



Chapter III

AFFIRMING AND CELEBRATING
YOUR TALENTS

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You have taken the Clifton StrengthsFinder, received your Signature Themes report, and discussed your Signature Themes with three people who know you very well. Now, it's time for you to affirm the Signature Themes indicated by your StrengthsFinder responses.

Affirming a Signature Theme simply means that you *agree* that it is one of your dominant areas of talent. It also means being able to see how your talent in that theme enables you to do certain things very well. Affirming your Signature Themes may seem easy, but many people experience some difficulty in doing so. Listed below are some of those difficulties and the reasons for them.

Difficulties in Affirming Our Signature Themes

1. *Many people are blind to their own greatest talents, and often to the greatest talents of others.* Some of our talents are called upon so frequently that we take them for granted. We don't consider them special, and we don't even perceive them as talents. Consequently, our Signature Themes may not seem important, valuable, or even special to us.
2. *Our talents sometimes threaten others. Rather than admit their insecurity, some people criticize us for having talents they wish they had.* As a result, we might mistakenly come to think that our Signature Themes hold weaknesses rather than talents.
3. *In some cases, we end up in positions or roles that simply don't fit our dominant talents.* Or, those talents may conflict with the roles and expectations of the positions we are in. This can make us feel like there is something wrong with us. But the problem may only be a mismatch between our dominant talents and the expectations of a role we are in.
4. *The fear of becoming proud and arrogant may interfere with seeing and affirming our Signature Themes.* In reality, pride and arrogance often stem from feelings of inadequacy. Affirming our dominant areas of talent usually results in humble gratitude for having been blessed with them.
5. *Some people have difficulty affirming their Signature Themes because they don't see how the talents in them will help them achieve*

their goals. If that is the case, they will benefit from a better understanding of their talents. Talents are always valuable, and they can often be applied toward achievement in less obvious, or even surprising, ways.

Questions You Might Be Asking

If a Particular Theme Is Not Among Your Signature Themes, Is It Necessarily an Area of Weakness?

No. The Clifton StrengthsFinder *does not* simultaneously measure weakness and talent. StrengthsFinder measures talent, and that's all it does. So, if a particular theme is not among your Signature Themes, it simply means that at least five other themes are more dominant in you. For example, your Responsibility theme might not be among your Signature Themes. That doesn't mean you are irresponsible. It just means that your overall talents in at least five other themes are more dominant than those in your Responsibility theme.

By focusing on your Signature Themes, you will concentrate your attention on where you have the greatest potential for achieving excellence and personal fulfillment. Focusing on any other area may serve as nothing more than a distraction.

What If You Believe You Have Dominant Talent in a Theme That Was Not Identified as a Signature Theme?

Our response is simple and direct: Claim it! Affirm and celebrate your talents in that theme, then build on them to fully develop and apply strengths. Just remember that we limited your Signature Themes to five because focusing on your *most* dominant areas of talent will provide the greatest opportunities for achievement.

Is Having Talent Always a Positive Experience?

Talent is always positive in the sense that it enables a person to do certain things very well. Your talents always hold potential for positive results in terms of achievements, success, personal fulfillment, and a better quality of life.

At the same time, talents place demands on the people who have them. And from that standpoint, talents can present a bit of a challenge.

Some people honestly say that they wish that their talents weren't so powerful in certain themes because they make their lives more demanding. They simply may experience more pressure because other people place higher expectations on them to achieve.

AFFIRMING YOUR
SIGNATURE THEMES

Affirming Your Signature Themes While Acknowledging Challenges They May Pose

On your Signature Themes report, each of your Signature Themes is accompanied by a paragraph that describes talents often found within that theme. While some of the talents described may not fit you, many of them should sound very familiar — and that is what is important. The issue is not who you *aren't*; the issue is who you *are* in terms of your dominant talents.

At this point, we would like you to consider insights and action ideas for affirming your Signature Themes. Items for each of the 34 themes measured by the Clifton StrengthsFinder are presented here, in alphabetical order by theme. Please locate and examine the items that are customized to your Signature Themes.

The first few items listed under each theme describe some of the key talents in the theme, and might touch on a challenge that talents from that theme can present, such as how they may be misjudged or misperceived by others. The final item touches on the “genius” of the theme that makes its talents so valuable. By “genius” we mean an extraordinary ability.

Achiever as One of Your Signature Themes

To begin affirming Achiever as one of your areas of dominant talents, first take another look at the description of that theme:

Your Achiever theme helps explain your drive. Achiever describes a constant need for achievement. You feel as if every day starts at zero. By the end of the day you must achieve something tangible in order to feel good about yourself. And by “every day” you mean every single day — workdays, weekends, vacations. No matter how much you may feel you deserve a day of rest, if the day passes without some form of achievement, no matter how small, you will feel dissatisfied. You have an internal fire burning inside you. It pushes you to do more, to achieve more. After each accomplishment is reached, the fire dwindles for a moment, but very soon it rekindles itself, forcing you toward the next accomplishment. Your relentless need for achievement might not be logical. It might not even be focused. But it will always be with you. As an Achiever you must learn to live with this whisper of discontent. It does have its bene-

fits. It brings you the energy you need to work long hours without burning out. It is the jolt you can always count on to get you started on new tasks, new challenges. It is the power supply that causes you to set the pace and define the levels of productivity for your work group. It is the theme that keeps you moving.

Now, consider this statement based on comments from individuals who possess Achiever among their Signature Themes. It represents what Achiever could “sound like.”

“Instead of just fifteen credit hours each semester, I’m going to take eighteen or twenty so I can graduate even sooner and get started in my career.”

For further understanding of your talents, examine these insights and select those that describe you best.

- ☐ You work very hard to complete each task on your “to do” list, and you always have a long list. In fact, at the end of the day some achievers add to their list all of the unexpected tasks they’ve accomplished, just so they have the satisfaction of crossing them off the list.
- ☐ You are busy and productive, and you derive satisfaction from your accomplishments.
- ☐ You can draw on a deep reservoir of internal motivation, stamina, and determination to achieve your goals.
- ☐ Other people may criticize you, because to them you seem too driven to achieve. They may call you a “workaholic” but the truth is that you like your work, and you like to work hard.

The genius of Achiever talents is your sheer ability to push hard to get things done. You are known for that.

Activator as One of Your Signature Themes

To begin affirming Activator as one of your areas of dominant talents, first take another look at the description of that theme:

“When can we start?” This is a recurring question in your life. You are impatient for action. You may concede that analysis has its uses or that debate and discussion can occasionally yield some valuable insights, but deep down you know that only action is real. Only action can make things happen. Only action leads to performance. Once a decision is made, you cannot not act. Others may worry that “there are still some things we don’t know,” but this doesn’t seem to slow you. If the decision has been made to go across town, you know that the fastest way to get there is to go stoplight to stoplight. You are not going to sit around waiting until all the lights have turned green. Besides, in your view, action and thinking are not opposites. In fact, guided by your Activator theme, you believe that action is the best device for learning. You make a decision, you take action, you look at the result, and you learn. This learning informs your next action and your next. How can you grow if you have nothing to react to? Well, you believe you can’t. You must put yourself out there. You must take the next step. It is the only way to keep your thinking fresh and informed. The bottom line is this: You know you will be judged not by what you say, not by what you think, but by what you get done. This does not frighten you. It pleases you.

Now, consider this statement based on comments from individuals who possess Activator among their Signature Themes. It represents what Activator could “sound like.”

“On our group project for Sociology class, things just weren’t getting done — nothing was moving. I decided to get everyone together to get the ball rolling again.”

For further understanding of your talents, examine these insights and select those that describe you best.

- ☐ You naturally see how ideas can be turned into action.
- ☐ You want to do things now, rather than simply talk about them.

- ☐ You can be very powerful in making things happen and getting people to take action.
- ☐ Other people may criticize you for being impatient and seeming to “run over” them. You might occasionally struggle with people you feel are trying to control you.

The genius of Activator talents is in your natural ability to initiate the transformation of ideas into actions, programs, and services.

