

# CLIFTON STRENGTHSFINDER® RESOURCE GUIDE

**Full Theme  
Descriptions**

**Action Items**

**“How to  
Manage” Items**



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# GENERAL INFORMATION ON THE CLIFTON STRENGTHSFINDER®

## Research and Concept

- The conceptual basis of the Clifton StrengthsFinder is grounded in more than three decades of the study of success across a wide variety of functions (from business to education) and many different cultures (nearly 50 countries).
- The Clifton StrengthsFinder measures not strengths, but the presence of talents in 34 general areas, or “themes.” While talents (recurring patterns of thought, feeling, or behavior that can be productively applied) naturally exist within individuals, strengths (the ability to provide consistent, near-perfect performance in a specific task) must be developed and are the product that results when one’s talents are refined with acquired skills and knowledge.
- For that reason, the Clifton StrengthsFinder serves as a starting point for self-discovery in all of our strengths-based development programs. After an individual has completed the assessment, a group of developmental suggestions is customized to the individual’s top five themes — called his or her Signature Themes — and his or her role.
- An individual’s Signature Themes are unique to that person. When ranking within the set of five themes is considered, 33,390,720 different sets of Signature Themes are possible.
- We do not advocate the use of the Clifton StrengthsFinder in either employee selection or hiring. We take this approach to keep individuals focused on their own intrapersonal development rather than interpersonal comparison. We do create and administer customized selection tools for our clients, using other assessments that are tailored to specific roles.

## Application

- Our primary use of the Clifton StrengthsFinder is in a purely developmental context. This means that we do not teach that any specific theme of talent is more appropriate for one role than for another (i.e., we do not say that “Achievers” should be managers). Instead, we first look at each person as an individual on the basis of talent, then help that individual discover how to build upon his or her talents to develop strengths within his or her role.
- Since 1998, we have used the Clifton StrengthsFinder as our initial diagnostic tool in all of our development programs with various academic institutions, faith-based organizations, major businesses, and other organizations.
- During that time, Clifton StrengthsFinder assessments have initiated the development of individuals across hundreds of roles, including nurse, lawyer, teacher, manager, leader, student, school administrator, customer service representative, salesperson, pastor, and many others.
- As of January 2012, more than 7 million people in more than 50 countries had received a Clifton StrengthsFinder talent assessment. The instrument is available in more than 20 languages.

## ACHIEVER®

### Theme Description

Your Achiever theme helps explain your drive. Achiever describes a constant need for achievement. You feel as if every day starts at zero. By the end of the day you must achieve something tangible in order to feel good about yourself. And by “every day” you mean every single day — workdays, weekends, vacations. No matter how much you may feel you deserve a day of rest, if the day passes without some form of achievement, no matter how small, you will feel dissatisfied. You have an internal fire burning inside you. It pushes you to do more, to achieve more. After each accomplishment is reached, the fire dwindles for a moment, but very soon it rekindles itself, forcing you toward the next accomplishment. Your relentless need for achievement might not be logical. It might not even be focused. But it will always be with you. As an Achiever you must learn to live with this whisper of discontent. It does have its benefits. It brings you the energy you need to work long hours without burning out. It is the jolt you can always count on to get you started on new tasks, new challenges. It is the power supply that causes you to set the pace and define the levels of productivity for your workgroup. It is the theme that keeps you moving.

### Action Items

- Select jobs in which you have the leeway to work as hard as you want, and in which you are encouraged to measure your own productivity. You will feel stretched and alive in these environments.
- You do not require much motivation from your supervisor. Take advantage of your self-motivation by setting challenging goals. Set a more stretching goal every time you finish a project.
- Own the fact that you might work longer hours than most people, and that you might not need as much sleep as many other people do.
- Choose to work with other hard workers. Share your goals with them so they can help you.
- Accept that you might be discontented even when you achieve.
- Take a moment to appreciate your successes. You can look ahead tomorrow. Today, celebrate.
- Partner with someone with a strong Discipline or Focus theme. This person can help you use your energy as efficiently as possible.
- Count personal achievements in your scoring “system.” This will help you direct your Achiever theme toward family as well as work.

### How to Manage a Person Especially Talented in the Achiever® Theme

When there are times that require extra work, call on this person. Remember that the saying “If you want to get a job done, ask a busy person” is generally true.

Recognize that he likes to be busy. Sitting in meetings is likely to be very boring for him. So either let him get his work done or arrange to have him attend only those meetings where you really need him and he can be fully engaged.

Help him measure what he gets done. He may well enjoy keeping track of hours, but, more importantly, he should have a way to measure cumulative production. Simple measures such as number of customers served, customers known by name, files reviewed, prospects contacted, or patients seen will help give him definition.

Establish a relationship with this person by working alongside him. Working hard together is often a bonding experience for him. And keep low producers away from him. “Slackers” annoy him.

When this person finishes a job, a rest or an easy assignment is rarely the reward he wants. He will be much more motivated if you give recognition for past achievement and then a new goal that stretches him.

This person may well need less sleep and get up earlier than most. Look to him when these conditions are required on the job. Also, ask him questions such as “How late did you have to work to get this done?” or “When did you come in this morning?” He will appreciate this kind of attention.

You may be tempted to promote him to higher-level roles simply because he is a self-starter. This may be a mistake if it leads him away from what he does best. A better course would be to pinpoint his other themes and strengths, and look for opportunities for him to do more of what he does well.

#### NOTES

## ACTIVATOR®

### Theme Description

“When can we start?” This is a recurring question in your life. You are impatient for action. You may concede that analysis has its uses or that debate and discussion can occasionally yield some valuable insights, but deep down you know that only action is real. Only action can make things happen. Only action leads to performance. Once a decision is made, you cannot not act. Others may worry that “there are still some things we don’t know,” but this doesn’t seem to slow you. If the decision has been made to go across town, you know that the fastest way to get there is to go stoplight to stoplight. You are not going to sit around waiting until all the lights have turned green. Besides, in your view, action and thinking are not opposites. In fact, guided by your Activator theme, you believe that action is the best device for learning. You make a decision, you take action, you look at the result, and you learn. This learning informs your next action and your next. How can you grow if you have nothing to react to? Well, you believe you can’t. You must put yourself out there. You must take the next step. It is the only way to keep your thinking fresh and informed. The bottom line is this: You know you will be judged not by what you say, not by what you think, but by what you get done. This does not frighten you. It pleases you.

