



*"How blessed is the one who finds wisdom,
and the one who finds understanding".
Proverbs 3:13*

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Understanding Strengths and Blending Differences

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome! You have just taken a significant step in the process of understanding the unique strengths that God has designed in you. This report will provide insight into your natural strengths and how those strengths are operating in your life. As you learn more about yourself and God's plan for the uniqueness of strengths, you will also begin recognizing and valuing the strengths in others.

There are several sections in this report and each contributes to the knowledge and understanding that will produce the greatest transformation in your relationships. Therefore, please commit yourself to read and explore this report completely.

In I Corinthians 12:12-18 we read that although the body is one, it is made up of many parts. Each part has a vital function and is no less a part of the body because it is different. As you study the passage, it is apparent that God not only intentionally created differences, but He designed them very specifically. God's desire in our relationships is for our differences to unite us not divide us. These Biblical principles establish a foundation for understanding ourselves and our relationships and to see that our differences are strengths when allowed to function as God designed.

The mission of Ministry Insights is to transform relationships worldwide. We believe this transformation takes place as you discover God's plan for your unique strengths and the unique strengths of others. As you learn more about yourself and others it is our prayer that your eyes will be opened to clearly see God's divine design for differences.

Additional supporting resources are available at www.ministryinsights.com.



Interpreting Your Natural Strength Chart

Let's begin with a look at your natural strengths. Your Natural Strengths Chart presents a visual picture of the predictable ways that you naturally approach or respond to problems, information, change and risk. In each of these four scales, there are two different strengths that you may possess; therefore, there are eight strength possibilities. There is a vertical line in the center of the chart that is referred to as the energy line. Proceeding in each direction from that line is a 10 point scale. The number on the scale indicates the intensity of the strength. There may be situations in which you utilize a strength different from you natural strength, but it will require energy for you to do so. (This will be discussed further in later sections)

If your score on any scale is within 2 points of the energy line, it is indicated as neutral. This means you can move towards either of the strengths outlined in the scales based on the current situation. As opposed to someone that exhibits a clearly observable strength in an area, it will not require as much energy for you to move from one strength to the other in that area. You will tend to take a neutral position until you understand clearly what strength is required.

These strengths are a part of who you are and will remain relatively consistent over time. Typically only very small changes in your natural strengths are observed throughout your life. It is not often that we see major shifts in someone's natural strengths, but it is possible. Such a shift is normally due to a major life changing event.

The Problem Solving Scale (L Scale)

Your score on this scale indicates whether your natural strength is more reflective or aggressive in the way in which you approach problems. If you plot on the reflective side of the scale, we can predict that you will take a more reflective or calculating approach to solving a problem or challenge. If you plot on the aggressive side of the scale, it is predictable that when a problem or challenge arises you will take a more aggressive or assertive approach to solving that problem. Depending on the problem or issue, each side of the scale can highlight an important strength.



The Processing Information Scale (O Scale)

Your score on this scale indicates whether your natural strength is to be more optimistic or realistic in the way in which you process information. If you plot on the optimistic side of the scale, it is predictable that when processing new information you will be more trusting and accepting. If you plot on the realistic side of the scale, you will be more skeptical and want to validate information before trusting. Again, each side of the scale represents a strength in processing information.

The Managing Change Scale (G Scale)

Your score on this scale indicates whether your natural strength is to be more dynamic or predictable in the way you manage change. If you are on the dynamic side of this scale, you will tend to be fast-paced. You are comfortable managing many projects simultaneously, and you allow change to drive your plan. If you plot on the predictable side of the scale, you will lean toward a slower pace. You prefer to focus on one project at a time, and you tend to want to plan for change. Managing change effectively requires a combination of these strengths.

The Facing Risk Scale (B Scale)

Your score on this scale indicates whether your natural strength is to be more structured or pioneering in the way you face risk. If you are on the structured side of the scale, you will tend to follow the established procedures and rules and see them as a source of protection. Therefore you will tend to be a lower risk taker. If you are on the pioneering side of this scale, you will tend to view rules and established procedures as broad guidelines and tend to push the envelope of risk. You may even view them as obstacles standing in the way of your progress. Each of these strengths is important and needed for balancing the risk scale.