Adaptability as One of Your Signature Themes

To begin affirming Adaptability as one of your areas of dominant talents, first take another look at the description of that theme:

You live in the moment. You don't see the future as a fixed destination. Instead, you see it as a place that you create out of the choices that you make right now. And so you discover your future one choice at a time. This doesn't mean that you don't have plans. You probably do. But this theme of Adaptability does enable you to respond willingly to the demands of the moment even if they pull you away from your plans. Unlike some, you don't resent sudden requests or unforeseen detours. You expect them. They are inevitable. Indeed, on some level you actually look forward to them. You are, at heart, a very flexible person who can stay productive when the demands of work are pulling you in many different directions at once.

Now, consider this statement based on comments from individuals who possess Adaptability among their Signature Themes. It represents what Adaptability could “sound like.”

“My friends know that I am willing and able to drop everything in order to help them. I can change my schedule at a moment's notice, so when people need something from me, it doesn't stress me out.”

For further understanding of your talents, examine these insights and select those that describe you best.

Affirming Analytical

- ☐ In many ways, you modify yourself to meet the demands of your environment.
- ☐ You easily adjust to many things all day long because you naturally live in the moment.
- ☐ You create the future out of the choices you make right now, one choice at a time.
- ☐ Your “go with the flow” attitude may seem like irresponsibility to those who prefer structure and predictability. They may get irritated with what they perceive to be sloppiness or carelessness.
- ☐ Adaptability talents are valuable because they allow you to keep moving forward when the unexpected happens. You can press ahead in a world of unknowns and seemingly unfair treatment when others would give up. You can deal with everything from injustices to crises and still find a way to make progress.

The genius of Adaptability talents lies in the way you respond to chaos: You can quickly change and respond in circumstances that would be frightening or intimidating to others.

Analytical as One of Your Signature Themes

To begin affirming Analytical as one of your areas of dominant talents, first take another look at the description of that theme:

Your Analytical theme challenges other people: “Prove it. Show me why what you are claiming is true.” In the face of this kind of questioning some will find that their brilliant theories wither and die. For you, this is precisely the point. You do not necessarily want to destroy other people’s ideas, but you do insist that their theories be sound. You see yourself as objective and dispassionate. You like data because they are value free. They have no agenda. Armed with these data, you search for patterns and connections. You want to understand how certain patterns affect one another. How do they combine? What is their outcome? Does this outcome fit with the theory being offered or the situation being confronted? These are your questions. You peel the layers back until, gradually, the root cause or causes are revealed. Others see you as logical and

rigorous. Over time they will come to you in order to expose someone's "wishful thinking" or "clumsy thinking" to your refining mind. It is hoped that your analysis is never delivered too harshly. Otherwise, others may avoid you when that "wishful thinking" is their own.

Now, consider this statement based on comments from individuals who possess Analytical among their Signature Themes. It represents what Analytical could "sound like."

"One of the things I love about my philosophy class is that the professor encourages us to challenge what we are learning. I love to pick apart an argument, ask questions, and debate the evidence."

For further understanding of your talents, examine these insights and select those that describe you best.

- ☐ You search for the reasons why things are the way they are.
- ☐ You think about the factors that might affect a situation and what causes certain reactions.
- ☐ You take a more critical approach to what others might quickly accept as truth. You want to see the proof.
- ☐ Some people may reject you and your questioning ways because you insist that facts be verified, theories be sound, and reasoning be logical. Some people may feel you are negative or unnecessarily critical when, from your standpoint, you are simply trying to understand something.
- ☐ Analytical talents are valuable because they enable you to dig deep, find the root causes and effects, and then develop clear thoughts based on facts. This type of thinking helps you gain clarity about excellence and how it can be attained.

The genius of Analytical talents lies in the solid foundation you lay for moving forward. Your questions drive you to uncover the essential facts needed for excellence in any endeavor.

Arranger as One of Your Signature Themes

To begin affirming Arranger as one of your areas of dominant talents, first take another look at the description of that theme:

You are a conductor. When faced with a complex situation involving many factors, you enjoy managing all of the variables, aligning and realigning them until you are sure you have arranged them in the most productive configuration possible. In your mind there is nothing special about what you are doing. You are simply trying to figure out the best way to get things done. But others, lacking this theme, will be in awe of your ability. “How can you keep so many things in your head at once?” they will ask. “How can you stay so flexible, so willing to shelve well-laid plans in favor of some brand-new configuration that has just occurred to you?” But you cannot imagine behaving in any other way. You are a shining example of effective flexibility, whether you are changing travel schedules at the last minute because a better fare has popped up or mulling over just the right combination of people and resources to accomplish a new project. From the mundane to the complex, you are always looking for the perfect configuration. Of course, you are at your best in dynamic situations. Confronted with the unexpected, some complain that plans devised with such care cannot be changed, while others take refuge in the existing rules or procedures. You don’t do either. Instead, you jump into the confusion, devising new options, hunting for new paths of least resistance, and figuring out new partnerships — because, after all, there might just be a better way.

Now, consider this statement based on comments from individuals who possess Arranger among their Signature Themes. It represents what Arranger could “sound like.”

“The school year is wrapping up, which means that I have to study for finals and prepare to move out of the dorms, in addition to working my part-time job. Not a problem. I’ll ask my boss to schedule me to work the days before my easier exams, which will give me more time to study for the tough ones. I’ll pack during my study breaks.”

For further understanding of your talents, examine these insights and select those that describe you best.

- ☐ You are highly organized and flexible. You can get a lot done, even though you usually have many projects going at the same time. You can multitask like few others.
- ☐ You enjoy coordinating all of the complex factors that go into making a project successful.
- ☐ Some people who like to do things by rules and procedures may find your ways chaotic. They may think that your effectiveness is mystery or pure luck.
- ☐ Arranger talents are valuable because they help you continually find the right combinations of people and resources to complete projects successfully.

The genius of Arranger talents lies in your ability to orchestrate people and resources for maximum effectiveness.

Belief as One of Your Signature Themes

To begin affirming Belief as one of your areas of dominant talents, first take another look at the description of that theme:

If you possess a strong Belief theme, you have certain core values that are enduring. These values vary from one person to another, but ordinarily your Belief theme causes you to be family-oriented, altruistic, even spiritual, and to value responsibility and high ethics — both in yourself and others. These core values affect your behavior in many ways. They give your life meaning and satisfaction; in your view, success is more than money and prestige. They provide you with direction, guiding you through the temptations and distractions of life toward a consistent set of priorities. This consistency is the foundation for all your relationships. Your friends call you dependable. “I know where you stand,” they say. Your Belief makes you easy to trust. It also demands that you find work that meshes with your values. Your work must be meaningful; it must matter to you. And guided by your Belief theme it will matter only if it gives you a chance to live out your values.

Affirming Command

Now, consider this statement based on comments from individuals who possess Belief among their Signature Themes. It represents what Belief could “sound like.”

“My education is important to me, but making a difference for the kids in my community is part of my personal mission. Even when I have a lot of assignments due, I make time to volunteer for the after-school program at the youth center.”

For further understanding of your talents, examine these insights and select those that describe you best.

- ☐ You have core values that are unchanging. You may conflict with people who oppose or don't value your beliefs.
- ☐ You have deeply held ideas about what is, what should be, and the purpose of your life.
- ☐ You naturally become enthusiastic and energetic about tasks, roles, or positions that promote your deeply held beliefs.
- ☐ Some people may think you are rigid or contrary because of your strongly held beliefs.
- ☐ When you live your life according to your deepest values and beliefs, you experience motivation, drive, and determination.

The genius of Belief talents is found in the tremendous power of your foundational values. They are sources of powerful drive and direction.

Command as One of Your Signature Themes

To begin affirming Command as one of your areas of dominant talents, first take another look at the description of that theme:

Command leads you to take charge. Unlike some people, you feel no discomfort with imposing your views on others. On the contrary, once your opinion is formed, you need to share it with others. Once your goal is set, you feel restless until you have aligned others with you. You are not frightened by confrontation; rather, you know that confrontation is the first step toward resolution. Whereas others may avoid facing up to

life's unpleasantness, you feel compelled to present the facts or the truth, no matter how unpleasant it may be. You need things to be clear between people and challenge them to be clear-eyed and honest. You push them to take risks. You may even intimidate them. And while some may resent this, labeling you opinionated, they often willingly hand you the reins. People are drawn toward those who take a stance and ask them to move in a certain direction. Therefore, people will be drawn to you. You have presence. You have Command.