### Action Items

- Seek work in which you can make your own decisions and act upon them. In particular, look for start-up or turn-around situations.
- Take responsibility for your intensity by always asking for action when you are a part of a group.
- To avoid conflict later, ensure that your manager judges you on measurable outcomes rather than your process. Your process is not always pretty.
- Prepare a simple explanation as to why any decision, even the wrong one, will help you learn, and therefore will make the next decision more informed. Use it when people challenge you and tell you to slow down.
- Try to work only on committees that are action-oriented. Much committee work might prove very boring for you.
- Give the reasons why your requests for action must be granted; otherwise, others might dismiss you as impatient and label you a “ready, fire, aim” person.
- Recognize that your “pushiness” might sometimes intimidate others.
- Partner with someone with a strong Strategic or Analytical theme. This person can help you see how high the cliff is before you fall off it.
- Avoid activity for activity’s sake. If you want people to join in your activity, you will need to provide them with a purpose for their actions.



### How to Manage a Person Especially Talented in the Activator® Theme

Ask this person what new goals or improvements should be achieved by your division. Select an area that fits and give her the responsibility for initiating and organizing the project.

Let her know that you know she is a person who can make things happen and that you will be asking her for help at key times. Your expectations will energize her.

Assign her to a team that is bogged down and talks more than it performs. She will stir them into action.

When this person complains, listen carefully — you may learn something. But then get her on your side by talking about new initiatives that she can lead or new improvements she can make tomorrow. Do this quickly because, unchecked, she can quickly stir up negativity when she gets off track.

Examine her other dominant themes. If she is strong in Command, she may have the potential to sell and persuade very effectively. If she is also strong in Relator or Woo, she may become an excellent recruiter for you, drawing in the recruit and then pressing him to commit.

To prevent her from running into too many obstacles, partner her with people strong in Strategic or Analytical. They can help her look around the corner. However, you may have to intercede for her in these partnerships so that her instinct to act is not stymied by their desire to project and analyze.

#### NOTES

# ADAPTABILITY®

## Theme Description

You live in the moment. You don't see the future as a fixed destination. Instead, you see it as a place that you create out of the choices that you make right now. And so you discover your future one choice at a time. This doesn't mean that you don't have plans. You probably do. But this theme of Adaptability does enable you to respond willingly to the demands of the moment even if they pull you away from your plans. Unlike some, you don't resent sudden requests or unforeseen detours. You expect them. They are inevitable. Indeed, on some level you actually look forward to them. You are, at heart, a very flexible person who can stay productive when the demands of work are pulling you in many different directions at once.

## Action Items

- Seek roles in which success depends upon responding to constantly changing circumstances. Consider career areas such as journalism, live television production, emergency healthcare, and customer service. In roles of this type, the best react the fastest and stay level headed.
- Fine-tune your responsiveness. For example, if your job demands unanticipated travel, learn how to pack and leave in 30 minutes. If your work pressure comes in unpredictable spurts, practice the first three moves you will always make when the pressure hits.
- During times when the pressure is on, help your colleagues find productive ways to relieve the pressure and therefore make progress. You can be the spark that “unfreezes” them.
- Cultivate your reputation as a calm and reassuring person when others become upset by daily events.
- Never apologize for your spontaneity. On the contrary, help others realize how many experiences might be missed if you don't seize the moment now.
- Avoid roles that demand structure and predictability. These roles will quickly frustrate you, make you feel inadequate, and stifle your independence.
- Look to others for planning. People who are strong in themes such as Focus, Strategic, or Belief can help you shape your longer-term goals, leaving you to excel at dealing with the day-to-day variations.

### How to Manage a Person Especially Talented in the Adaptability® Theme

This person lives to react and respond. Position him so that his success depends on his ability to accommodate the unforeseen and then run with it.

Let him know about the planning you are doing, but unless he is also strong in Focus, don't expect him to do the planning with you. He is likely to find much planning work endlessly boring.

With his instinctively flexible nature, he is a valuable addition to almost every team. When balls are dropped or plans go awry, he will adjust to the new circumstances and try to make progress. He will not sit on the sidelines and sulk.

He will be most productive on short-term assignments that require immediate action. He prefers a life filled with many quick skirmishes rather than long, drawn-out campaigns.

Examine his other dominant themes. If he also has a talent for Empathy, you might try positioning him where he has to be sensitive to and accommodate the varied needs of customers or guests. If one of his other strong themes is Developer, you should cast him in a mentor role. With his willingness to “go with the flow” he can provide a wonderful environment in which others can experiment and learn.

Be ready to excuse this person from meetings about the future, such as goal-setting meetings or career-counseling sessions. He is a “here-and-now” person and he will find these meetings rather irrelevant.

#### NOTES

## ANALYTICAL®

### Theme Description

Your Analytical theme challenges other people: “Prove it. Show me why what you are claiming is true.” In the face of this kind of questioning, some will find that their brilliant theories wither and die. For you, this is precisely the point. You do not necessarily want to destroy other people’s ideas, but you do insist that their theories be sound. You see yourself as objective and dispassionate. You like data because they are value-free. They have no agenda. Armed with these data, you search for patterns and connections. You want to understand how certain patterns affect one another. How do they combine? What is their outcome? Does this outcome fit with the theory being offered or the situation being confronted? These are your questions. You peel the layers back until, gradually, the root cause or causes are revealed. Others see you as logical and rigorous. Over time they will come to you in order to expose someone’s “wishful thinking” or “clumsy thinking” to your refining mind. It is hoped that your analysis is never delivered too harshly. Otherwise, others may avoid you when that “wishful thinking” is their own.

