

What Kind of Leader Are You?

An awareness of how you lead, communicate, behave and interact with others gives you deeper insight into your current leadership approach, as well as your aspirational approach—the leader you need to be to match your goals. Research shows those who use four out of five strengths at work are more content and productive.¹

Strengths

There are a variety of assessment tools that can help you learn more about your leadership and personality type. One choice, available for free, is the [VIA Character Strengths Survey](#).²

Now ask yourself:

- Did the results surprise you?
- What did you learn about yourself?
- Would your results be different if you took this same survey a few years ago?

Inventory

To employ your top strengths, you first need to identify them. Are you (and your team) employing four of your five top strengths? Research shows this is correlated to productivity and contentment at work:

“The more signature strengths were applied at the workplace, the higher the positive experiences at work.”³

Here are additional paid and free strengths surveys you and your team can take:

- **Myers-Briggs Type Indicator** identifies dominant categories of personalities types: extraversion or introversion, sensing or intuition, thinking or feeling, and judging or perceiving (Paid).⁴
- **DISC** has been used to work through challenges in leadership teams, and it centers on four personality traits: Dominance (D), Influence (I), Steadiness (S), and Conscientiousness (C) (Paid).⁵
- **StrengthsFinder** ranks your top five of 34 strengths with suggestions of how to apply them to greatest use (Paid).⁶

- **TypeFinder** is based on the theories of Isabel Briggs Myers (of the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator) and maps participants to one of 16 personality types (Free/combo - similar to MBTI).⁷
- **The Big Five Personality Test** is based on the International Personality Item Pool to give you deeper insight into your personality (Free/combo).⁸
- **The HEXACO Personality Inventory-Revised** (HEXACO-PI-R) assesses the six major dimensions of personality: Honesty-Humility, Emotionality, eXtraversion, Agreeableness (versus Anger), Conscientiousness, Openness to Experience (Free - adds an extra component to Big Five).⁹

What Are Your Strengths According to Others?

Read **“The Benefits of Using Your Strengths at Work,”**¹⁰ and recreate the activity of asking 10 people who know you from different walks of your life about times you performed at your best.

- What was it about you at that time that made an impression upon them?
- What are the common themes across their answers?
- Who are you when you’re at your best?
- What are the strengths that arise from you during those times?
- How can you adjust your job to showcase your strengths more?

Strengths and Styles: Interacting with Others

To better understand how you can adjust your management style to connect with different personality types of your employees and help them succeed, read **“6 Personalities in Every Office—and How to Manage Them”**¹¹ and ask yourself:

- Are you able to recognize different personality strengths in your employees?
- How can you motivate an employee whose personality strengths may be unlike yours?
- What personalities are the most successful in your office?

DEEP DIVE:

For a deeper look into applying personality awareness in your daily office practice, read the following articles:

- **“How to Understand People’s Personality Types”**¹² offers advice on how to gain the most from different personality types in your company.
- **“5 Tips for Introverts to Survive in an Office of Extroverts”**¹³ provides helpful information on how quiet employees can succeed in an outgoing office.

Conclusion:

Now that you've completed various assessments and learned more about personality types in the workplace, answer the following questions.

1. What are your top strengths? (example: I'm an energetic extrovert.)

2. What is an example of how this strength shows up? (example: I contribute heavily to brainstorming sessions and confidently guide discussions.)

3. What is an example of potential conflicts because of this strength? (example: I recognize my energy may intimidate or override other voices in the room, which can stifle good ideas.)

4. How can you help mitigate this potential conflict? (example: I've learned to call on people who I recognize have good ideas, but are reluctant to fight for their voice in a boisterous room.)

¹ Claudia Harzer & Willibald Ruch, *The Application of Signature Character Strengths and Positive Experiences at Work*, 14 Journal of Happiness Studies, 965 (June 26, 2012).

² *The VIA Survey*, VIA Institute on Character, <http://www.viacharacter.org/www/Character-Strengths-Survey> (accessed Dec. 3, 2018).

³ Claudia Harzer & Willibald Ruch, *The Application of Signature Character Strengths and Positive Experiences at Work*, 14 Journal of Happiness Studies, 965. (June 26, 2012).

⁴ *Versions of the MBTI® Questionnaire*, The Myers & Briggs Foundation, <https://www.myersbriggs.org/using-type-as-a-professional/versions-of-the-mbti-questionnaire/> (accessed Dec. 3, 2018).

⁵ *All DiSC Reports*. Your Life's Path, https://www.thediscpersonalitytest.com/?view=Assessments_disc&gclid=CjwKCAiArK_fBRA-BEiwA0gOOc8FdKjnSM27IDhGsA-2DpDtfSEH0okY1DtEJQv3RF2A8dYat7fa_SxoCTTgQAvD_BwE (accessed Dec. 3, 2018).

- ⁶ *Discover StrengthsFinder, the Assessment Empowering 19,948,599 People to Succeed*, GallupStrengths Center, <https://www.gallupstrengthscenter.com/home/en-us/strengthsfinder> (accessed Dec. 3, 2018).
- ⁷ *The TypeFinder® Personality Test*, Truity, <https://www.truity.com/test/type-finder-personality-test-new> (accessed Dec. 3, 2018).
- ⁸ *Big Five Personality Test*, Psychology Today, <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/tests/personality/big-five-personality-test> (accessed Dec. 3, 2018).
- ⁹ Kibeom Lee & Michael C. Ashton, *The Hexaco Personality Inventory—Revised*, Hexaco, <http://hexaco.org/hexaco-online> (accessed Dec. 3, 2018).
- ¹⁰ Susan Peppercorn, *The Benefits of Using Your Strengths at Work*, Huffington Post (April 13, 2015), https://www.huffingtonpost.com/susan-peppercorn/the-benefits-of-using-your-strengths-at-work_b_6981708.html (accessed Dec. 3, 2018).
- ¹¹ Molly Owens, *6 Personalities in Every Office—and How to Manage Them*. The Next Web (July 27, 2015), <https://thenextweb.com/insider/2015/06/27/6-personalities-in-every-office-and-how-to-manage-them/> (accessed Dec. 3, 2018).
- ¹² John H. Ostidick, *How to Understand People’s Personality Types*, Success (Dec. 17, 2015), <https://www.success.com/how-to-understand-peoples-personality-types/> (accessed Dec. 3, 2018).
- ¹³ Jennifer Purdie, *5 Tips for Introverts to Survive in an Office of Extroverts*, Success (July 15, 2015), <https://www.success.com/5-tips-for-introverts-to-survive-in-an-office-of-extroverts/> (accessed Dec. 3, 2018).