Now, consider this statement based on comments from individuals who possess Command among their Signature Themes. It represents what Command could "sound like."

"Some of my friends are intimidated by conflict, but not me. If I'm upset with someone or see something that isn't right, I'll say so! People know what I think. I'm not a hard person to read."

For further understanding of your talents, examine these insights and select those that describe you best.

- ☐ You see what needs to be done, and you are willing to say so.
- ☐ You are willing to go into a confrontation and argue because you know that what is right will prevail, and confrontations often help get things moving.
- ☐ You can jump into a conflict, crisis, or emergency and take charge of the situation.
- ☐ Other people may feel threatened or put off by your power and assertiveness. When others label you as bossy, it points out an opportunity to manage and develop your Command talents.
- ☐ Command talents are valuable because they help you positively impact other people. You can help people and entire organizations get through difficult times and make substantive changes in the midst of chaos.

The genius of Command talents is in your ability to bring to light what is often avoided or unstated, so that people are able to resolve conflicts and misunderstandings.

Communication as One of Your Signature Themes

To begin affirming Communication as one of your areas of dominant talents, first take another look at the description of that theme:

You like to explain, to describe, to host, to speak in public, and to write. This is your Communication theme at work. Ideas are a dry beginning. Events are static. You feel a need to bring them to life, to energize them, to make them exciting and vivid. And so you turn events into stories and practice telling them. You take the dry idea and enliven it with images and examples and metaphors. You believe that most people have a very short attention span. They are bombarded by information, but very little of it survives. You want your information — whether an idea, an event, a product's features and benefits, a discovery, or a lesson — to survive. You want to divert their attention toward you and then capture it, lock it in. This is what drives your hunt for the perfect phrase. This is what draws you toward dramatic words and powerful word combinations. This is why people like to listen to you. Your word pictures pique their interest, sharpen their world, and inspire them to act.

Now, consider this statement based on comments from individuals who possess Communication among their Signature Themes. It represents what Communication could “sound like.”

“When I was a kid, I used to get in trouble for talking in class. But I could tell such great stories — and when my classmates would laugh, it encouraged me to keep talking. My teachers said I was ‘a joy to work with,’ but that I was disrupting the class.”

For further understanding of your talents, examine these insights and select those that describe you best.

- ☐ You like to talk, and you probably are good at it.
- ☐ You can explain things and make them clear.
- ☐ You may have an ability to tell particularly captivating stories by constructing mental images in the minds of others.
- ☐ You may be criticized because you like to talk a lot.

- Communication talents are valuable because your abilities in this area enable you to reach out and connect with people. Your storytelling ability builds images in the minds of others and makes you a powerful person as you connect and bond with people.

The genius of Communication talents lies in your ability to find words for not only your own thoughts and feelings, but also those of others.

Competition as One of Your Signature Themes

To begin affirming Competition as one of your areas of dominant talents, first take another look at the description of that theme:

Competition is rooted in comparison. When you look at the world, you are instinctively aware of other people's performance. Their performance is the ultimate yardstick. No matter how hard you tried, no matter how worthy your intentions, if you reached your goal but did not outperform your peers, the achievement feels hollow. Like all competitors, you need other people. You need to compare. If you can compare, you can compete, and if you can compete, you can win. And when you win, there is no feeling quite like it. You like measurement because it facilitates comparisons. You like other competitors because they invigorate you. You like contests because they must produce a winner. You particularly like contests where you know you have the inside track to be the winner. Although you are gracious to your fellow competitors and even stoic in defeat, you don't compete for the fun of competing. You compete to win. Over time you will come to avoid contests where winning seems unlikely.

Now, consider this statement based on comments from individuals who possess Competition among their Signature Themes. It represents what Competition could "sound like."

"I like to know where I stand in a class. I like it when the professor posts the grades and I can see that I'm at the top. Competing against my classmates motivates me — and when I can't do that, I even compete against myself and try to do better than I did last time."

Affirming Connectedness

For further understanding of your talents, examine these insights and select those that describe you best.

- ☐ You want to win, which usually means outperforming others.
- ☐ You will work hard to excel — especially in comparison to others.
- ☐ You constantly compare yourself and your performance to other people and their performances.
- ☐ You may not be willing to try something if you think you can't "win" at it. Other people may consider your competitiveness inappropriate and therefore push you away, reject you, or accuse you of being arrogant.

The genius of Competition talents lies in your ability to stimulate yourself and others to higher levels of performance.

Connectedness as One of Your Signature Themes

To begin affirming Connectedness as one of your areas of dominant talents, first take another look at the description of that theme:

Things happen for a reason. You are sure of it. You are sure of it because in your soul you know that we are all connected. Yes, we are individuals, responsible for our own judgments and in possession of our own free will, but nonetheless we are part of something larger. Some may call it the collective unconscious. Others may label it spirit or life force. But whatever your word of choice, you gain confidence from knowing that we are not isolated from one another or from the earth and the life on it. This feeling of Connectedness implies certain responsibilities. If we are all part of a larger picture, then we must not harm others because we will be harming ourselves. We must not exploit because we will be exploiting ourselves. Your awareness of these responsibilities creates your value system. You are considerate, caring, and accepting. Certain of the unity of humankind, you are a bridge builder for people of different cultures. Sensitive to the invisible hand, you can give others comfort that there is a purpose beyond our humdrum lives. The exact articles of your faith will depend on your upbringing and your culture, but your faith is strong. It sustains you and your close friends in the face of life's mysteries.

Now, consider this statement based on comments from individuals who possess Connectedness among their Signature Themes. It represents what Connectedness could “sound like.”

“There’s a reason I’m so committed to caring for the environment. We’re all part of the earth, so if I don’t do my part to take care of it, we all suffer.”

For further understanding of your talents, examine these insights and select those that describe you best.

- ☐ You see that all things happen for a reason. You believe that all things are working together in a purposeful manner.
- ☐ You feel connected to life itself. Therefore, you feel a responsibility to be considerate, caring, and accepting toward others.
- ☐ You build bridges that allow people from all backgrounds to come together and develop a faith that goes beyond themselves.
- ☐ When people and the world seem fractured, broken, and isolated, you can become discouraged. For this reason, some may perceive you as too naïve or fragile.
- ☐ Connectedness talents are valuable because they provide you with conviction and faith that sustain and encourage you and your friends in difficult times. You believe that there’s a plan, a design, and a power beyond the visible world that provide meaning, comfort, and confidence.

The genius of Connectedness talents lies in the ability to “connect the dots” between the past, present, and future in a way that gives you and others hope.

Consistency as One of Your Signature Themes

To begin affirming Consistency as one of your areas of dominant talents, first take another look at the description of that theme:

Balance is important to you. You are keenly aware of the need to treat people the same, no matter what their station in life, so you do not

Affirming Consistency

want to see the scales tipped too far in any one person's favor. In your view this leads to selfishness and individualism. It leads to a world where some people gain an unfair advantage because of their connections or their background or their greasing of the wheels. This is truly offensive to you. You see yourself as a guardian against it. In direct contrast to this world of special favors, you believe that people function best in a consistent environment where the rules are clear and are applied to everyone equally. This is an environment where people know what is expected. It is predictable and evenhanded. It is fair. Here each person has an even chance to show his or her worth.

Now, consider this statement based on comments from individuals who possess Consistency among their Signature Themes. It represents what Consistency could "sound like."

"In one of my classes, we were each assigned a different book to read. But some of the books had three hundred pages, while others had only one hundred. I wasn't very happy about that because I thought everyone should have to read the same book, or at least the same number of pages."

For further understanding of your talents, examine these insights and select those that describe you best.

- ☐ You try to treat everyone equally by having clear rules and applying them consistently.
- ☐ You're offended when some people gain an advantage because of their connections or the "games" they play.
- ☐ You believe that people work best in a consistent environment where the rules apply to everyone equally, and you work to create that type of environment.
- ☐ While you may see yourself as a guardian of what is right and a warrior against special treatment, some people may reject you for assuming that responsibility.