### Action Items

- Choose work in which you are paid to analyze data, find patterns, or organize ideas. For example, you might excel at research (e.g., marketing, financial, medical), database management, editing, or risk management.
- Whatever your role, identify credible sources upon which you can rely. You are at your best when you have well-researched sources of information and numbers to support your logic. For example, determine the most helpful books, Web sites, or publications that can serve as references.
- Develop your Analytical skills by getting to know and share ideas with the outstanding analysts who specialize in your area.
- Take an academic course that will expand your Analytical strength. Specifically, study people whose logic you admire.
- Volunteer your Analytical talent. You can be particularly helpful to those who are struggling to organize large quantities of data or to bring structure to their ideas.
- Partner with someone with a strong Activator theme. This person’s impatience will move you quickly through the analytical phase into the action phase.
- Listen to people with the Strategic, Belief, or Empathy themes. Their insights and intuitions are difficult to measure, but are often accurate and valuable nonetheless.

### How to Manage a Person Especially Talented in the Analytical® Theme

Whenever this person is involved with an important decision, take time to think through the issues with her. She will want to know all the factors affecting the decision.

If you are explaining a decision that has already been made, always remember to lay out the logic of the decision very clearly. To you it may feel as though you are overexplaining things, but for her this level of detail is essential if she is to commit to the decision.

Every time you have the opportunity, recognize and praise her reasoning ability. She is proud of her disciplined mind.

When defending a decision or a principle, show this person the supporting numbers. She instinctively gives more credibility to information that displays numbers.

Remember that she has a need for exact, well-researched numbers. Never try to pass shoddy data to her as credible evidence.

A highlight in her life is to discover patterns in data. Always give her the opportunity to explain the pattern in detail to you. This will be motivational for her and will help to solidify your relationship.

You will not always agree with her, but always take her point of view seriously. She has probably thought through her points very carefully.

Because the accuracy of the work is so important to her, getting a task done correctly may be more important to her than meeting a deadline. Therefore, as the deadline draws near, keep checking in with her to ensure that she has the necessary time to do it right.

#### NOTES

## ARRANGER®

### Theme Description

You are a conductor. When faced with a complex situation involving many factors, you enjoy managing all of the variables, aligning and realigning them until you are sure you have arranged them in the most productive configuration possible. In your mind there is nothing special about what you are doing. You are simply trying to figure out the best way to get things done. But others, lacking this theme, will be in awe of your ability. “How can you keep so many things in your head at once?” they will ask. “How can you stay so flexible, so willing to shelve well-laid plans in favor of some brand-new configuration that has just occurred to you?” But you cannot imagine behaving in any other way. You are a shining example of effective flexibility, whether you are changing travel schedules at the last minute because a better fare has popped up or mulling over just the right combination of people and resources to accomplish a new project. From the mundane to the complex, you are always looking for the perfect configuration. Of course, you are at your best in dynamic situations. Confronted with the unexpected, some complain that plans devised with such care cannot be changed, while others take refuge in the existing rules or procedures. You don’t do either. Instead, you jump into the confusion, devising new options, hunting for new paths of least resistance, and figuring out new partnerships — because, after all, there might just be a better way.

### Action Items

- Seek complex, dynamic work environments in which there are few routines.
- Make lists of suggestions for how to improve your work environment.
- Develop successful strategies for getting things done. Push yourself to keep adding new wrinkles.
- Learn the goals of the people with whom you work. Let them know that you are aware of their goals.
- Take on the organization of a big event, a convention perhaps, or a organization celebration.
- Explain that your flexibility doesn’t mean that your priorities are constantly changing. Tell others that your priorities remain the same, but that you are simply looking for better ways to implement them.
- Give people time to understand your new way of doing things when you present it to them. Your mental juggling is instinctive, but others might find it difficult to break with the existing procedures. Take the time to clearly explain why your new way is more effective.

### How to Manage a Person Especially Talented in the Arranger® Theme

This person will thrive on responsibility, so give him as much as you are able, according to his knowledge and skill levels.

He may well have the talent to be a manager or supervisor. His Arranger theme enables him to figure out how people with very different strengths can work together.

When you are launching a project, give him the opportunity to choose and position the members of the project team. He is good at figuring out how each person's strengths might add greatest value to the team.

He is excited by complex, multifaceted assignments. He will thrive in situations where he has many things going on at the same time.

He can be resourceful. Feel confident that you can slot him into a role where something is not working, and he will enjoy figuring out other ways of doing things.

Pay attention to his other strong themes. If he also has talent for Discipline, he may be an excellent organizer, establishing routines and systems for getting things done.

Understand that his modus operandi for team building is through trust and relationship. He may well reject someone who he believes is dishonest or does shoddy work.

#### NOTES

## BELIEF®

### Theme Description

If you possess a strong Belief theme, you have certain core values that are enduring. These values vary from one person to another, but ordinarily your Belief theme causes you to be family-oriented, altruistic, even spiritual, and to value responsibility and high ethics — both in yourself and others. These core values affect your behavior in many ways. They give your life meaning and satisfaction; in your view, success is more than money and prestige. They provide you with direction, guiding you through the temptations and distractions of life toward a consistent set of priorities. This consistency is the foundation for all your relationships. Your friends call you dependable. “I know where you stand,” they say. Your Belief makes you easy to trust. It also demands that you find work that meshes with your values. Your work must be meaningful; it must matter to you. And guided by your Belief theme it will matter only if it gives you a chance to live out your values.

### Action Items

- Clarify your values by thinking about one of your best days ever. How did your values play into the satisfaction that you received from your best day? How can you organize your life to repeat that day as often as possible?
- Don't be afraid to give voice to your values. This will help others know who you are and how to relate to you.
- Actively seek roles that fit your values. In particular, think about joining organizations that define their purpose by the contribution they make to society.
- Express your values outside of the workplace by volunteering for a hospital board or a school board, or by running for an elected office.
- Actively cultivate friends who share your basic values. Consider your best friend. Does this person share your value system?
- Partner with someone with a strong Futuristic theme. This person can energize you by painting a vivid picture of the direction in which your values will lead.
- Accept that other people might have values different from your own. Having strong Belief does not equate with being judgmental.



### How to Manage a Person Especially Talented in the Belief® Theme

This person will have a passion about something. Discover her passion and tie it to the work to be done.