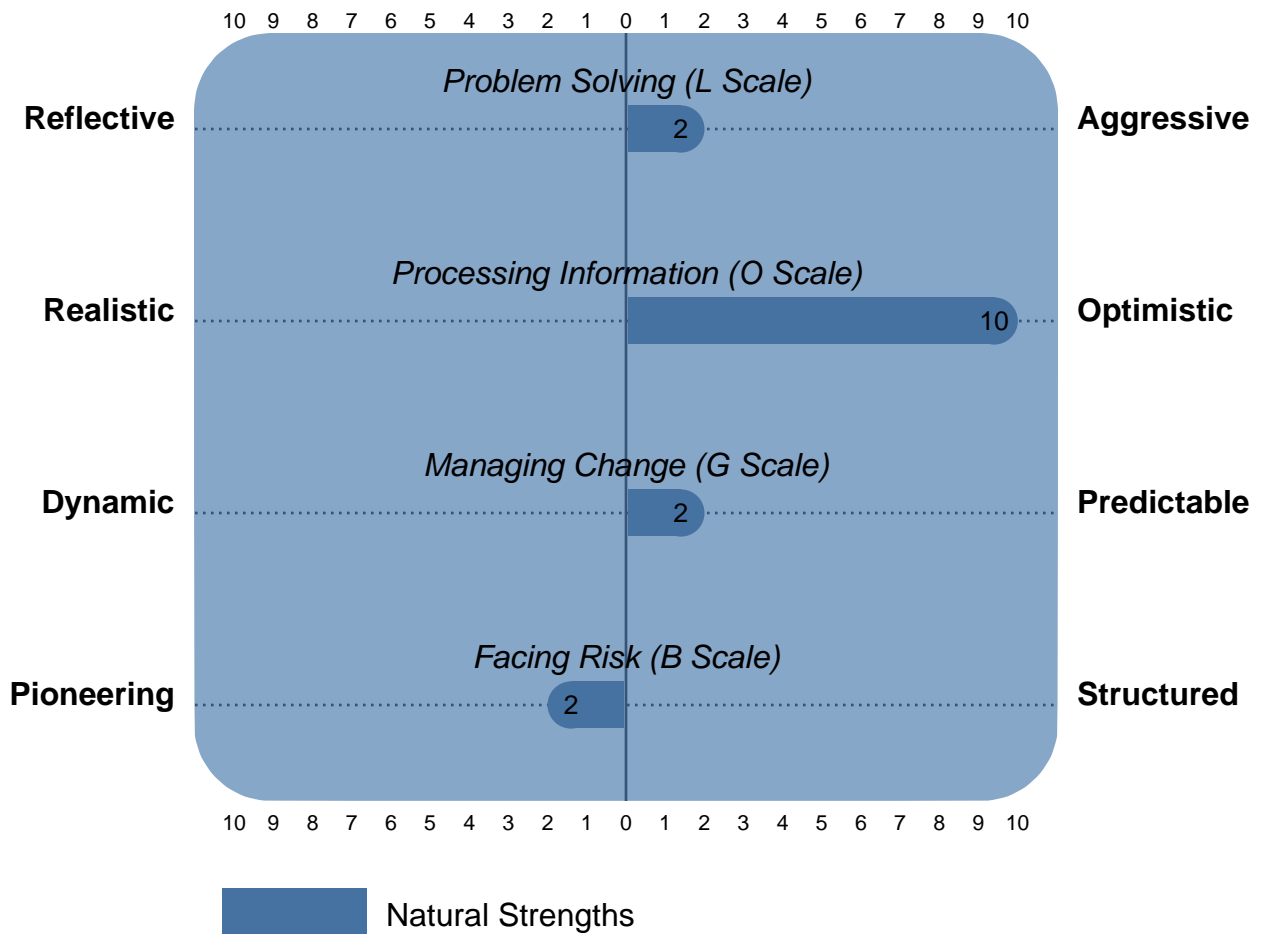
In any relationship – from the team you work with, to your closest friendships, to your marriage, or even your relationship with your children – you'll find that understanding your natural strengths and those of others in these predictable measures is crucial to building trust, closeness, commitment and caring. In fact, by understanding where people differ in these areas, you may even discover a “great secret” – that the differences of others are actually designed to complement your strengths, enabling you to function in that relationship more fully. Living out our strengths and valuing the strengths of others allows us to be more than we can be on our own.



Here are some last thoughts before you move on to your strengths chart. The order in which the information on the chart is presented is not an indication that one scale is more important than another. Also, you are a combination of strengths, so while each scale is important individually, they are not independent. Your unique combination of strengths will give you a better understanding of who you are. Therefore, the pages of text that follow your Natural Strengths Chart are essential to help you interpret your mix of strengths into a word picture that will give you a comprehensive understanding of your strengths. They will also serve as an objective platform to facilitate discussion with others.