The genius of Consistency talents lies in the way you easily and quickly make judgments that equally apply to everyone involved. As a result, people have confidence in you and see you as trustworthy.

Context as One of Your Signature Themes

To begin affirming Context as one of your areas of dominant talents, first take another look at the description of that theme:

You look back. You look back because that is where the answers lie. You look back to understand the present. From your vantage point the present is unstable, a confusing clamor of competing voices. It is only by casting your mind back to an earlier time, a time when the plans were being drawn up, that the present regains its stability. The earlier time was a simpler time. It was a time of blueprints. As you look back, you begin to see these blueprints emerge. You realize what the initial intentions were. These blueprints or intentions have since become so embellished that they are almost unrecognizable, but now this Context theme reveals them again. This understanding brings you confidence. No longer disoriented, you make better decisions because you sense the underlying structure. You become a better partner because you understand how your colleagues came to be who they are. And counterintuitively you become wiser about the future because you saw its seeds being sown in the past. Faced with new people and new situations, it will take you a little time to orient yourself, but you must give yourself this time. You must discipline yourself to ask the questions and allow the blueprints to emerge because no matter what the situation, if you haven't seen the blueprints, you will have less confidence in your decisions.

Now, consider this statement based on comments from individuals who possess Context among their Signature Themes. It represents what Context could "sound like."

"I always think about that saying, 'Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it.' That's very true, but it's also important to remember the successes of the past so we can learn from them as well."

Affirming Deliberative

For further understanding of your talents, examine these insights and select those that describe you best.

- ☐ You look to the past to understand the present.
- ☐ You see patterns that emerge from your studies of history.
- ☐ You learn best when you place what is to be learned into the context of other important dynamics and the history of what you are learning.
- ☐ You may feel disoriented when you can't see patterns stemming from the past. Others may become impatient with you as you strive to build an understanding of life's many complexities. You may be perceived as "plodding" because you want to understand how we got to where we are.

The genius of Context talents is reflected in your unique ability to remember the past and to appreciate that the seeds of "new" are often found in the old.

Deliberative as One of Your Signature Themes

To begin affirming Deliberative as one of your areas of dominant talents, first take another look at the description of that theme:

You are careful. You are vigilant. You are a private person. You know that the world is an unpredictable place. Everything may seem in order, but beneath the surface you sense the many risks. Rather than denying these risks, you draw each one out into the open. Then each risk can be identified, assessed, and ultimately reduced. Thus, you are a fairly serious person who approaches life with a certain reserve. For example, you like to plan ahead so as to anticipate what might go wrong. You select your friends cautiously and keep your own counsel when the conversation turns to personal matters. You are careful not to give too much praise and recognition, lest it be misconstrued. If some people don't like you because you are not as effusive as others, then so be it. For you, life is not a popularity contest. Life is something of a minefield. Others can run through it recklessly if they so choose, but you take a different ap-

proach. You identify the dangers, weigh their relative impact, and then place your feet deliberately. You walk with care.

Now, consider this statement based on comments from individuals who possess Deliberative among their Signature Themes. It represents what Deliberative could “sound like.”

“My friends couldn’t believe the process I went through to choose a college to attend. I took two years to explore all the possibilities and consider any potential barriers — but I needed to be absolutely sure that I wouldn’t have any regrets.”

For further understanding of your talents, examine these five insights and select those that describe you best.

- ☐ You take great care as you consider options, thinking through the pros and cons of each alternative. To you, making the correct choice is more important than the time it takes to do so.
- ☐ You prefer to listen to others rather than reveal a lot of information about yourself. Listening is an important way for you to gather the information you need to make a sound decision.
- ☐ You make very good decisions. In fact, you would change few of them.
- ☐ Others may become impatient with you as you make your decisions thoughtfully and slowly. You always think about the risks and what might go wrong. You may be falsely categorized as indecisive when in fact you are making better choices in the long run.

The genius of Deliberative talents is in your ability to reduce risk and prevent problems through innate anticipation and careful thought. As a result, you tend to make outstanding decisions.

Developer as One of Your Signature Themes

To begin affirming Developer as one of your areas of dominant talents, first take another look at the description of that theme:

You see the potential in others. Very often, in fact, potential is all you see. In your view no individual is fully formed. On the contrary, each individual is a work in progress, alive with possibilities. And you are drawn toward people for this very reason. When you interact with others, your goal is to help them experience success. You look for ways to challenge them. You devise interesting experiences that can stretch them and help them grow. And all the while you are on the lookout for the signs of growth — a new behavior learned or modified, a slight improvement in a skill, a glimpse of excellence or of “flow” where previously there were only halting steps. For you these small increments — invisible to some — are clear signs of potential being realized. These signs of growth in others are your fuel. They bring you strength and satisfaction. Over time many will seek you out for help and encouragement because on some level they know that your helpfulness is both genuine and fulfilling to you.

Now, consider this statement based on comments from individuals who possess Developer among their Signature Themes. It represents what Developer could “sound like.”

“I am so excited about becoming a teacher. I look at children and see how much of a future they have, and I just love those moments when I see a child make even just a little bit of progress. That’s my reward.”

For further understanding of your talents, examine these insights and select those that describe you best.

- ☐ You naturally see others’ potential to move, change, grow, and develop for the better.
- ☐ You love to see others make progress, and you will notice even the slightest progress.

- ☐ Being a part of another person's development is the one of best experiences in the world for you.
- ☐ Other people may not be as interested in their development as you are. In fact, they might push you away because they feel you are pressuring them.

The genius of Developer talents lie in your ability to see the raw potential and incremental progress of others, and to actively invest in furthering that development.

Discipline as One of Your Signature Themes

To begin affirming Discipline as one of your areas of dominant talents, first take another look at the description of that theme:

Your world needs to be predictable. It needs to be ordered and planned. So you instinctively impose structure on your world. You set up routines. You focus on timelines and deadlines. You break long-term projects into a series of specific short-term plans, and you work through each plan diligently. You are not necessarily neat and clean, but you do need precision. Faced with the inherent messiness of life, you want to feel in control. The routines, the timelines, the structure, all of these help create this feeling of control. Lacking this theme of Discipline, others may sometimes resent your need for order, but there need not be conflict. You must understand that not everyone feels your urge for predictability; they have other ways of getting things done. Likewise, you can help them understand and even appreciate your need for structure. Your dislike of surprises, your impatience with errors, your routines, and your detail orientation don't need to be misinterpreted as controlling behaviors that box people in. Rather, these behaviors can be understood as your instinctive method for maintaining your progress and your productivity in the face of life's many distractions.

Now, consider this statement based on comments from individuals who possess Discipline among their Signature Themes. It represents what Discipline could "sound like."

Affirming Empathy

“I’m super-organized. Everything has a place so I know where to find it. My schedule is mapped out in advance, and that enables me to get a lot done. I never miss turning in an assignment on time.”

For further understanding of your talents, examine these insights and select those that describe you best.

- ☐ You find ways to organize yourself to get things done on time.
- ☐ You tend to place yourself in productive environments.
- ☐ You create order and structure where it is needed.
- ☐ Some people may label you as compulsive, anal, or a control freak because of your ability to discipline yourself and structure your world. But these attributes make you productive — often more so than your critics.

The genius of Discipline talents is in your ordered and structured approach, which brings predictability to your work and life.

Empathy as One of Your Signature Themes

To begin affirming Empathy as one of your areas of dominant talents, first take another look at the description of that theme:

You can sense the emotions of those around you. You can feel what they are feeling as though their feelings are your own. Intuitively, you are able to see the world through their eyes and share their perspective. You do not necessarily agree with each person’s perspective. You do not necessarily feel pity for each person’s predicament — this would be sympathy, not Empathy. You do not necessarily condone the choices each person makes, but you do understand. This instinctive ability to understand is powerful. You hear the unvoiced questions. You anticipate the need. Where others grapple for words, you seem to find the right words and the right tone. You help people find the right phrases to express their feelings — to themselves as well as to others. You help them give voice to their emotional life. For all these reasons other people are drawn to you.