She will have some powerful permanent values. Figure out how to align her values with those of the organization. For example, talk with her about how your products and services make the lives of people better, or discuss how your organization embodies integrity and trust, or give her opportunities to go above and beyond to help colleagues and customers. In this way, through her actions and words, she will make visible the values of your organization's culture.

Learn about her family and community. She will have made rock-solid commitments here. You will need to understand, appreciate, and honor these commitments, and she will respect you for it.

Realize that she may place more value on opportunities to provide greater levels of service than on opportunities to make more money. Find ways to enhance this natural service orientation, and you will see her at her best.

You do not have to share this person's belief system, but you do have to understand it, respect it, and apply it. If you cannot apply her values to either your goals or your organization's, you should perhaps help her find a different work situation. Otherwise, major conflicts will eventually erupt.

#### NOTES

## COMMAND®

### Theme Description

Command leads you to take charge. Unlike some people, you feel no discomfort with imposing your views on others. On the contrary, once your opinion is formed, you need to share it with others. Once your goal is set, you feel restless until you have aligned others with you. You are not frightened by confrontation; rather, you know that confrontation is the first step toward resolution. Whereas others may avoid facing up to life's unpleasantness, you feel compelled to present the facts or the truth, no matter how unpleasant it may be. You need things to be clear between people and challenge them to be clear-eyed and honest. You push them to take risks. You may even intimidate them. And while some may resent this, labeling you opinionated, they often willingly hand you the reins. People are drawn toward those who take a stance and ask them to move in a certain direction. Therefore, people will be drawn to you. You have presence. You have Command.

### Action Items

- Seek roles in which you will be asked to persuade others. Consider whether selling would be a good career for you.
- You will always be ready to confront. Practice the words, the tone, and the techniques that will turn your ability to confront into real persuasiveness.
- In your relationships, seize opportunities to speak plainly and directly about sensitive subjects. Your unwillingness to hide from the truth can become a source of strength and constancy for your colleagues and friends. Strive to become known as a candid person.
- Help your colleagues and friends make commitments. You can provide the spark that will inspire them to act.
- Find a cause you believe in and support it. You might discover yourself at your best when defending a cause in the face of resistance.
- Ask people for their opinions. Sometimes your candor will prove intimidating, causing others to tread very lightly for fear of your reaction. Watch for this. If necessary, explain that you are candid simply because it feels so uncomfortable to keep things bottled up, not because you want to frighten other people into silence.
- Partner with someone with a strong Woo or Empathy theme. Some obstacles do not need to be confronted; they can be circumvented. This person can help you to circumvent obstacles through relationships.

### How to Manage a Person Especially Talented in the Command® Theme

When you need to jar a project loose and get things moving again or when people need to be persuaded, ask this person to take charge.

Always ask him for evaluations of what is happening in your organization. He is most likely to give you a straight answer. In the same vein, look to him to raise ideas different from your own. He isn't likely to be a head nodder.

As much as you can, give him the room to lead and make decisions. He will not like to be supervised closely.

If he starts empire building, upsetting colleagues, veering from focus, or ignoring his commitments, meet him head-on. Confront him directly with specific examples. Take firm action and, if necessary, require immediate restitution. Then arrange for him to be productive as soon as possible. He will get over his mistake quickly, and so should you.

Never threaten him unless you are 100% ready to follow through.

This person may intimidate others with his up-front, assertive style. You may need to weigh whether or not the contribution of this person who makes things happen justifies the occasional ruffled feather. Rather than pushing him to learn how to be empathic and polite, your time may be better spent helping his colleagues understand that his assertiveness is part of what makes him effective — as long as he remains assertive rather than aggressive or offensive.

#### NOTES

# COMMUNICATION®

## Theme Description

You like to explain, to describe, to host, to speak in public, and to write. This is your Communication theme at work. Ideas are a dry beginning. Events are static. You feel a need to bring them to life, to energize them, to make them exciting and vivid. And so you turn events into stories and practice telling them. You take the dry idea and enliven it with images and examples and metaphors. You believe that most people have a very short attention span. They are bombarded by information, but very little of it survives. You want your information — whether an idea, an event, a product's features and benefits, a discovery, or a lesson — to survive. You want to divert their attention toward you and then capture it, lock it in. This is what drives your hunt for the perfect phrase. This is what draws you toward dramatic words and powerful word combinations. This is why people like to listen to you. Your word pictures pique their interest, sharpen their world, and inspire them to act.

## Action Items

- You will always do well in roles in which you are paid to capture people's attention. Your strengths will probably flourish in teaching, sales, marketing, ministry, or the media.
- Start a collection of stories or phrases that resonate with you. For example, cut out magazine articles that move you, or write down powerful word combinations.
- Practice telling these stories or saying these words by yourself, out loud. Listen to yourself actually saying the words. Refine.
- When you are presenting, listen closely to your audience. Watch their reactions to each part of your presentation. You will see that some parts prove especially engaging. After the presentation, take time to identify the parts that particularly caught the audience's attention. Re-draft your next presentations around these highlights.
- Practice. Improvisation has a certain appeal, but, in general, an audience will respond best to a presenter who knows where he or she is headed. Counterintuitively, the more prepared you are, the more natural your improvisations will appear.
- Volunteer for opportunities to present. You can become known as someone who helps people express their thoughts and ambitions in a captivating way.

### How to Manage a Person Especially Talented in the Communication® Theme

Explore with this person how her Communication strengths can be developed so she can make an even more significant contribution to the organization.

She finds it easy to carry on a conversation. Ask her to come to social gatherings, dinners, or any events where you want to entertain prospects or customers.

Ask her to learn the folklore, the stories of interesting events within your organization, and then give her the opportunity to tell these stories to her colleagues. She will help bring your culture to life, and thereby strengthen it.

Take the time to hear about her life and experiences. She will enjoy the telling. You will enjoy the listening. And your relationship will be closer because of it.

Discuss your plans with her for your organization's social events. She is likely to have good ideas both for entertainment and for what should be communicated at the event.

Ask her to help some of the specialists in your organization make more engaging presentations. In some situations she should actually make the presentation for the specialist.

If you send her to public speaking training, make sure to place her in a small class with advanced students and a top-level trainer. She will quickly chafe in a remedial beginners class.

