

The **Strengths Profile** Book



Finding What You
Can Do + Love To Do
And Why It Matters

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TRUDY BATEMAN

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Introduction

Strengths Profile is a product developed by Capp.

Capp was founded in 2005 by Alex Linley and Nicky Garcea with a clear purpose of *Strengthening the World*, enabled through our vision of *Matching the world to their perfect job*. Our Capp staff are proud to contribute daily to the difference we make through strengths.

We've become *The Strengths Experts* through our hundreds of research papers and thousands of hours working on the application of strengths. Whilst we pride ourselves on our background in research and data, we've also listened and watched extensively for strengths in people in all areas of their lives. We are humbled to work in advising people and organisations across all professions and backgrounds to identify and develop their strengths. We know a strength from a mile off!

We started our journey in 2005 with 'Strengthspotting', a way of learning to identify, classify, and measure strengths through conversations. Through these conversations with individuals and organisations, we have over 200 validated strengths we work with to support our assessment, development and transformation interventions.

We work in the real world with people, managers, and organisations who want to know more about themselves from a holistic view. People who want to understand what they are good at, what they love to do, and what they have the potential to be good at in the future. There are also questions about things they are good at but didn't enjoy and yes, that question, "*What are my weaknesses then?*".

To help with all of this, we developed an online strengths assessment, launched in 2009, that could identify and help people to develop their strengths, and could also address the other questions. We chose 60 of the most prevalent strengths from our bank of validated strengths and our thousands of interviews to develop what is now Strengths Profile (formerly Realise2 and R2 Strengths Profiler).

This book is all about the 60 strengths featured in Strengths Profile. Most of us don't have a clear understanding of what our strengths are, the things we **can do + love to do**. Through this book, and the Strengths Profile assessment, we'll show you how to develop these strengths so that you can become your best self.

If you have completed the assessment and already have your Strengths Profile, use the book to gain deeper knowledge of your own strengths and those of others too.

If you don't have a Strengths Profile, you can complete one at **www.strengthsprofile.com** or try these questions to get you thinking more about the strengths you have, in preparation for the next chapter.

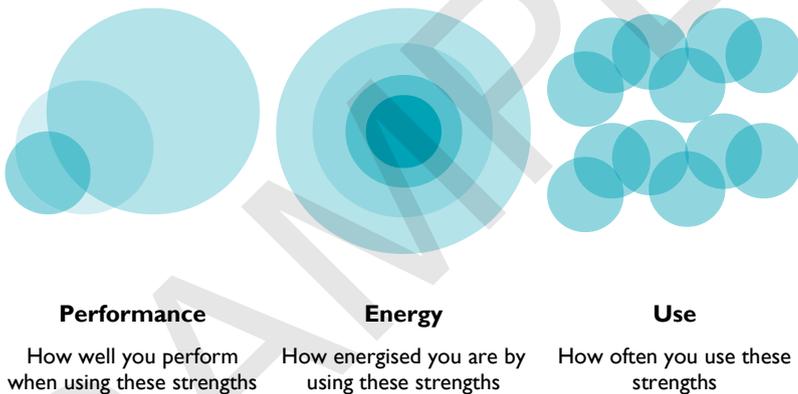
- What do your friends and family know you for?
- Ask a friend to describe you at your best to a stranger – what do they say?
- When are you at your best inside of work?
- What do you enjoy most outside of work?
- What does a 'great' day look like for you?
- When did you last go home energised from work? Why was that?
- What tasks or activities do you find easy?
- What skills, through work or school, did you learn quickly?
- When did you last achieve something you were proud of?
- What made you feel this way?

What is a strength?

Research has shown that only one in three people can say what their strengths are. Unfortunately, of these people, most will still get it wrong.

When people talk about strengths, most people think about ‘the things that I’m good at’. This is probably something ingrained from education. Hopefully, we will have been recognised and appreciated throughout our life for the tasks we do well.

And that’s right, to an extent, but there is much more. Through the thousands of hours Strengthspotting, and reading all the research reports, books, conference abstracts and opinion pieces, we define a strength as consisting of:



You can read more about this thinking in the book *Average to A+: Realising Strengths in Yourself and Others* by Alex Linley.