YOUR NATURAL STRENGTHS CHART





GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS

Based on Daniel's responses, the report has selected general statements to provide a broad understanding of his strengths. These statements identify the "Natural" strengths that he brings to the position or relationship. That is, if left on his own, these statements identify how he would choose to carry out his work and relate to others. Use the general characteristics to gain a better understanding of Daniel's "Natural" strengths.

Daniel is most likely to be at his best in situations where important things, such as values, judgments, feelings and emotions are involved. He prides himself on his "intuition." His goal is to have and make many friends. At work, he is good at maintaining friendly public relations. He is driven by recognition, status and "being in charge". He prefers working for a participative leader. He does his best work in this kind of environment. Daniel influences most people with his warmth. He is gregarious and sociable. He will be seen as a good mixer both at work and in social settings. He seeks popularity and social recognition. He likes to deal with people in a favorable social environment. He believes in getting results through other people. He prefers the "team approach." Daniel projects a self-assured and self-confident image. He likes feedback from his leader on how he is doing.

Daniel likes working for a leader who make quick decisions. He will not be overlooked nor uninvolved. He will consistently try to inspire people to his point of view. He is good at solving problems that deal with people. He is good at giving verbal and nonverbal feedback that serves to encourage people to be open, to trust him and to see him as receptive and helpful. When he has strong feelings about a particular problem, you should



GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS

expect to hear these feelings, and they will probably be expressed in an emotional manner. He may leap to a favorable conclusion without considering all the facts. Because of his trust and willing acceptance of people, he may misjudge the abilities of others.

Daniel has the ability to look at the whole problem; for example, thinking about relationships, being concerned about the feelings of others and focusing on the real impact of his decisions and actions. Communication can extend from friendly to argumentative discourse. He tends to influence people to his way of thinking by using verbiage as compared with others who like to use reports. He judges others by their verbal skills and warmth. It is important for Daniel to use his people skills to "facilitate" agreement between people. He tends to look at all the things the group has in common, rather than key in on the differences. He is both a good talker and a good listener. He is positive in his approach to dealing with others. He may not understand why everyone doesn't see life as he does! He is people-oriented and verbally fluent.



VALUE TO THE TEAM

This section of the report identifies the specific talents and strengths Daniel brings to the ministry. By looking at these statements, one can better identify his role. Understanding these strengths can help capitalize on Daniel's God-given strengths that make him an integral part of the team.

- Self-reliant.
- Verbalizes his feelings.
- Brings fresh ideas for solving problems.
- Pioneering.
- Big thinker.
- Accomplishes goals through people.
- Positive sense of humor.
- People-oriented.



CHECKLIST FOR COMMUNICATING

Many people find this section to be extremely accurate and important for enhancing communication with Daniel. Whether at work, home or in the ministry, understanding how best to communicate with others can be a great relationship asset. This page provides a list of things to DO when communicating with Daniel. Review each statement with Daniel to identify the statements which are most important to him. We recommend highlighting the most important "DO's" and provide this list to those who communicate with Daniel frequently.

Do:

- Clarify any parameters in writing.
- Use a balanced, objective and emotional approach.
- Ask for his opinions/ideas regarding people.
- Speak to his self-confidence.
- Understand his determined nature.
- Provide a warm and friendly environment.
- Read the body language for approval or disapproval.
- Talk about him, his goals and the opinions he finds stimulating.
- Appeal to the benefits he will receive.
- Use enough time to be stimulating, fun-loving, fast-moving.
- Look for his oversights.



DON'TS ON COMMUNICATING

This section of the report is a list of things NOT to do while communicating with Daniel. Review each statement with Daniel and identify those methods of communication that result in frustration or reduced performance. By sharing this information, both parties can negotiate a communication system that is mutually agreeable.

Don't:

- Be curt, cold or tight-lipped.
- Be paternalistic.
- Give him your opinion unless asked.
- "Dream" with him or you'll lose time.
- Ramble.
- Legislate or muffle--don't overcontrol the conversation.
- Let him overpower you with verbiage.
- Talk down to him.
- Drive on to facts, figures, alternatives or abstractions.
- Leave decisions hanging in the air.
- Be dictatorial.



IDEAL ENVIRONMENT

This section identifies the ideal environment based on Daniel's God-given strengths or "Natural" Style. Use this section to identify specific duties and responsibilities that Daniel enjoys and also those that may create frustration.