Now, consider this statement based on comments from individuals who possess Empathy among their Signature Themes. It represents what Empathy could “sound like.”

“I’m the one my friends turn to when they have a fight with their boyfriend or girlfriend. They know I understand how they’re feeling, but they know I can help them see how the other person is feeling, too. I tend to be the one whose shoulder they cry on.”

For further understanding of your talents, examine these insights and select those that describe you best.

- ☐ You can sense what it feels like to be someone else.
- ☐ You can pick up on the pain and joy of others — sometimes before they express it. Other people feel heard by you and experience your compassion.
- ☐ Because you can quickly understand others, people are drawn to you when they have a need or a problem, especially in relationships.
- ☐ Your Empathy can be challenging because you may become overwhelmed with all of the emotions you can pick up in a day.

The genius of Empathy talents lies in the emotional depth of the relationships you’re able to form with others. People feel understood by you and seek your company.

Focus as One of Your Signature Themes

To begin affirming Focus as one of your areas of dominant talents, first take another look at the description of that theme:

“Where am I headed?” you ask yourself. You ask this question every day. Guided by this theme of Focus, you need a clear destination. Lacking one, your life and your work can quickly become frustrating. And so each year, each month, and even each week you set goals. These goals then serve as your compass, helping you determine priorities and make the necessary corrections to get back on course. Your Focus is powerful because it forces you to filter; you instinctively evaluate whether or

Affirming Focus

not a particular action will help you move toward your goal. Those that don't are ignored. In the end, then, your Focus forces you to be efficient. Naturally, the flip side of this is that it causes you to become impatient with delays, obstacles, and even tangents, no matter how intriguing they appear to be. This makes you an extremely valuable team member. When others start to wander down other avenues, you bring them back to the main road. Your Focus reminds everyone that if something is not helping you move toward your destination, then it is not important. And if it is not important, then it is not worth your time. You keep everyone on point.

Now, consider this statement based on comments from individuals who possess Focus among their Signature Themes. It represents what Focus could "sound like."

"Sometimes I'm so intent on my homework that my roommate can walk into the room and say my name — and I don't even realize he's there. I get so zoned in on what I'm doing that nothing breaks my concentration."

For further understanding of your talents, examine these insights and select those that describe you best.

- ☐ You can take a direction, follow through, and make the necessary corrections to stay on track.
- ☐ You prioritize your life and tasks, and then take action.
- ☐ You set goals that keep you effective and efficient.
- ☐ You become frustrated when you when a group you are a part of doesn't have clear goals or direction. Likewise, your life and work become frustrating when your goals are unclear.

The genius of Focus talents is in your intense concentration on one task. Your single-mindedness enhances the speed and quality of your performance.

Futuristic as One of Your Signature Themes

To begin affirming Futuristic as one of your areas of dominant talents, first take another look at the description of that theme:

“Wouldn’t it be great if . . .” You are the kind of person who loves to peer over the horizon. The future fascinates you. As if it were projected on the wall, you see in detail what the future might hold, and this detailed picture keeps pulling you forward, into tomorrow. While the exact content of the picture will depend on your other strengths and interests — a better product, a better team, a better life, or a better world — it will always be inspirational to you. You are a dreamer who sees visions of what could be and who cherishes those visions. When the present proves too frustrating and the people around you too pragmatic, you conjure up your visions of the future and they energize you. They can energize others, too. In fact, very often people look to you to describe your visions of the future. They want a picture that can raise their sights and thereby their spirits. You can paint it for them. Practice. Choose your words carefully. Make the picture as vivid as possible. People will want to latch on to the hope you bring.

Now, consider this statement based on comments from individuals who possess Futuristic among their Signature Themes. It represents what Futuristic could “sound like.”

“I’m only a freshman, but I’m anxious to decide whether to major in transportation planning or international business. Either way, I’ll be prepared for what lies ahead. Of course, some of the jobs I’ll have in life haven’t even been invented yet!”

For further understanding of your talents, examine these insights and select those that describe you best.

- ☐ You are fascinated by the future, and you usually see the future positively.
- ☐ You can see in detail what the future might hold.
- ☐ You can energize yourself and others by your vision of what could be. You can clearly see possibilities.

- Others may dismiss you as a dreamer. You might become frustrated by present circumstances and discouraged by highly pragmatic people who can't or won't see the possible future that is so clear to you.

The genius of Futuristic talents is in your emotional anticipation and visual imagination of a better future, which inspire you — and could inspire others — to make that dream a reality.

Harmony as One of Your Signature Themes

To begin affirming Harmony as one of your areas of dominant talents, first take another look at the description of that theme:

You look for areas of agreement. In your view there is little to be gained from conflict and friction, so you seek to hold them to a minimum. When you know that the people around you hold differing views, you try to find the common ground. You try to steer them away from confrontation and toward harmony. In fact, harmony is one of your guiding values. You can't quite believe how much time is wasted by people trying to impose their views on others. Wouldn't we all be more productive if we kept our opinions in check and instead looked for consensus and support? You believe we would, and you live by that belief. When others are sounding off about their goals, their claims, and their fervently held opinions, you hold your peace. When others strike out in a direction, you will willingly, in the service of harmony, modify your own objectives to merge with theirs (as long as their basic values do not clash with yours). When others start to argue about their pet theory or concept, you steer clear of the debate, preferring to talk about practical, down-to-earth matters on which you can all agree. In your view we are all in the same boat, and we need this boat to get where we are going. It is a good boat. There is no need to rock it just to show that you can.

Now, consider this statement based on comments from individuals who possess Harmony among their Signature Themes. It represents what Harmony could "sound like."

“In my family I’m known as the peacemaker. Somehow I’m able to work behind the scenes to help resolve or even prevent conflicts. Half the time, the people involved don’t realize all the conversations I’ve had with both sides to help them reach a win-win solution.”

For further understanding of your talents, examine these insights and select those that describe you best.

- ☐ You want peace, and you try to bring people together.
- ☐ You can see points that people have in common, even when they are in conflict.
- ☐ You seek to help individuals, families, and organizations work together.
- ☐ Some people may criticize you, saying you lack courage. Occasionally, even you may see your desire for harmony as an avoidance of conflict.

The genius of Harmony talents is in your natural practicality and preference for emotional efficiency. By reducing friction, you enhance collaboration.

Ideation as One of Your Signature Themes

To begin affirming Ideation as one of your areas of dominant talents, first take another look at the description of that theme:

You are fascinated by ideas. What is an idea? An idea is a concept, the best explanation of the most events. You are delighted when you discover beneath the complex surface an elegantly simple concept to explain why things are the way they are. An idea is a connection. Yours is the kind of mind that is always looking for connections, and so you are intrigued when seemingly disparate phenomena can be linked by an obscure connection. An idea is a new perspective on familiar challenges. You revel in taking the world we all know and turning it around so we can view it from a strange but strangely enlightening angle. You love all these ideas because they are profound, because they are novel, because they are clarifying, because they are contrary, because they are bizarre.

Affirming Includer

For all these reasons you derive a jolt of energy whenever a new idea occurs to you. Others may label you creative or original or conceptual or even smart. Perhaps you are all of these. Who can be sure? What you are sure of is that ideas are thrilling. And on most days this is enough.

Now, consider this statement based on comments from individuals who possess Ideation among their Signature Themes. It represents what Ideation could “sound like.”

“In my psychology class, we were supposed to do a group research project on mental illness. Every other group presented a report to the class, but I talked my group into making a creative video about what it might be like to experience mental illness. All the research was there — it was just presented in a really cool way that helped everybody remember it better.”

For further understanding of your talents, examine these insights and select those that describe you best.

- ☐ You are a creative person, and you appreciate originality.
- ☐ You like free-thinking experiences such as brainstorming and discussion groups.
- ☐ You love new ideas and concepts.
- ☐ At times, it may seem like you get lost in the world of ideas, and others may think you are a daydreamer.

The genius of Ideation talents is in your spontaneous creativity. You have a natural sense of innovation that can defy conventional thinking.