Performance

Performance is likely to be the one thing you have already recognised in yourself through your education and school. You might be good at, say, motivating the football team forward, writing essays, or coming up with new ways of doing things. For it to be a strength, you do need to be good at it. It’s no good enjoying singing without any performance in it – unless you want to keep it as a hobby.

Energy

Let's look at the most critical element: energy. When you are using a strength, you feel energised. You get a buzz. You feel like it's the 'real you' coming through. You feel like you could use the strength all day. It's the activity that has you leaping out of bed in the morning earlier than usual. It's the work assignment that has you screeching to a halt, leaving tyre marks in the office car park, because you can't get to your desk fast enough. It's that sense of 'This is what I was born to do'. Strengths are deeply fulfilling to us – and they should be. They are about our unique selves, what we love to do and who we are at our best.

The science tells us that people perform better at work when using their strengths – and are a lot more engaged with what they are doing. People are happier when using their strengths, as well as feeling more capable and more confident in what they can achieve. Performance and energy contribute to this.

People grow, learn, and develop best in the areas of their strengths, despite the common mistake that our 'areas for development' should be our weaknesses. You can read more about the science of strengths on page 180.

In contrast, when you are good at something but don't have the energy in the task, we call this a learned behaviour. Whilst a valuable skill and resource, it is *not* a strength.

This is where people are often mistaken. They think that because they are good at doing something, it must be a strength. But for it to be a strength, you have to be good at it **and** energised by it. If you're just good at it but you don't enjoy it, then it's a learned behaviour. This realisation has been a lightbulb moment for thousands of people through our work.

Learned behaviours form part of our Strengths Profile Model of Development, which can be found on page 151.

Use

The third element of our strengths definition is use. If a strength isn't being used, we think this is something that needs some attention. If you perform well at something and enjoy it, but don't use it, you could be sitting on a potential talent to be utilised.

In Strengths Profile, we call these unrealised strengths.

In contrast, realised strengths are the things that you perform well at, find energising, and do frequently. We already use them to achieve good performance results.

Unrealised strengths may be new to us because we don't have the situation or opportunity to use them as much. This distinction between realised strengths and unrealised strengths is a powerful one. Quite simply, our areas of greatest potential for development exist in our unrealised strengths.

If you have a Strengths Profile, you will be familiar with your realised and unrealised strengths. If you are using this book on its own, as you go through the strengths and tick off the ones you have, pay attention to how often you use them currently. Give them a score out of 10 on use and mark any under 6 as an unrealised strength, with 7 and over being your realised strengths.

You can learn more about developing and applying your strengths in Part 3 of this book, starting on page 143.

Adventure



Understand me

I relish the risk of the unusual or the untried. I look forward to experiences that are on the edge of, or outside, my comfort zone. New and challenging scenarios provide ways for me to test myself and to understand what I can and can't do. Above all, I love to push the boundaries and see what life will throw at me.

Describe me

"I love to travel to different places that people wouldn't normally associate with going on holiday."

"I find myself thinking about how I would react to new and difficult situations. It helps give me a deeper understanding of myself."

"I find it exciting to do something that scares me and that carries a real risk – something that takes me to the edge."

"I really enjoy experiencing new and challenging situations, and even more so if it is with others."

"I find that I am at ease with being uncomfortable to the point when I'm not. I look for ways to be challenged."

People like me

Bear Grylls – British adventurer, writer, and television presenter. He is widely known for his television series *Man vs. Wild*.

Prince Harry – British Prince. He and a group of military veterans reached the South Pole after a gruelling 200-mile-long (335 kilometres) trek in treacherous weather conditions across Antarctica for charity.

Valentina Tereshkova – Soviet cosmonaut. As the pilot of Vostok 6 in June 1963, she was the first woman to go into space.

Develop me



Coach yourself

What's the biggest risk you have taken? How did you benefit from it?

What gives you that buzz when you are at the edge of your comfort zone?

What impact does your sense of Adventure have on you or others around you?



Apply yourself

Is there a task or project you would love to do right now but have put off? What one thing could you do to get closer to this?

Create a list of questions when considering a new approach, to weigh up the benefits of choosing a riskier or consistent approach. Share the results with others to gain trust.

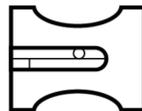
Think through the impact of risk on others as you embark on another exciting Adventure. Consider ways to demonstrate your considered care and attention to their wellbeing.



Watch out for yourself

Don't become an adrenaline junkie. If overplayed, you could find yourself never settling with anything for any length of time. It could also impact negatively on your wellbeing and see you becoming bored in relationships. Learn to balance your need for Adventure with more routine activity.

Improver



Understand me

I get a thrill from seeing how I can make things more effective. I love looking for ways to do things better, even when I'm not asked to! I have an innate sense of how to improve on any way of doing things.

Describe me

"I believe that anything can be done better, you just need to review something with fresh eyes and have done your research."

"I have a reputation for being good with processes. Technology is constantly changing, so there are always new ways to approach a task."

"I love to take something that isn't working as well as it could and make it simpler, clearer, more logical, more efficient or simply better."

"I never have to be told when to improve something – even if it isn't something I am working on. I just naturally do it."

"It's been hard to learn that sometimes things don't need improving and that the way they are is good enough."

People like me

Mary Anderson – Inventor of the windscreen wiper. She was awarded a US patent in 1903, thereby improving the driving experience and safety of millions.

Elizabeth Fry – English humanitarian. She was known for her activism for prison reform. From 2001 to 2016 she was depicted on the Bank of England £5 note.

Jack Welch – Former CEO of GE plc. He was renowned for always striving for greater efficiency and higher profits, with his time at GE increasing the company's value by 4000%.

Develop me



Coach yourself

What drives you to look for better ways of doing things?

[Blank text box for response]

When have you used your Improver strength to achieve an outcome that you are proud of?

[Blank text box for response]

How do you judge when it's suitable to leave things as they are?

[Blank text box for response]



Apply yourself

Surround yourself with a role or hobby that allows you to learn, grow, and develop new and improved ways of working. You may feel stifled if you don't.

Measure the success of your improvements before moving on to the next thing. Use this as the business case for your next idea.

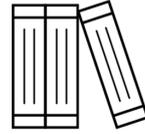
Be the gatekeeper of ideas on a new project to ensure that you make considered recommendations. Collate all the suggestions and record both the short and long-term benefits.



Watch out for yourself

Know when to leave well alone. Your strength in suggesting and making improvements can, if overplayed, mean you never rest or accept that things are satisfactory. Learn to spot when something does not need refining or improving, but can safely be left as-is – and then relax!

Organiser



Understand me

I love to be exceptionally well-organised. Everything has its place, both in my work and my personal life. My order and organisation mean that I'm able to be as effective as possible in everything I do. I always know where things are, what to do when, and why something is important.

Describe me

"I firmly believe that everything has its place. When it doesn't, nothing delights me more than to find a place for it."

"In all areas of my life, I like things to be organised. It helps me focus on what I need to do, knowing where everything is."

"I get really excited when I am asked to organise something that is a complete mess. It is so satisfying to see the end result."

"My friends often rely on me for events and socials, as I think of everything and everyone to make it successful."

"I have learnt not everyone loves to be organised, so I try to help where I can without taking over, however hard this is!"

People like me

David Beckham OBE – Former British footballer and businessman. He has shared in interviews his need for order, reportedly with a colour coded fridge and even number of drinks.

A.A. Milne – Author of *Winnie the Pooh*. He is quoted as saying "Organising is what you do before you do something, so that when you do it, it is not all mixed up".

Abraham Ortelius – Flemish cartographer. He is generally recognised as the creator of the first modern atlas.

Develop me



Coach yourself

How does your strength in Organiser reveal itself in your life?

[Blank response area]

How does being organised help you achieve your daily tasks at home and at work?

[Blank response area]

In what situation has your Organiser strength been the most effective?

[Blank response area]



Apply yourself

Communicate your desire for order rather than inflexibility. Let people know you work more efficiently with deadlines, priorities and structure, and how to approach this with you.

What routines can you create at home or at work that will ease any frustrations? Make order easily accessible for others so they can join in.

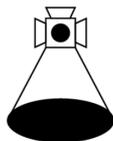
Remember, others may reach success in a different way. Learn to give tips, help along structure, share your best templates and then take a step back.



Watch out for yourself

Know when to allow disorder. Your strength in having a place for everything can, if overplayed, come across as overly constraining to others. Not everyone enjoys structure and order. Be prepared to relax your focus to engage others – and be open to new information or ideas.

