



Chapter II

GAINING DIRECTION
FOR YOUR QUEST

GALLUP PRESS
1251 Avenue of the Americas
23rd Floor
New York, NY 10020

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Cover design by Chin-Yee Lai
Manufactured in the United States of America

First edition 2002
Second edition 2006

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2

ISBN 10: 1-59562-011-7
ISBN 13: 978-1-59562-011-8

A strengths quest is a revolutionary approach to achieving. Why? Because adopting a strengths perspective to your life and fully embracing it has a radical impact on your motivation. So, what exactly are the connections between your strengths quest and your motivations?

1. Your quest addresses your questions.

Most great scholars know that motivation to conduct research, and to learn in general, stems from personally meaningful questions to which they want to find answers.

2. Your quest is an adventure of discovery.

A quest is motivating simply because of the adventure and the discoveries you will make along the way. The first adventure is discovering your talents — but that is only the beginning. Then, there are discoveries and insights that will come to you as you gain a strengths perspective on your entire life. Suddenly, you will begin to understand the connection between your talents and your past achievements.

3. Your quest generates optimism.

As you become increasingly aware of your talents, you'll develop more optimistic, because you realize that you have abilities you can use in pursuing your goals. This alone builds motivation because you recognize that in your talents, you in fact have assets that can help you reach your desired goals.

4. Your quest provides a sense of direction.

Being lost is a dreadful experience. One of the most motivating aspects of a strengths quest is the increased sense of direction that comes as you gain a greater understanding of who you are.

5. Your quest generates confidence.

As you become increasingly aware of your talents and as you develop strengths, you will become more aware of your potential for excellence. As a result, you'll gain confidence.

6. Your quest generates a sense of vitality.

Whenever you use your greatest talents, there is a psychological reward — you receive both satisfaction and motivation. The pleasurable experience of using those talents seems to reach some of your deepest motivations. When you are using your most natural talents, you seem to become more fully alive.

Your Signature Themes Report

Let's turn now to your Signature Themes report, which you received after completing the Clifton StrengthsFinder assessment.

As described earlier, your Signature Themes are your five most dominant themes of talent, as indicated by your responses to the assessment. They are presented in rank order, with your most dominant theme listed first. Each Signature Theme is accompanied by a description of the talents in that theme.

Some people are concerned about receiving only their top five themes. That's understandable, but Gallup research clearly points to the fact that the top achievers focus on their most dominant areas of talent, and we would like you to do the same. Attempting to focus on too many themes can dilute the attention you give to your top themes. Also, we don't want you to fall prey to the conventional "wisdom" that the best way to achieve is to emphasize your areas of lesser talent. We want you to hone in on your Signature Themes — your greatest areas of talent — which present your best opportunities to achieve.

What Should You Do With Your Signature Themes Report?

The rest of this book is devoted to answering this question. But there are two things that we would like you to do as soon as possible.

First, please print a copy of your report, and carefully read the descriptions of each of your Signature Themes. Please underline or highlight each term, phrase, and sentence that seems to describe you.

Next, contact the three people who know you best, and read each of your Signature Themes and their descriptions. After reading each description, please ask these people if they see that theme in you. If they say yes, ask them to give you an example of when they have seen it in

you. If any of them answer no, simply move on to the next Signature Theme.

You are a talented person with a unique and very special set of talents. Now, it's time to learn more about them and gain further direction for your strengths quest by affirming your Signature Themes.