Includer as One of Your Signature Themes

To begin affirming Includer as one of your areas of dominant talents, first take another look at the description of that theme:

“Stretch the circle wider.” This is the philosophy around which you orient your life. You want to include people and make them feel part of the group. In direct contrast to those who are drawn only to exclusive groups, you actively avoid those groups that exclude others. You want to

expand the group so that as many people as possible can benefit from its support. You hate the sight of someone on the outside looking in. You want to draw them in so that they can feel the warmth of the group. You are an instinctively accepting person. Regardless of race or sex or nationality or personality or faith, you cast few judgments. Judgments can hurt a person's feelings. Why do that if you don't have to? Your accepting nature does not necessarily rest on a belief that each of us is different and that one should respect these differences. Rather, it rests on your conviction that fundamentally we are all the same. We are all equally important. Thus, no one should be ignored. Each of us should be included. It is the least we all deserve.

Now, consider this statement based on comments from individuals who possess Includer among their Signature Themes. It represents what Includer could "sound like."

"In class, I noticed one guy who always ended up by himself when the professor would tell us to get into groups. I could tell he was feeling left out, so I invited him to join our group."

For further understanding of your talents, examine these insights and select those that describe you best.

- ☐ You notice people who feel like outsiders or who feel unappreciated.
- ☐ You are not content when people are left out, so you try to reach out to the "outsiders" and bring them in.
- ☐ People see you as accepting and sense that you want them to be included.
- ☐ In your attempts to include others, you may be rejected by the very people you try to include. You may have to confront your own fears as you seek to include those who may reject you. You may also have to deal with people who misunderstand your actions, yet themselves do nothing to reach out to those who feel left out.

The genius of Includer talents lies in your sensitivity to those who are excluded and your desire and capacity to bring them into the group.

Individualization as One of Your Signature Themes

To begin affirming Individualization as one of your areas of dominant talents, first take another look at the description of that theme:

Your Individualization theme leads you to be intrigued by the unique qualities of each person. You are impatient with generalizations or “types” because you don’t want to obscure what is special and distinct about each person. Instead, you focus on the differences between individuals. You instinctively observe each person’s style, each person’s motivation, how each thinks, and how each builds relationships. You hear the one-of-a-kind stories in each person’s life. This theme explains why you pick your friends just the right birthday gift, why you know that one person prefers praise in public and another detests it, and why you tailor your teaching style to accommodate one person’s need to be shown and another’s desire to “figure it out as I go.” Because you are such a keen observer of other people’s strengths, you can draw out the best in each person. This Individualization theme also helps you build productive teams. While some search around for the perfect team “structure” or “process,” you know instinctively that the secret to great teams is casting by individual strengths so that everyone can do a lot of what they do well.

Now, consider this statement based on comments from individuals who possess Individualization among their Signature Themes. It represents what Individualization could “sound like.”

“I’m coaching an after-school youth basketball team at the YMCA. It’s cool to see what brings out the best in each of my players. Tony responds really well when I match him up on defense with the top player on the other team; Jay gets into it most when I tell him he’s NBA material. And Daniel shines when I keep track of how many steals he has in a game and make a big deal of that.”

For further understanding of your talents, examine these insights and select those that describe you best.

- ☐ You view each person as a distinct, one-of-a-kind individual.
- ☐ You naturally see how people who are very different can work together well.

- ☐ You know how to build productive teams because you can see the talents of people and structure groups that maximize those talents.
- ☐ Because you see individuals so distinctly and try to relate to them in terms of their specific characteristics, relating to people can be sometimes be tiring and even overwhelming.

The genius of Individualization talents is in your ability to notice and appreciate the unique characteristics of each person, and to customize your approach accordingly.

Input as One of Your Signature Themes

To begin affirming Input as one of your areas of dominant talents, first take another look at the description of that theme:

You are inquisitive. You collect things. You might collect information — words, facts, books, and quotations — or you might collect tangible objects such as butterflies, baseball cards, porcelain dolls, or sepia photographs. Whatever you collect, you collect it because it interests you. And yours is the kind of mind that finds so many things interesting. The world is exciting precisely because of its infinite variety and complexity. If you read a great deal, it is not necessarily to refine your theories but, rather, to add more information to your archives. If you like to travel, it is because each new location offers novel artifacts and facts. These can be acquired and then stored away. Why are they worth storing? At the time of storing it is often hard to say exactly when or why you might need them, but who knows when they might become useful? With all those possible uses in mind, you really don't feel comfortable throwing anything away. So you keep acquiring and compiling and filing stuff away. It's interesting. It keeps your mind fresh. And perhaps one day some of it will prove valuable.

Now, consider this statement based on comments from individuals who possess Input among their Signature Themes. It represents what Input could "sound like."

Affirming Intellection

“When I go on the Internet to do research for a paper, I can easily find relevant and appropriate information that help me get the paper written. In fact, I often find extra information that will help my friends get their papers written, too.”

For further understanding of your talents, examine these insights and select those that describe you best.

- ☐ You always want to know more. You crave information.
- ☐ You like to collect certain things, such as ideas, books, memorabilia, quotations, and facts.
- ☐ You have an active curiosity. You find many things very interesting. A few minutes of “surfing the Net” may turn into hours once your curiosity takes off, and you might have difficulties filing and housing all of the new information you acquire.

The genius of Input talents is in your active and resourceful curiosity, which leads you to become a storehouse of knowledge.

Intellection as One of Your Signature Themes

To begin affirming Intellection as one of your areas of dominant talents, first take another look at the description of that theme:

You like to think. You like mental activity. You like exercising the “muscles” of your brain, stretching them in multiple directions. This need for mental activity may be focused; for example, you may be trying to solve a problem or develop an idea or understand another person’s feelings. The exact focus will depend on your other strengths. On the other hand, this mental activity may very well lack focus. The theme of Intellection does not dictate what you are thinking about; it simply describes that you like to think. You are the kind of person who enjoys your time alone because it is your time for musing and reflection. You are introspective. In a sense you are your own best companion, as you pose yourself questions and try out answers on yourself to see how they sound. This introspection may lead you to a slight sense of discontent as you compare what you are actually doing with all the thoughts and ideas that your mind conceives. Or this introspection may tend toward more

pragmatic matters such as the events of the day or a conversation that you plan to have later. Wherever it leads you, this mental hum is one of the constants of your life.

Now, consider this statement based on comments from individuals who possess Intellection among their Signature Themes. It represents what Intellection could “sound like.”

“I once got to house-sit for one of my professors. The time away from all the noise and activity at the dorm was a great opportunity to think about the best way to approach the rest of the semester.”

For further understanding of your talents, examine these insights and select those that describe you best.

- ☐ You love to study, and you prefer intellectual discussions.
- ☐ You like to think and to let your thoughts go in many directions.
- ☐ You like to spend time alone so that you can reflect and ponder.
- ☐ Others may write you off as a “geek” because of your sophisticated level of thinking and use of language.

The genius of Intellection talents stems from the deep processing that occurs when you think. Wisdom and clarity result from your ability to muse for long periods of time.

Learner as One of Your Signature Themes

To begin affirming Learner as one of your areas of dominant talents, first take another look at the description of that theme:

You love to learn. The subject matter that interests you most will be determined by your other themes and experiences, but whatever the subject, you will always be drawn to the process of learning. The process, more than the content or the result, is especially exciting for you. You are energized by the steady and deliberate journey from ignorance to competence. The thrill of the first few facts, the early efforts to recite or practice what you have learned, the growing confidence of a skill mastered — this is the process that entices you. Your excitement leads you to

Affirming Learner

engage in adult learning experiences — yoga or piano lessons or graduate classes. It enables you to thrive in dynamic work environments where you are asked to take on short project assignments and are expected to learn a lot about the new subject matter in a short period of time and then move on to the next one. This Learner theme does not necessarily mean that you seek to become the subject matter expert, or that you are striving for the respect that accompanies a professional or academic credential. The outcome of the learning is less significant than the “getting there.”

Now, consider this statement based on comments from individuals who possess Learner among their Signature Themes. It represents what Learner could “sound like.”

“I’m headed to Spain for a semester next year. I’ve been reading everything I can get my hands on about what it will be like to travel and live with a family in Seville.”

