

Developing Your Strength

Activator

The genius of your Activator talent begins with the concept of action. You want action and you can make things happen. Most of all, the genius of your Activator talent gives you the ability to see how to make things happen. Whereas others have ideas that only swim around in their minds, you can quickly see how to turn ideas into actions, programs, and services. This points to the greatest aspect of the genius of your Activator talent. You are creative and very innovative. Finally, you have a tremendous amount of motivation, energy and personal power when it comes to taking an idea and then putting it into action. You are particularly motivated to be innovative in turning your ideas into action, programs, and services. You are a dynamo in turning ideas into actions that generate revolutionary changes.

Adapted from "The Genius and Beauty found within The Clifton StrengthsFinder Themes of Talent," by Edward C. Anderson

Applying Activator Talents in Careers

- People with exceptional Activator talents like to jump right in and start, so your best approach to career planning is to try out various roles. Look for part-time jobs, internships, or volunteer opportunities where you can "try on" a career that looks interesting to you.
- Identify formal or informal leadership roles on campus where your Activator talents can flourish.
- Powerful Activator talents make you good at the starting line. Look for work environments that will reward you for getting people out of the blocks quickly.
- Consider becoming an entrepreneur. Make a list of possible businesses you could start, grow, and sell once they show a profit. Understand that you may lose interest once an enterprise is so fine-tuned to the point that it runs on its own.
- Understand that some supervisors and managers may feel threatened by your insistence on making decisions and acting without delay. Your Activator talents will flourish best in an environment where quick decision-making is valued and there is not a lot of hierarchical structure.

Adapted from StrengthsQuest website: www.strengthsquest.com

Career Plan of Action:

Applying Activator Talents in Academics

General Academic Life

- Initiate classroom discussions. Take sides in debates. Help your fellow students learn faster and learn more.
- Find the answers to questions that you anticipate the instructor will ask on upcoming tests and quizzes.
- Instigate conversations with your peers outside the classroom. Center these on topics related to a recent lecture given by your instructor.
- Take charge of small-group conversations, projects, presentations, and experiments. Distinguish yourself by transforming plans into tangible results.
- Waste no time finishing the first draft of a writing assignment. Immediately seek feedback from your professor. Incorporate some of the constructive suggestions in your second draft.

Study Techniques

- Lead study groups. Participate in the life of the mind. Urge members to share their best ideas. Give timid individuals permission to explore topics, raise questions, and work on projects.
- Jot down one or two key thoughts as you read an article, story, or the directions for a project. Use these insights to shape the group's discussions.
- Draw quiet individuals into conversations, debates, planning, and discussions. Call on them by name. Probe when they respond to questions with one- or two-word answers.
- Read ahead to prepare for class lectures. Compose two or three questions not offered in the textbook to ask your instructor. Intentionally change the classroom atmosphere from one of passive listening to active participation.
- Stay physically active to remain mentally engaged in your studies. Eat. Pace. Take breaks to stretch. Test your ideas with your study group. Press for their honest opinions.

Relationships

- Surround yourself with individuals who are restless to start working on projects and assignments. Associate with people who welcome and respond to your directives.
- Identify classmates who automatically know when the time for planning has expired and the time for action has arrived.
- Initiate conversations with professors outside the classroom. Make appointments with them to confirm expectations, clarify course requirements, and establish deadlines.
- Volunteer to chair group discussions, facilitate brainstorming sessions, or spearhead projects. Observe your classmates' relief at not having to be in charge.

Class Selection

- Choose a major field of study about which you are passionate. Realize your success hinges on your being fully engaged. Opt for courses that involve hands-on activities, lively verbal exchanges, and interesting experiments.
- Check the course syllabus for information about projects, field trips, extra reading, and independent study options. Avoid classes that restrict your pace and methods. Honor your need for speedy results and changes of pace.
- Attack your assignments immediately. Refuse to procrastinate. Turn in your work ahead of schedule. Enjoy the satisfaction of being done. Analyze how you avoid the pitfalls of "analysis paralysis" and excessive preparation.

Extracurricular Activities

- Join clubs and try out for athletic teams with jam-packed rosters of events. Avoid groups with a reputation for meeting a lot but accomplishing very little.
- Volunteer for activities such as constructing a Habitat for Humanity® house, serving as a Big Brother or Big Sister, acting in community theatre productions, conducting nature walks, running to raise funds for worthwhile causes, or coaching a youth team.
- Campaign for an office in campus government. Influence potential voters to cast their ballots for you.

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Academic Plan of Action:
