, inventions and approaches.

Judgment:

- You make good decisions both quickly and easily.
- You enjoy assessing the situation, evidence and facts, being confident that you will reach the right decision.
- Your decisions stand up to robust challenge, and you typically turn out to be right.

Optimism:

- You tend to see the best side of any situation, with a steady belief that things will work out well in the future.
- Having this belief keeps you strong and enables you to stay positive, even when things become difficult.
- You often find that you can look on the bright side of life.

Order:

- You like being well-organized. Everything has its place, both at work and home.
- Your order and organization mean that you are able to be as effective as possible in everything you do.
- You know where things are and what to do when because you have usually organized things in advance.

Planful:

- You find it easy, before starting tasks, to think carefully and establish timeframes.
- For you, having a plan is essential

Prevention:

- You have learned to think ahead and anticipate problems before they happen.
- You try to notice the little things that might be out of place or going wrong, and then deal with them.
- You know that by acting in this way, you can head off future problems.

Reconfiguration:

- You love rearranging resources and adapting plans to meet the changing demands of new situations.
- You sense when to stay on track and when to change to become more effective.
- Your adaptability means that you are always looking for the best possible fit for when the context changes.

Resolver:

- You love solving problems. The more complicated the problem, the better.
- You will always go the extra mile to find a solution, getting to the root of the problem.
- You're never beaten by a problem, but the problems are often beaten by you.

Strategic Awareness:

- You have learned to take an interest in understanding changes in the wider world that could impact on your plans.
- You are able to develop and shift long term plans effectively.
- You try to ensure that you take steps to deal with whatever future circumstances may arise.

Time Optimizer:

- You have learned that it is important not to waste time, finding ways to squeeze as much as you can into every minute.
- You try to ensure you use your time productively.
- Whatever situation you are in, you have learned to make the most of your time.

Websites:

The VIA Classification of Character Strengths and Virtues <http://www.viacharacter.org/www/Character-Strengths/VIA-Classification>
R2 Strengths Profiler: Strengths Families <http://www.capp.co/downloads/R2%20Expert%20Profile%20-%20Sample.pdf>
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