- Democratic supervisor with whom he can associate.
- Assignments with a high degree of people contacts.
- Forum for his ideas to be heard.
- Freedom from control and detail.
- Work with a results-oriented team.
- Needs difficult assignments.



KEYS TO MOTIVATING

Understanding what motivates a person is often found by understanding what it is he wants or values. This section of the report can help understand Daniel's wants and desires. Those statements that ring true, but aren't a current part of his ministry, can become goals to reach.

Daniel wants:

- Freedom from control and detail.
- Public recognition of his ideas and results.
- A support system to do the detail work.
- Exposure to those who appreciate his results.
- Rewards to support his dreams.
- Freedom to talk and participate on the team.
- Independence.
- Working conditions with freedom to move and to talk to people.
- Participation in meetings on future planning.
- Freedom from many rules and regulations.
- No close supervision.
- Flattery, praise, popularity and strokes.
- A leader who practices participative management.



KEYS TO LEADING

In this section are some needs which must be met in order for Daniel to perform at an optimum level. Some needs can be met by himself, while leadership must provide for others. It is difficult for a person to enter a motivational environment when that person's basic needs have not been fulfilled. Review the list with Daniel and identify 3 or 4 statements that are most important to him. This allows Daniel to participate in forming his own personal growth plan.

Daniel needs:

- Better organization of record keeping.
- Support in doing excessive detail work.
- To mask emotions when appropriate.
- Objectivity when dealing with people because of his high trust level.
- Authority equal to responsibility.
- Restraints, or program to calculate the risk involved by his decisions.
- To focus conversations on work activities--less socializing.
- To relax and pace himself.
- Recognition that limits and rules do exist, and why.
- To handle routine paperwork only once.
- Help on controlling time and setting priorities.
- Participatory leader.



AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

This section lists possible "Natural" limitations or tendencies for Daniel. It does not consider life and work experiences or formal education and training that he may have received to overcome these obstacles. Review with Daniel and cross out those limitations that do not apply. Highlight one to three statements that are hindering his performance and develop an action plan to eliminate or reduce these tendencies.

Daniel has a tendency to:

- Underinstruct and overdelegate--will rely on personality as opposed to a disciplined approach to follow-up.
- Be unrealistic in appraising people--especially if the person is a "friend."
- Be optimistic regarding possible results of his projects or the potential of his people.
- Overuse praise in motivating others.
- Be inattentive to detail unless that detail is important to him or if detail work is of a short duration.
- Take information at face value without validation or substantial investigation.
- Act impulsively--heart over mind, especially if his security is not perceived to be threatened.
- Be overly enthusiastic about his own shortcomings (weaknesses) and the shortcomings of others.



A person's actions and feelings may be quickly telegraphed to others. This section provides additional information on Daniel's self-perception and how, under certain conditions, others may perceive his actions. Understanding this section will enable Daniel to balance his emotions to be successful in different situations.

"See Yourself As Others See You"

SELF-PERCEPTION

Daniel usually sees himself as being:

Enthusiastic
Charming
Persuasive

Outgoing
Inspiring
Optimistic

OTHERS' PERCEPTION

Under moderate pressure, tension, stress or fatigue, others may see him as being:

Self-Promoting
Overly Optimistic

Glib
Unrealistic

And, under extreme pressure, stress or fatigue, others may see him as being:

Overly Confident
Poor Listener

Talkative
Self-Promoter



During your response to the online questionnaire we were able to identify more than just your natural strengths. We also identified your strengths movement. Strengths movement is a measure of how the current environment impacts your natural strengths. Some environmental issues impact your strengths in a positive way and some negative. The Strengths Movement Chart illustrates this impact on your natural strengths.

As stated earlier, your natural strengths will typically remain stable over time. However, it is common for you to adapt to your current environment based on your perception of whether your strengths are being valued or discounted, or whether they are different than what may be required by your current role.

The Strengths Movement Chart provides a picture of how much you feel you need to "change" or "adapt" your natural strengths to match the needs or requirements of your current environment. You will see the same strength indicators from your natural strengths chart, but an additional indicator is overlaid that displays a measurement of your strengths movement. That movement can be positive or negative, or there may be areas where there is no movement.

Areas without any movement could indicate that your natural strengths are in alignment with your environment. Areas that have positive movement could indicate that the environment may require you to use more of that strength. In both of these scenarios, you will typically feel valued and comfortable.

