

Developing Your Strength

Adaptability

The genius of your Adaptability talent begins with where you “live” in terms of your mind. You live in the present – even the present moment. Whereas others live their lives in their “rear-view mirror,” always looking to the past and being tied to the past, you are a right here – right now person. This means that you can change and change quickly. Rather than being rigid, you are flexible; and rather than being tied to some pre-set plan, you can quickly change to meet immediate demands and circumstances that require attention. But the real genius of your Adaptability is seen in circumstances that make others scramble and cower into some safety zone for security. Your talent comes to light in chaos. In fact, you not only deal with chaos, you get energized, come alive and get a thrill out of chaos as you “ride the wave” and quickly make the changes that chaos requires. You can learn and change quickly.

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

Applying Adaptability Talents in Careers

- Those with great Adaptability talents often respond well to changing demands. Shadow people in careers that are attractive to you and watch how they continually respond to the varied requests of their customers or clients.
- Interview individuals who have jobs that demand flexibility and a comfort with rapid change. Ask what their typical day is like.
- Gain part-time or seasonal employment in organizations where the demand for flexibility exists hour-by-hour and day-by-day. Pay attention to ways in which your Adaptability talents benefit you in these settings.
- Your Adaptability talents will flourish in environments that reward responsiveness and your ability to "turn on a dime."
- You may thrive in chaos. Avoid environments that are highly structured or routine, with lots of rules and regulations.
- Talk to people in the entertainment industry. Interview designers or producers and ask them to describe their work and the types of satisfaction they receive from it.

Adapted from StrengthsQuest website: www.strengthsquest.com

Career Plan of Action:

Applying Adaptability Talents in Academics

General Academic Life

- Live in the moment. Calm yourself before an exam with positive self-talk. Recall your personal history of dealing with surprises on tests.
- Leverage your ability not to feel overwhelmed by multifaceted assignments. Document three to five instances during the day when you successfully juggled competing tasks.
- Understand that you can balance academic demands with social commitments, extracurricular activities, and part-time jobs. Describe how you managed to make progress on all fronts last week.

Study Techniques

- Analyze your study habits. Do you plan and then improvise as circumstances change? Or do you improvise minute by minute rather than plan?
- Choose study partners who are serious yet share your easy-going, relaxed work style. Avoid individuals who are tense and anxious. Make a list of potential study buddies.
- Make notes about how your study habits vary depending on the situation. Ask yourself these questions: Do I need the pressure of a test or deadline to force me to study? When am I most likely to ignore intriguing distractions? Least likely?
- Designate places to which you can retreat when you need to give your full attention to your studies. Choose venues where the potential for interruptions and extraneous noise is significantly reduced.

Relationships

- Surround yourself with individuals who, like you, pause to take in the world's loveliness as it appears. Identify people who automatically put aside what they are doing to watch a sunset, listen to rustling leaves, or enjoy the arts.
- Help classmates, coworkers, and friends overcome difficulties that stymie their progress. Capitalize on your ability to take things as they are rather than rail against life's surprises.
- Invite one or two highly organized and time-conscious people to become your study buddies. Discuss ahead of time how they can help you be more efficient. Explain how you can infuse fun into their studies.

Class Selection

- Follow your interests when choosing classes. Explore several disciplines before choosing your major. Partner with a counselor who can help you accelerate your decision-making process to avoid additional tuition costs.
- Seek out classes of professors who stimulate students' thinking.

Extracurricular Activities

- Join organizations that sponsor events that demand flexibility in terms of planning as well as execution. Capitalize on your ability to monitor and adjust.
- Convince teammates of the importance of not fighting change. Outline the benefits of letting go of the original plan in order to try a new process.
- Recall two or three instances where you successfully redirected the emotional energy of people paralyzed by unexpected news or sudden changes in the group's plans.

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Academic Plan of Action:
