

Use Signature Strengths to be your Best Self

Signature strengths are your dominant character strengths. When you think about your strengths, you might only focus on what you're good at. However, sometimes what you're good at exhausts you and feels unnatural. Signature strengths are like your dominant hand. These are the strengths you excel in using, and you're motivated to use them. You feel energized—and true to yourself—when you use them too. Once you discover and apply your signature strengths, you're likely to be happier, more productive, and highly motivated.

To help discover your signature strengths, here's a list of 24 character strengths with 3 open boxes beside each one. Put a checkmark in the box next to each strength that best describes you.

1. You're motivated to use the strength on your own. No one has to pressure you to use it.
2. You're energized when you use the strength. It's not a struggle or exhausting for you to use it.
3. You feel true to yourself when you use the strength. You don't feel fake when displaying it.

| Character Strength | 1 | 2 | 3 |
|-------------------------------------|---|---|---|
| Appreciation of Beauty & Excellence | | | |
| Bravery | | | |
| Caution/Prudence | | | |
| Creativity | | | |
| Critical Thinking | | | |
| Curiosity | | | |
| Fairness | | | |
| Forgiveness | | | |
| Gratitude | | | |
| Honesty | | | |
| Hope/Optimism | | | |
| Humility | | | |
| Humor & Playfulness | | | |
| Kindness | | | |
| Leadership | | | |
| Love | | | |
| Love of Learning | | | |
| Persistence | | | |
| Perspective/Wisdom | | | |
| Self-Control | | | |

| Character Strength | 1 | 2 | 3 |
|-------------------------|---|---|---|
| Social Intelligence | | | |
| Spirituality/Faith | | | |
| Teamwork/Loyalty | | | |
| Zest/Passion | | | |
| Other Strengths: | | | |
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Circle each character strength that has 3 checkmarks. These are your self-identified signature strengths!

Keep in mind most people have somewhere in the range of 3–8 signature strengths, but it's okay if you have more or even less. Visit HPRC's Performance Psychology page at hprc-online.org to learn more about strengths and take an online survey that can help identify your signature strengths. Now that you've identified your signature strengths, use them with the Aware-Explore-Apply framework to help boost your performance!

Aware

What are your signature strengths, and how are you currently using them?

- How do your signature strengths show up in specific behaviors? How do you apply them when you're at work, at home, or with friends?
- What are the most unexpected ways you display strengths?
- Who else in your life displays those strengths? How do they display them similar to or different from you?

Explore

Gain a deeper understanding of how you use your signature strengths.

- **Development:** How have your signature strengths developed over your lifetime? How did you see them in yourself as a kid? Which specific experiences helped develop them?
- **Problems:** When do your signature strengths become problematic? When do you overuse or over-rely on one—or more—of them? How can you keep them from getting you in trouble?
- **Barriers:** What gets in the way of using your signature strengths? Are there certain people or environments that make it hard for you to use one or more of them? Are there certain beliefs that prevent you from using them? How can you overcome those barriers?
- **Relationships:** How do you use your signature strengths to help build your relationships? Do you feel energized, motivated, and true to yourself when you're around the important people in your life? Do others feel the same when they're around you?

Apply

Put your signature strengths into action. Think about how you can more fully use your signature strengths to bring out the best in yourself.

- What if you're struggling? Do you have an underused signature strength that can help you perform well in this area?
- What goals do you hope to achieve? How can you use your signature strengths to achieve them?
- Is there something you have to do, but you hate doing it? How can you use your signature strengths to help make it more enjoyable?
- What's a signature strength you want to develop? Think of 5 new ways you can start using that strength and apply the ones you like best!