If there is negative movement in a scale, you may feel that your environment requires you to be something other than what you naturally are. You may want to explore these areas further. As you do, keep in mind that some adaptation is good and also necessary. However, long term adaptation consumes energy and can lead to stress and frustration. The greater the degree of movement away from your natural strength, the greater the degree of energy you are expending to adapt.

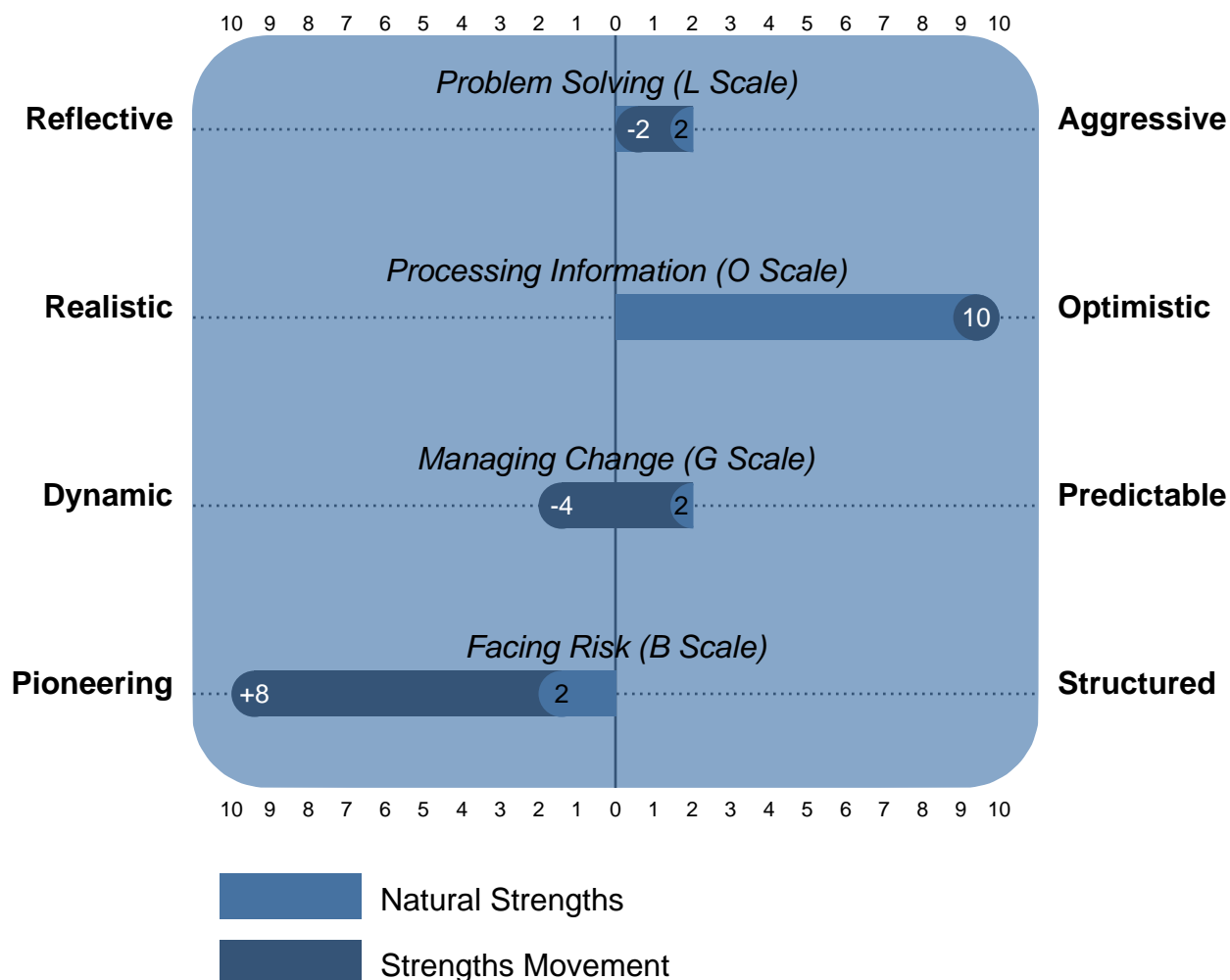
Changes in your current environment can dramatically impact the movement in your strengths. Therefore, it is our recommendation that you retake this assessment on an annual basis, or sooner, if there are significant changes in your current environment. This will provide an objective point of reference and help you to focus your natural strengths.