For further understanding of your talents, examine these insights and select those that describe you best.

- ☐ You want to continuously learn and improve.
- ☐ You enjoy the process of learning as much as what you actually learn — perhaps even more.
- ☐ You get a thrill out of learning new facts, beginning a new subject, and mastering an important skill. Learning builds your confidence.
- ☐ You can get frustrated about wanting to learn so many different things because you fear you’ll never be an expert.

The genius of Learner talents is that you not only love to learn; you also intuitively know how you learn best.

Maximizer as One of Your Signature Themes

To begin affirming Maximizer as one of your areas of dominant talents, first take another look at the description of that theme:

Excellence, not average, is your measure. Taking something from below average to slightly above average takes a great deal of effort and in your opinion is not very rewarding. Transforming something strong into something superb takes just as much effort but is much more thrilling. Strengths, whether yours or someone else's, fascinate you. Like a diver after pearls, you search them out, watching for the telltale signs of a strength. A glimpse of untutored excellence, rapid learning, a skill mastered without recourse to steps — all these are clues that a strength may be in play. And having found a strength, you feel compelled to nurture it, refine it, and stretch it toward excellence. You polish the pearl until it shines. This natural sorting of strengths means that others see you as discriminating. You choose to spend time with people who appreciate your particular strengths. Likewise, you are attracted to others who seem to have found and cultivated their own strengths. You tend to avoid those who want to fix you and make you well rounded. You don't want to spend your life bemoaning what you lack. Rather, you want to capitalize on the gifts with which you are blessed. It's more fun. It's more productive. And, counterintuitively, it is more demanding.

Now, consider this statement based on comments from individuals who possess Maximizer among their Signature Themes. It represents what Maximizer could "sound like."

"I was elected to student government and am heading a committee for our big Celebrate Diversity event on campus. I keep seeing ways we can make the event even better than it was last year, even though the rest of the committee thinks what we're doing so far is good enough."

For further understanding of your talents, examine these insights and select those that describe you best.

- ☐ You see talents and strengths in others, sometimes before they do.

Affirming Positivity

- ☐ You love to help others become excited by the natural potential of their talents.
- ☐ You have the capacity to see what people will do best and which jobs they will be good at. You can see how people's talents match the tasks that must be completed.
- ☐ Some people may see you as picky or plodding because they don't understand your exceptional commitment to excellence.

The genius of Maximizer talents is in your natural discrimination toward better and your preference for working with and toward the best.

Positivity as One of Your Signature Themes

To begin affirming Positivity as one of your areas of dominant talents, first take another look at the description of that theme:

You are generous with praise, quick to smile, and always on the lookout for the positive in the situation. Some call you lighthearted. Others just wish that their glass were as full as yours seems to be. But either way, people want to be around you. Their world looks better around you because your enthusiasm is contagious. Lacking your energy and optimism, some find their world drab with repetition or, worse, heavy with pressure. You seem to find a way to lighten their spirit. You inject drama into every project. You celebrate every achievement. You find ways to make every- thing more exciting and more vital. Some cynics may reject your energy, but you are rarely dragged down. Your Positivity won't allow it. Somehow you can't quite escape your conviction that it is good to be alive, that work can be fun, and that no matter what the setbacks, one must never lose one's sense of humor.

Now, consider this statement based on comments from individuals who possess Positivity among their Signature Themes. It represents what Positivity could "sound like."

"College is great! There are lots of assignments and it's hard work, but it's such a fun and energizing atmosphere. Even when I'm buried in homework, I can't help but have a good time."

For further understanding of your talents, examine these insights and select those that describe you best.

- ☐ You bring enthusiasm to people, groups, and organizations.
- ☐ You can stimulate people to be more productive and become more hopeful.
- ☐ You can get people excited about what they are doing, causing them to become more engaged in their work.
- ☐ Some people will criticize you for being so optimistic. They may say you are naïve, and that may cause you to doubt yourself.

The genius of Positivity talents is found in your positive emotional impact. Simply stated, everyone feels better about life when you are around.

Relator as One of Your Signature Themes

To begin affirming Relator as one of your areas of dominant talents, first take another look at the description of that theme:

Relator describes your attitude toward your relationships. In simple terms, the Relator theme pulls you toward people you already know. You do not necessarily shy away from meeting new people — in fact, you may have other themes that cause you to enjoy the thrill of turning strangers into friends — but you do derive a great deal of pleasure and strength from being around your close friends. You are comfortable with intimacy. Once the initial connection has been made, you deliberately encourage a deepening of the relationship. You want to understand their feelings, their goals, their fears, and their dreams; and you want them to understand yours. You know that this kind of closeness implies a certain amount of risk — you might be taken advantage of — but you are willing to accept that risk. For you a relationship has value only if it is genuine. And the only way to know that is to entrust yourself to the other person. The more you share with each other, the more you risk together. The more you risk together, the more each of you proves your caring is genuine. These are your steps toward real friendship, and you take them willingly.

Affirming Responsibility

Now, consider this statement based on comments from individuals who possess Relator among their Signature Themes. It represents what Relator could “sound like.”

“Leaving all my high school friends behind when I started college was hard. Even though I’m meeting a bunch of people here, there’s such a big difference between being friendly with people and actually being friends.”

For further understanding of your talents, examine these insights and select those that describe you best.

- ☐ You can form close relationships with people, and you enjoy doing so.
- ☐ You receive profound satisfaction from working hard with friends to accomplish an important goal.
- ☐ You know many people, and you can relate with all kinds of people. But you also have a very small group of friends with whom you have incredibly deep relationships.
- ☐ Some people may feel threatened or uncomfortable because they don’t have the close, intense personal relationships that you thrive on.

The genius of Relator talents is in your ability to form solid, mutually rewarding relationships.

Responsibility as One of Your Signature Themes

To begin affirming Responsibility as one of your areas of dominant talents, first take another look at the description of that theme:

Your Responsibility theme forces you to take psychological ownership for anything you commit to, and whether large or small, you feel emotionally bound to follow it through to completion. Your good name depends on it. If for some reason you cannot deliver, you automatically start to look for ways to make it up to the other person. Apologies are not enough. Excuses and rationalizations are totally unacceptable. You will not quite be able to live with yourself until you have made restitu-

tion. This conscientiousness, this near obsession for doing things right, and your impeccable ethics, combine to create your reputation: utterly dependable. When assigning new responsibilities, people will look to you first because they know it will get done. When people come to you for help — and they soon will — you must be selective. Your willingness to volunteer may sometimes lead you to take on more than you should.

Now, consider this statement based on comments from individuals who possess Responsibility among their Signature Themes. It represents what Responsibility could “sound like.”

“I’m not always thrilled about group projects when the professor assigns the groups. I just don’t want to get stuck with someone who doesn’t pull their weight or do quality work. If I’m going to partner with someone, I want them to deliver — just like I always do.”

For further understanding of your talents, examine these insights and select those that describe you best.

- ☐ You are dependable, and people know it. They count on you when something important is on the line.
- ☐ You don’t want to let people down, and you will work very hard to fulfill all your responsibilities and keep your word.
- ☐ Because you “come through” for people, word spreads — and more and more people come to you.
- ☐ With the responsibility you feel to the people who come to you and with the demands that each of them brings, you might feel overwhelmed and under pressure to perform.

The genius of Responsibility talents stems from the deep commitments you make to others and the ownership you feel. Because you are a person of your word, people trust you and count on you.

Restorative as One of Your Signature Themes

To begin affirming Restorative as one of your areas of dominant talents, first take another look at the description of that theme:

You love to solve problems. Whereas some are dismayed when they encounter yet another breakdown, you can be energized by it. You enjoy the challenge of analyzing the symptoms, identifying what is wrong, and finding the solution. You may prefer practical problems or conceptual ones or personal ones. You may seek out specific kinds of problems that you have met many times before and that you are confident you can fix. Or you may feel the greatest push when faced with complex and unfamiliar problems. Your exact preferences are determined by your other themes and experiences. But what is certain is that you enjoy bringing things back to life. It is a wonderful feeling to identify the undermining factor(s), eradicate them, and restore something to its true glory. Intuitively, you know that without your intervention, this thing — this machine, this technique, this person, this company — might have ceased to function. You fixed it, resuscitated it, rekindled its vitality. Phrasing it the way you might, you saved it.