#### NOTES

# COMPETITION®

## Theme Description

Competition is rooted in comparison. When you look at the world, you are instinctively aware of other people's performance. Their performance is the ultimate yardstick. No matter how hard you tried, no matter how worthy your intentions, if you reached your goal but did not outperform your peers, the achievement feels hollow. Like all competitors, you need other people. You need to compare. If you can compare, you can compete, and if you can compete, you can win. And when you win, there is no feeling quite like it. You like measurement because it facilitates comparisons. You like other competitors because they invigorate you. You like contests because they must produce a winner. You particularly like contests where you know you have the inside track to be the winner. Although you are gracious to your fellow competitors and even stoic in defeat, you don't compete for the fun of competing. You compete to win. Over time you will come to avoid contests where winning seems unlikely.

## Action Items

- Select work environments in which you can measure your achievements. You might never be able to discover how good you can be without competing.
- List the performance scores that can help you know where you stand every day. What scores should you pay attention to daily?
- Identify an achieving person against whom you can measure your own achievement. If there is more than one, list all the people with whom you currently compete. Without measurement, how will you know if you won?
- Take the time to celebrate your wins. In your world, there is no victory without celebration.
- Seek competitive friends.
- Try to turn ordinary tasks into competitive games. You will get more done this way.
- When you win, take the time to investigate why you won. Counterintuitively, you can learn a great deal more from a victory than from a loss.
- Design some mental strategies that can help you deal with a loss. Armed with these strategies, you will be able to move on to the next challenge much more quickly.
- Let people know that being competitive does not equate with putting other people down. Explain that you derive your satisfaction from pitting yourself against good, strong competitors and winning. It is not satisfying to outperform a "hobbled" player.

### How to Manage a Person Especially Talented in the Competition® Theme

Use competitive language with this person. For example, it is a win-lose world for this person, so from his perspective, achieving a goal is winning and missing a goal is losing. When you need to engage him in planning or problem solving, use the competitive word “outsmart.”

Measure him against other people, particularly other competitive people. You may decide to post the performance records of all your people, but remember that only your competitive people will get a kick out of this public comparison. Others may resent it and be mortified by the comparison.

Set up contests for him. Pit him against other competitors even if you have to find competitors in business units other than your own. Highly charged competitors want to compete with others who are very close to their skill level. Matching them against modest achievers will not motivate them.

Find places where he can win. If he loses repeatedly, he may stop playing. Remember, in the contests that matter to him, he doesn’t compete for the fun of competing. He competes to win.

Consider that one of the best ways to manage him is to hire another competitive person who produces more.

Talk about talents with him. Like all competitors, he knows that it takes talent to be a winner. Name his talents. Tell him that he needs to marshal his talents to win. Do not “Peter Principle” this person by suggesting that “winning” means getting promoted. Help him focus on winning where his true talents lie.

When this person loses, he may need to mourn for a while. Let him. Then quickly move him into another opportunity to win.

#### NOTES

## CONNECTEDNESS®

### Theme Description

Things happen for a reason. You are sure of it. You are sure of it because in your soul you know that we are all connected. Yes, we are individuals, responsible for our own judgments and in possession of our own free will, but nonetheless we are part of something larger. Some may call it the collective unconscious. Others may label it spirit or life force. But whatever your word of choice, you gain confidence from knowing that we are not isolated from one another or from the earth and the life on it. This feeling of Connectedness implies certain responsibilities. If we are all part of a larger picture, then we must not harm others because we will be harming ourselves. We must not exploit because we will be exploiting ourselves. Your awareness of these responsibilities creates your value system. You are considerate, caring, and accepting. Certain of the unity of humankind, you are a bridge builder for people of different cultures. Sensitive to the invisible hand, you can give others comfort that there is a purpose beyond our humdrum lives. The exact articles of your faith will depend on your upbringing and your culture, but your faith is strong. It sustains you and your close friends in the face of life's mysteries.

### Action Items

- Consider roles that ask you to listen and to counsel. You can become adept at helping other people see connection and purpose in everyday occurrences.
- Schedule time for meditation or contemplation. Reflect upon: how your religious beliefs affirm your sense of connection to others; how your sense of connection gives you stability through your faith in people; the role of coincidences in your life.
- Make a list of the experiences that support your sense of connection.
- Explore specific ways to expand your sense of connection, such as starting a book club, attending a retreat, or joining an organization that puts Connectedness into practice.
- Within your organization, help your colleagues understand how their efforts fit in the larger picture. You can be a leader in building teams and helping people feel important.
- Help those around you cope with unpredictable and unexplainable events. In particular, you can help people find meaning in even sickness and death. Your perspective will bring comfort.
- Partner with someone with a strong Communication theme. This person can help you with the words you need to describe vivid examples of connection in the real world.
- Don't spend too much time attempting to persuade others to see the world as a linked web. Be aware that your sense of connection is intuitive. If others don't share your intuition, rational argument will not persuade them.



**How to Manage a Person Especially Talented in the Connectedness® Theme**

This person will likely have social issues that she will defend strongly. Listen closely to know what these issues are. Your acceptance of these issues will influence the depth of relationship you can build with her.

She is likely to have a spiritual orientation and perhaps a strong faith. Your knowledge and, at the very least, acceptance of her spiritual position will enable her to become increasingly comfortable around you.

Encourage this person to build bridges to the different groups in your organization. She naturally thinks about how things are connected, so she should excel at showing different people how each relies on the others. Properly positioned, she can be a team builder in your organization.

She may be very receptive to thinking about and developing the mission for your organization. She likes to feel part of something larger than herself.

If you are also strong in Connectedness, share articles, writings, and experiences with her. You can reinforce each other's focus.

**NOTES**

# CONSISTENCY™

## Theme Description

Balance is important to you. You are keenly aware of the need to treat people the same, no matter what their station in life, so you do not want to see the scales tipped too far in any one person's favor. In your view this leads to selfishness and individualism. It leads to a world where some people gain an unfair advantage because of their connections or their background or their greasing of the wheels. This is truly offensive to you. You see yourself as a guardian against it. In direct contrast to this world of special favors, you believe that people function best in a consistent environment where the rules are clear and are applied to everyone equally. This is an environment where people know what is expected. It is predictable and evenhanded. It is fair. Here each person has an even chance to show his or her worth.