Spotlight



Understand me

I enjoy being the centre of attention. Whether in a meeting or in a social gathering, I naturally speak up and hold the floor. I like holding people's interest and focus. I can get people to listen to me and keep their attention – whatever else might be going on.

Describe me

“Performing and talking is what I am all about. I just love being the centre of attention and having people looking at me.”

“I get a real buzz from being listened to. I try to do this in an engaging way, so others enjoy what I have to say.”

“Any opportunity I get, I entertain people and make them laugh through stories, experiences, and jokes.”

“I am often more comfortable with public speaking or speaking in large groups, than I am with a one-to-one conversation.”

“I'm conscious not to take over and steal the limelight as other people need to share their views, although this can be difficult!”

People like me

Sir Richard Branson – Founder of Virgin Group. He has attempted many world records and events, including the fastest crossing of the Atlantic Ocean by both boat and hot air balloon, the fastest crossing of the Pacific Ocean by hot air balloon, and the fastest crossing of the English Channel in an amphibious vehicle.

Madonna – American singer. She has been recognised as the best-selling female recording artist of all time by the Guinness Book of World Records and is reported to have sold over 300 million albums.

Oscar Wilde – Irish playwright and poet. He wrote numerous short stories and one novel, being famous for his biting wit. He was one of the greatest celebrities of his day.

Develop me



Coach yourself

What underpins your desire to put yourself in the Spotlight?

What do you enjoy about speaking up in front of others?

How do you use your Spotlight strength to achieve your objectives?



Apply yourself

Presenting doesn't come naturally to most people. Find ways to partner with others, where they come up with the ideas and strategies and you deliver them or co-present.

Attend to your audience and adapt your presentation style. Rely on a range of tools like stories, videos and other presenters, rather than having it as just you speaking.

As well as how you say it, know what to say when. Ensure your contributions are relevant and timely, and your content is well-informed.



Watch out for yourself

Allow others their time in the Spotlight as well. Your strength in speaking up can, if overplayed, be at the expense of others. Encourage others to contribute their thoughts, views and ideas. Inclusion is critical in a team or organisational context.

About the authors



Dr. Alex Linley is a world authority on positive psychology and its applications, particularly strengths approaches. He is the Founder and CEO of Capp, where he leads the company purpose of *Strengthening the World* and vision of *Matching the world to their perfect job*. In his former academic career, Alex has written, co-written, or edited more than 130 research papers and book chapters, and eight books, including *Positive Psychology in Practice* (Wiley, 2004), *Average to A+: Realising Strengths in Yourself and Others* (Capp Press, 2008), and the *Oxford Handbook of Positive Psychology and Work* (Oxford University Press, 2009), all of which he now appreciates as a result of the combination of his Legacy and Writer strengths. As well as working on strengths, Alex listens to The Cure, supports Nottingham Forest Football Club and plays with the family dachshunds, Buddy and Dash. Alex lives in the West Midlands with his wife and four children.



Trudy Bateman is an expert in strengths and their applications and as Head of Strengths Profile is responsible for implementing the successful product strategy and delivery of the tool. Having been with Capp since 2009, she has delivered thousands of strengths solutions through coaching, facilitating, and consulting. Trudy now applies her expertise and top strength of Legacy to deliver her passion in helping people and organisations to be their best. This focuses on the development of accessible tools to build strengths-based cultures and lives that are sustaining and rewarding. Trudy is a key speaker and resident expert in strengths and their applications. Trudy lives in Warwickshire with her husband, two children and two dogs, where she loves to overplay her Humour strength.

The Strengths Profile Book

Strengths help you be your authentic best self by understanding what you can do + love to do.

Years of research, thousands of interviews and consulting with hundreds of companies globally make Capp *The Strengths Experts*.

We know that using your strengths helps you achieve a happier, productive and more rewarding life.

The Strengths Profile Book reveals all 60 strengths from our online strengths tool. We take you on a journey to discover your strengths, and give you the language to talk about and share them.

With insights and practical suggestions, we help you develop and apply your strengths in practice.

Understand and use your strengths to achieve your goals and get results. Wake up every day excited about what you will achieve.

If you want to get the best out of life, or if you're a coach, manager or parent wanting to get the best from your clients, team or children, *The Strengths Profile Book* shows you how.

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www.capp.co



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