Now, consider this statement based on comments from individuals who possess Restorative among their Signature Themes. It represents what Restorative could “sound like.”

“I’m loving my business ethics class right now. We’re doing case studies where we get to analyze all the problems in a company and figure out how to make the best decision. My prof tells me I’m really good at finding all the flaws and fixing them.”

For further understanding of your talents, examine these insights and select those that describe you best.

- ☐ You readily take on projects that others believe “can’t be saved.”
- ☐ You can analyze a situation and identify potential shortcomings and what needs to be fixed.
- ☐ You quickly recognize problems that others may not detect.

- Other people may not like the fact that you can so quickly determine the problems and weaknesses in people, situations, and organizations. They may find this embarrassing, even if your assessments and solutions are accurate.

The genius of Restorative talents is in your love of problems. While others shy away, your solution-oriented mind naturally gravitates toward these challenges.

Self-Assurance as One of Your Signature Themes

To begin affirming Self-Assurance as one of your areas of dominant talents, first take another look at the description of that theme:

Self-Assurance is similar to self-confidence. In the deepest part of you, you have faith in your strengths. You know that you are able — able to take risks, able to meet new challenges, able to stake claims, and, most important, able to deliver. But Self-Assurance is more than just self-confidence. Blessed with the theme of Self-Assurance, you have confidence not only in your abilities but in your judgment. When you look at the world, you know that your perspective is unique and distinct. And because no one sees exactly what you see, you know that no one can make your decisions for you. No one can tell you what to think. They can guide. They can suggest. But you alone have the authority to form conclusions, make decisions, and act. This authority, this final accountability for the living of your life, does not intimidate you. On the contrary, it feels natural to you. No matter what the situation, you seem to know what the right decision is. This theme lends you an aura of certainty. Unlike many, you are not easily swayed by someone else's arguments, no matter how persuasive they may be. This Self-Assurance may be quiet or loud, depending on your other themes, but it is solid. It is strong. Like the keel of a ship, it withstands many different pressures and keeps you on your course.

Now, consider this statement based on comments from individuals who possess Self-Assurance among their Signature Themes. It represents what Self-Assurance could “sound like.”

“I wasn’t recruited to play baseball here, but I’m trying out as a walk-on. I know I can make it — I feel it in my gut as I practice with the others. I can do this!”

For further understanding of your talents, examine these insights and select those that describe you best.

- ☐ You are confident about your ability to manage your life.
- ☐ You can “bounce back” from disappointments and crises.
- ☐ You believe that your decisions are right and that your perspective is unique and distinct.
- ☐ Other people may see your self-assurance as a type of pride or arrogance. They might think you’re cocky and not care for the way you tend to trust your own gut rather than others’ advice.

The genius of Self-Assurance talents is in the way you deeply trust your own instincts. This can enable you to forge ahead confidently, even on risky paths.

Significance as One of Your Signature Themes

To begin affirming Significance as one of your areas of dominant talents, first take another look at the description of that theme:

You want to be very significant in the eyes of other people. In the truest sense of the word you want to be recognized. You want to be heard. You want to stand out. You want to be known. In particular, you want to be known and appreciated for the unique strengths you bring. You feel a need to be admired as credible, professional, and successful. Likewise, you want to associate with others who are credible, professional, and successful. And if they aren’t, you will push them to achieve until they are. Or you will move on. An independent spirit, you want your work to be a way of life rather than a job, and in that work you want to be given free rein, the leeway to do things your way. Your yearnings feel intense to you, and you honor those yearnings. And so your life is filled with goals, achievements, or qualifications that you crave. Whatever your focus — and each person is distinct — your Significance theme will keep

pulling you upward, away from the mediocre toward the exceptional. It is the theme that keeps you reaching.

Now, consider this statement based on comments from individuals who possess Significance among their Signature Themes. It represents what Significance could “sound like.”

“One of my favorite high school memories is winning the ‘servant leader’ award for the work I did with inner-city kids in after-school programs. Knowing that people noticed the work I had done felt really good, especially when I knew I had made a difference in the lives of those kids.”

For further understanding of your talents, examine these insights and select those that describe you best.

- ☐ You probably enjoy receiving public recognition for the differences you make.
- ☐ You want to have an impact on other people, groups, and society as a whole.
- ☐ You want the contributions you make to be viewed as substantial, powerful, and significant.
- ☐ Significance talents are sometimes perceived as egotism or a need for attention.

The genius of Significance talents begins and ends with the difference you are determined to make. You want the world to be a better place because you are in it.

Strategic as One of Your Signature Themes

To begin affirming Strategic as one of your areas of dominant talents, first take another look at the description of that theme:

The Strategic theme enables you to sort through the clutter and find the best route. It is not a skill that can be taught. It is a distinct way of thinking, a special perspective on the world at large. This perspective allows you to see patterns where others simply see complexity. Mindful of

these patterns, you play out alternative scenarios, always asking, “What if this happened? Okay, well what if this happened?” This recurring question helps you see around the next corner. There you can evaluate accurately the potential obstacles. Guided by where you see each path leading, you start to make selections. You discard the paths that lead nowhere. You discard the paths that lead straight into resistance. You discard the paths that lead into a fog of confusion. You cull and make selections until you arrive at the chosen path — your strategy. Armed with your strategy, you strike forward. This is your Strategic theme at work: “What if?” Select. Strike.

Now, consider this statement based on comments from individuals who possess Strategic among their Signature Themes. It represents what Strategic could “sound like.”

“I chose this college to prepare for medical school. I’d like to do it as quickly as possible, so I considered trying to finish in three years. But I want to get into a top school, so I’m going to limit the credit hours I take each semester and get really good grades.”

For further understanding of your talents, examine these insights and select those that describe you best.

- ☐ You know that there is more than one means to an end. Your ability to see options helps you quickly come up with Plan B if your first plan doesn’t work.
- ☐ You can quickly pick out the relevant issues and patterns when confronted by problems and complexities.
- ☐ You have a “What if this happens?” mentality toward work and life. This type of questioning helps you see, plan, and prepare for future situations.
- ☐ Some may see your lightning-quick evaluation of what won’t work as overly critical. Because you are able to sort through everything so quickly, people don’t realize that you have considered all the options.

The genius of Strategic talents is found in your ability to quickly weigh various alternative paths and determine the one that will work best and most efficiently. Sometimes you think backwards — visualizing the outcome you want and then generating multiple ways of reaching that goal.

Woo as One of Your Signature Themes

To begin affirming Woo as one of your areas of dominant talents, first take another look at the description of that theme:

Woo stands for winning others over. You enjoy the challenge of meeting new people and getting them to like you. Strangers are rarely intimidating to you. On the contrary, strangers can be energizing. You are drawn to them. You want to learn their names, ask them questions, and find some area of common interest so that you can strike up a conversation and build rapport. Some people shy away from starting up conversations because they worry about running out of things to say. You don't. Not only are you rarely at a loss for words; you actually enjoy initiating with strangers because you derive satisfaction from breaking the ice and making a connection. Once that connection is made, you are quite happy to wrap it up and move on. There are new people to meet, new rooms to work, new crowds to mingle in. In your world there are no strangers, only friends you haven't met yet — lots of them.

Now, consider this statement based on comments from individuals who possess Woo among their Signature Themes. It represents what Woo could "sound like."

"The first day of classes is always so fun. I made a lot of new friends today and introduced myself to each of my professors!"

For further understanding of your talents, examine these insights and select those that describe you best.

- ☐ You have the capacity to quickly connect with people and generate positive responses from them.

Affirming Woo

- ☐ You can enter a crowd of people and easily know what to do and what to say.
- ☐ You see no strangers — only friends you haven't met yet.
- ☐ Because you know so many people, some may believe that you form only shallow relationships. Others, however, will envy how quickly and easily you make friends.

The genius of Woo talents is in your ability to quickly connect with people and become a catalyst in helping them connect with one another. You have an exceptional sense of how to draw others out.