## Action Items

- Make a list of the rules of consistency by which you can live. These rules might be based upon certain values that you have, or upon certain policies that you consider “non-negotiables” within your organization. Counterintuitively, the more clear you are about these rules, the more comfortable you will be with individuality within these boundaries.
- Seek roles in which you can be a force for leveling the playing field. At work, or in your community, you can be a leader in helping provide disadvantaged people with the platform they need to show their true potential.
- Cultivate a reputation for pinpointing those who really deserve the credit. Ensure that respect is always given to those who truly performed the work. You can become known as the conscience of your organization.
- Find a role in which you can enforce compliance to a set of standards. Always be ready to challenge people who break the rules or “grease the wheels” to earn an unfair advantage for themselves.
- Partner with someone with a strong Maximizer or Individualization theme. This person can remind you when it is appropriate to accommodate individual differences.
- Keep your focus on performance. Occasionally, the Consistency theme might lead you to overemphasize how someone gets work done, and ignore what he or she gets done.

### How to Manage a Person Especially Talented in the Consistency™ Theme

When it comes time to recognize the team after the completion of a project, ask this person to pinpoint each person's contribution. She will ensure that each person receives the accolades he or she truly deserves.

When you need to put consistent practices in place, ask her to help establish the routine ways of doing things for your organization.

Be supportive of her during times of great change because she is most comfortable with predictable patterns that she knows work well.

When in an analytical role, ask this person to work on group data rather than individual data. She is likely to be more adept at discovering generalizations that can be made about the group rather than particulars about a certain individual.

If as a manager you struggle with situations where rules must be applied equally and absolutely and no favoritism must be shown, ask her to step in and deal with them. The explanations and justifications will come naturally to her.

In those situations where it is necessary to treat diverse people equally, ask her to contribute to the development of the rules.

She has a practical bend and thus will tend to prefer getting tasks accomplished and decisions made rather than more abstract work such as brainstorming or long-range planning.

#### NOTES

## CONTEXT®

### Theme Description

You look back. You look back because that is where the answers lie. You look back to understand the present. From your vantage point the present is unstable, a confusing clamor of competing voices. It is only by casting your mind back to an earlier time, a time when the plans were being drawn up, that the present regains its stability. The earlier time was a simpler time. It was a time of blueprints. As you look back, you begin to see these blueprints emerge. You realize what the initial intentions were. These blueprints or intentions have since become so embellished that they are almost unrecognizable, but now this Context theme reveals them again. This understanding brings you confidence. No longer disoriented, you make better decisions because you sense the underlying structure. You become a better partner because you understand how your colleagues came to be who they are. And, counterintuitively, you become wiser about the future because you saw its seeds being sown in the past. Faced with new people and new situations, it will take you a little time to orient yourself, but you must give yourself this time. You must discipline yourself to ask the questions and allow the blueprints to emerge because no matter what the situation, if you haven't seen the blueprints, you will have less confidence in your decisions.

### Action Items

- Collect memories through photographs and written materials — they can be motivational for you.
- Read historical novels, non-fiction, or biographies. You will discover many insights that will help you understand the present. You will think more clearly.
- Before planning begins on a project, encourage your colleagues to study past projects. Help them appreciate the statement that “those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it.”
- If you are in a role that requires teaching others, build your lessons around case studies. You will enjoy the search for the appropriate case, and your students will learn from these precedents. Use your understanding of the past to help others map the future.
- Help your organization strengthen its culture via folklore. For example, collect symbols and stories that represent the best of the past, or suggest naming an award after a person who embodied the best of the past.
- Partner with someone with a strong Futuristic or Strategic theme. This person's fascination with what “could be” will stop you from becoming mired in the past, while your deep understanding of Context will stop him or her from ignoring the lessons of the past. Together you are more likely to create something that lasts.
- Accept change. Remember that the Context theme does not equate with “living in the past.” Instead, you can actually become known as an active agent for positive change. Your strong Context theme should allow you to identify more clearly than most the aspects of the past that can be discarded, and those that must be retained in order to build a sustainable future.

**How to Manage a Person Especially Talented in the Context® Theme**

When you ask this person to do something, take time to explain the thinking that led to this request for action. He needs to understand the background for a course of action before he can commit to it.

When you introduce him to new colleagues, ask these colleagues to talk about their background before you all get down to business.

During meetings, always turn to him to review what has been done and what has been learned up to the present time. Instinctively, he will want others to be aware of the context of decision making.

He thinks in terms of case studies; that is, when did we meet a similar situation, what did we do, what happened, what did we learn? You can expect him to use this talent to help others learn, especially when the need for case studies is important. No matter what the subject matter, ask him to collect revealing anecdotes, to highlight the key discovery from each anecdote, and perhaps to build a class around these case studies.

He can do the same in relation to your organization's culture. Ask him to collect anecdotes of people behaving in a way that exemplifies the cornerstones of the culture. His anecdotes, retold in newsletters, training classes, Web sites, videos, and so on, will strengthen your culture.

**NOTES**

## DELIBERATIVE™

### Theme Description

You are careful. You are vigilant. You are a private person. You know that the world is an unpredictable place. Everything may seem in order, but beneath the surface you sense the many risks. Rather than denying these risks, you draw each one out into the open. Then each risk can be identified, assessed, and ultimately reduced. Thus, you are a fairly serious person who approaches life with a certain reserve. For example, you like to plan ahead so as to anticipate what might go wrong. You select your friends cautiously and keep your own counsel when the conversation turns to personal matters. You are careful not to give too much praise and recognition, lest it be misconstrued. If some people don't like you because you are not as effusive as others, then so be it. For you, life is not a popularity contest. Life is something of a minefield. Others can run through it recklessly if they so choose, but you take a different approach. You identify the dangers, weigh their relative impact, and then place your feet deliberately. You walk with care.