Following the Strengths Movement Chart are pages that interpret your strength movement mix into a word picture to help you explore this movement in your strengths. These subsequent text pages and the strengths movement chart can serve as an objective platform to facilitate discussion with others in your current environment.



YOUR STRENGTHS MOVEMENT CHART

As you review this chart, pay special attention to areas where the movement is away from your natural strengths. Negative movement of 5 points or more and especially movement across the center (energy) line are areas that could be costing you energy and should be explored further.





HOW ARE YOU HAVING TO "ADAPT?"

This list of descriptions can give you a picture of the way Daniel feels he may need to respond to the current environment to be accepted. If these statements DO NOT sound related, explore the reasons why as a key to understanding Daniel's current situation and his need to "adapt" to be accepted.

- Being independent and innovative.
- Motivating people to take action by using persuasive skills.
- Willing to take risks when others may be hesitant.
- Using a creative approach in decision making.
- Making tactful decisions.
- Positive, outgoing, friendly behavior.
- Using a direct, forthright and honest approach in his communications.
- Responding well to challenges: "You say I can't do it? Just watch me!"
- Flaunting independence.
- Optimistic, future-oriented outlook.
- Obtaining results through people.



NATURAL AND ADAPTED STYLE

Daniel's "Natural" Style of dealing with problem solving (L), processing information (O), managing change (G) and facing risk (B) may not always fit what the environment needs. This section may provide valuable information related to the stress and pressure Daniel may feel when he "Adapts" his style to the environment.

"Natural" Style	PROBLEMS - CHALLENGES	"Adapted" Style
Daniel is quite inquisitive and wants to be seen as an outwardly competitive person who is adventuresome by nature. He is results-oriented and likes to be innovative in his approach to problem solving. Daniel is not necessarily confrontational by nature, but if a problem does exist he will not turn down the opportunity for confrontation.		Daniel sees no need to change his approach to solving problems or dealing with challenges in his present environment.
"Natural" Style	PEOPLE - INFORMATION	"Adapted" Style
Daniel's "Natural" style is to use persuasion and emotion to the extreme. He is positive and seeks to influence people by the virtues of his personality and verbal skills. He will convince you that what he is saying is not only right, but is exactly what is needed. He displays enthusiasm for almost any project.		Daniel sees no need to change his approach to influencing others to his way of thinking. He sees his "Natural" Style to be what the environment is calling for.
"Natural" Style	PACE - CHANGE	"Adapted" Style
Daniel is deliberate and steady. He is willing to change, if the new direction is meaningful and consistent with the past. He will resist change for change's sake.		Daniel wants an environment that is variety-oriented. He feels a great sense of urgency to get things completed quickly. He is eager to accept change and work on many activities.
"Natural" Style	RULES - RISK	"Adapted" Style
Daniel is independent by nature and somewhat self-willed. He is open to new suggestions and can, at times, be seen as somewhat freewheeling. He is most comfortable in an environment where the constraints can be "loosened" for certain situations.		Daniel seeks adventure and excitement. He wants to be seen as his own person and will break rules to display this desire for independence. He wants to be judged by the bottom-line results--not how those results were achieved.



THE STRENGTHS WHEEL

The Strengths Wheel is a powerful visual tool to help you see the natural strengths of a team or group of people. It can also help you understand how the team or group is moving their strengths collectively to meet the demands of their current environment. If you are part of a group or team who also took the assessment, it would be advantageous to use each person's Strengths Wheel to create a master Strengths Wheel that contains each person's "Natural Strengths" and "Strengths Movement". This allows for quick identification of potential issues and alignment.

The circle represents your natural strengths. The star represents your strengths movement. The Strengths Wheel is divided down and across the middle. By looking at the top of the Strengths Wheel you will see that the L and B scales have something in common. They both represent task orientation. At the bottom of the wheel you will see that the G and O scales represent people orientation. Therefore if a team or group clusters in the top of the wheel we can predict the team will be task oriented and vice versa.

Taking another look at the wheel and you will see on the left side the B and G scales have something in common as well. They are slower paced. The opposite side of the wheel you will see that the L and O scales are faster paced. Therefore if the team or group plotted on the left side of the wheel we could predict a slower paced environment and so on.

Putting all the pieces together can give us a powerful picture of a team. It can drive objective discussion about what the natural strengths of the team are and how the team feels it needs to move, as a whole, to succeed in the current environment.

THE STRENGTHS WHEEL