### Action Items

- You have naturally good judgment, so consider work in which you can provide advice and counsel. You might be especially adept at legal work, crafting sound business deals, or ensuring compliance of regulations.
- During times of change, consider the advantages of being conservative in your decision making. Be ready to explain these advantages to others when pressed.
- You have confidence in your own judgment, so always do what you think is sensible, regardless of the impact on your popularity.
- You see things that others do not. Whatever your role, take responsibility for helping others think through their decisions. You will soon be sought as a valuable sounding board.
- Don't let anyone push you into revealing too much of yourself too soon. Check people out carefully before sharing confidential information. You naturally build friendships slowly, so take pride in your small circle of good friends.
- Partner with someone with a strong Command, Self-Assurance, or Activator theme. Together you will make many decisions, and these decisions will be sound.
- Explain your process of careful decision making. Clarify that you highlight risk in order to take control and reduce it. You don't want others to misconstrue your Deliberative theme for tentativeness or fear of action.

### How to Manage a Person Especially Talented in the Deliberative™ Theme

Do not position this person in a role that requires snap judgments. She is likely to feel uncomfortable making decisions on gut alone.

Ask her to join teams or groups that tend to be impulsive. She will have a temporizing effect, adding much-needed thoughtfulness and anticipation to the mix.

She is likely to be a rigorous thinker. Before you make a decision, ask her to help you identify the land mines that may derail your plans.

In situations where caution is required, such as situations that are sensitive to legal, safety, or accuracy issues, ask her to take the lead. She will instinctively anticipate where the dangers might lie and how to keep your flanks protected.

She is likely to excel at negotiating contracts, especially behind the scenes. As far as you can within the confines of her job description, ask her to play this role.

Honor that she may be quite a private person. Unless invited, do not push to become too familiar with her too quickly. And by the same token, do not take it personally if she keeps you at arm's length.

Do not ask her to be a greeter, rainmaker, or networker for your organization. The kind of effusiveness that this role requires may not be in her repertoire.

In her relationships she will be selective and discriminating. Consequently, do not move her quickly from team to team. She needs to be confident that the people she surrounds herself with are competent and can be trusted, and this confidence takes time to build.

As a manager she will be known as someone who gives praise sparingly, but when she does, it is truly deserved.

#### NOTES

## DEVELOPER®

### Theme Description

You see the potential in others. Very often, in fact, potential is all you see. In your view no individual is fully formed. On the contrary, each individual is a work in progress, alive with possibilities. And you are drawn toward people for this very reason. When you interact with others, your goal is to help them experience success. You look for ways to challenge them. You devise interesting experiences that can stretch them and help them grow. And all the while you are on the lookout for the signs of growth — a new behavior learned or modified, a slight improvement in a skill, a glimpse of excellence or of “flow” where previously there were only halting steps. For you these small increments — invisible to some — are clear signs of potential being realized. These signs of growth in others are your fuel. They bring you strength and satisfaction. Over time many will seek you out for help and encouragement because on some level they know that your helpfulness is both genuine and fulfilling to you.

### Action Items

- Make a list of the people you have helped learn and grow. Look at the list often and remind yourself of the effect you have had on the world.
- Seek roles in which your primary responsibilities will be in facilitating growth. Teaching, coaching, or managing roles might prove especially satisfying for you.
- Notice when your associates grow, and tell them. Be specific about what you saw. Your detailed observations of their growth will enhance their growth.
- Make a list of the people you would like to help develop. Write what you would consider to be each person’s strengths. Schedule time to meet with each of them regularly — even if for only 15 minutes — and make a point of discussing both their goals and their strengths.
- Identify the mentor or mentors who recognized something special inside you. Take the time to thank them for helping you develop, even if this means tracking down a former schoolteacher and sending him or her a letter.
- Make a plan to develop your own strengths based on a detailed understanding of your talents, knowledge, and skills.
- Partner with someone with a strong Individualization theme. This person can help you see where each person’s greatest strengths lie. Without this help, your Developer instincts might lead you to encourage people to grow in areas in which they lack real strength.
- Carefully avoid supporting someone who is consistently struggling in his or her role. In such instances, the most developmental action you can take is to encourage him or her to find a different role — a role that fits.



### How to Manage a Person Especially Talented in the Developer® Theme

Ask this person to tell you which associates are growing in their jobs. He is likely to pick up small increments of growth that others miss.

Position him so that he can help others within the organization grow. For example, give him the opportunity to mentor one or two people of his choice or to teach a class on a organization topic, such as safety, benefits, or customer service.

Be prepared to pay the fee for him to belong to a local training organization.

Set him up as the one who will give recognition to colleagues. He will enjoy selecting the achievements that deserve praise, and his colleagues on the receiving end will know that the praise is genuine.

He may be a candidate for a supervisor, team leader, or manager role.

If he is already a manager or executive, look to his business unit for people who can be transferred to positions with larger responsibilities in the organization. He grows people and prepares them for the future.

Reinforce his self-concept as a person who encourages people to stretch and to excel. For example, tell him, “They would never have broken the record by themselves. Your encouragement and confidence gave them the spark they needed.”

Be aware that he may protect a struggling performer long past the time when she should have been moved or terminated. Help him focus his developing instincts on setting people up to achieve success, and not on supporting people who are enduring hardship. The most developmental action he can take with a person enduring hardship is to find her a different opportunity where she can truly excel.

#### NOTES

# DISCIPLINE™

## Theme Description

Your world needs to be predictable. It needs to be ordered and planned. So you instinctively impose structure on your world. You set up routines. You focus on timelines and deadlines. You break long-term projects into a series of specific short-term plans, and you work through each plan diligently. You are not necessarily neat and clean, but you do need precision. Faced with the inherent messiness of life, you want to feel in control. The routines, the timelines, the structure, all of these help create this feeling of control. Lacking this theme of Discipline, others may sometimes resent your need for order, but there need not be conflict. You must understand that not everyone feels your urge for predictability; they have other ways of getting things done. Likewise, you can help them understand and even appreciate your need for structure. Your dislike of surprises, your impatience with errors, your routines, and your detail orientation don't need to be misinterpreted as controlling behaviors that box people in. Rather, these behaviors can be understood as your instinctive method for maintaining your progress and your productivity in the face of life's many distractions.

## Action Items

- Seek out roles and responsibilities where structure exists.
- Don't hesitate to check as often as necessary to ensure that things are right. You feel an urge to do it anyway, and soon enough others will come to expect it of you.
- Learn how to use a time management system. It will make you even more efficient and give you more confidence.
- Create routines that make you follow through systematically. Over time, people will come to appreciate this kind of rigorous predictability.
- Recognize that mistakes might depress you. Precision is a core part of who you are; however, you must find ways to move through these moments of annoyance to prevent becoming dragged down.
- Help other people add a little order to their lives. Do it in the right way and they will appreciate it.
- Explain your Discipline theme to your close associates. Initially they might resent your perfectionism, but once you have explained how it works for you, do not be afraid to let your perfectionism show. Others will want to see it in action.
- Recognize that many others are not as disciplined as you are. More than likely, their clumsy process will frustrate you, so try to look beyond it, and instead assess them on their results, not on their process.

### How to Manage a Person Especially Talented in the Discipline™ Theme

Give this person the opportunity to bring structure to a haphazard or chaotic situation. Since she will never be comfortable in such shapeless, messy situations — and don't expect her to — she will not rest until order and predictability are restored.

Clutter will annoy her. Don't expect her to last long in a physically cluttered environment. Either charge her with cleaning it up or find her a different environment.

Always give her advance notice of deadlines. She feels a need to get work done ahead of schedule, and she can't do this if you don't tell her the schedule.

In the same vein, try not to surprise her with sudden changes in plan and priority. Surprises are distressing to her. They can ruin her day.

When there are many things that need to get done in a set time period, remember her need to prioritize. Take the time to prioritize together and then, once the schedule is set, stick to it.

If appropriate, ask her to help you plan and organize your own work. You might ask her to review your time management system or even your proposal for re-engineering some of your department's processes. Tell her colleagues that this is one of her strengths and encourage them to ask her for similar help.

She excels at developing routines that help her work efficiently. If she is forced to work in a situation that requires flexibility and responsiveness, encourage her to devise a set number of routines, each appropriate for a certain situation. In this way, she will have a predictable response to fall back on, no matter what the surprise.

#### NOTES

# EMPATHY™

## Theme Description

You can sense the emotions of those around you. You can feel what they are feeling as though their feelings are your own. Intuitively, you are able to see the world through their eyes and share their perspective. You do not necessarily agree with each person's perspective. You do not necessarily feel pity for each person's predicament — this would be sympathy, not Empathy. You do not necessarily condone the choices each person makes, but you do understand. This instinctive ability to understand is powerful. You hear the unvoiced questions. You anticipate the need. Where others grapple for words, you seem to find the right words and the right tone. You help people find the right phrases to express their feelings — to themselves as well as to others. You help them give voice to their emotional life. For all these reasons, other people are drawn to you.

## Action Items

- Appreciate your gift for getting in touch with the thoughts and feelings of others.
- Practice naming the feelings you experience and those you observe in others, then help others name their feelings. People who can name their feelings seem to work better with other people.
- Build trust with others by letting them know that you know how they are feeling.
- Help your colleagues be aware of the feelings of the persons with whom they work.
- Identify a friend who has strong Empathy and check your observations with him or her.
- Sometimes it is important to be silent. You have the talent to, without talking, let other people understand that you know how they are feeling. Over time, refine your non-verbal communication skills.
- Act quickly and firmly if a person is behaving in a way that is unhealthy for that person or for those around him or her. Understanding someone's emotional state does not mean that you must excuse this behavior. Be aware that when your empathy turns to sympathy, others might see you as a "bleeding heart."
- Partner with someone with a strong Command or Activator theme. This person will help you to take needed action, even though people's feelings might suffer as a result.

### How to Manage a Person Especially Talented in the Empathy™ Theme

Ask this person to help you know how certain people within your organization are feeling. He is sensitive to the emotions of others.

Before securing his commitment to a particular course of action, ask him how he feels and how other people feel about the issues involved. For him, emotions are as real as other, more practical factors and must be weighed when making decisions.

Pay attention but do not overreact when he cries. Tears are part of his life. He may sense the joy or tragedy in another person's life more poignantly than even that person does.

Help this person to see his Empathy as a special gift. It may come so naturally to him that he now thinks everyone feels what he feels, or he may be embarrassed by his strength of feeling. Show him how to use it to everyone's advantage.

Test this person's ability to make decisions instinctively rather than logically. He may not be able to articulate why he thinks that a certain action is right, but he will often be right nonetheless. Ask him, "What is your gut feeling about what we should do?"

Arrange for him to work with positive, optimistic people. He will pick up on these feelings and be motivated. Conversely, steer him away from pessimists and cynics. They will depress him.

When employees or customers have difficulty understanding why an action is necessary, ask him for help. He may be able to sense what they are missing.

#### NOTES

## FOCUS™

### Theme Description

“Where am I headed?” you ask yourself. You ask this question every day. Guided by this theme of Focus, you need a clear destination. Lacking one, your life and your work can quickly become frustrating. And so each year, each month, and even each week you set goals. These goals then serve as your compass, helping you determine priorities and make the necessary corrections to get back on course. Your Focus is powerful because it forces you to filter; you instinctively evaluate whether or not a particular action will help you move toward your goal. Those that don’t are ignored. In the end, then, your Focus forces you to be efficient. Naturally, the flip side of this is that it causes you to become impatient with delays, obstacles, and even tangents, no matter how intriguing they appear to be. This makes you an extremely valuable team member. When others start to wander down other avenues, you bring them back to the main road. Your Focus reminds everyone that if something is not helping you move toward your destination, then it is not important. And if it is not important, then it is not worth your time. You keep everyone on point.

### Action Items

- When you set goals, discipline yourself to attach timelines and measurements. These will provide regular proof that you are indeed making progress.
- Take the time to write down your goals and refer to them often. You will feel more in control of your life this way.
- Seek roles in which you are asked to function independently. With your strong Focus theme you will be able to stay on track with little supervision.
- Be sure to tell your manager your mid-term and short-term goals. This might well give your manager the confidence to give you the room you need.
- Your greatest worth as a team member might be to help others set goals. At the end of each meeting, take responsibility for summarizing what was decided, for defining when these decisions will be acted upon, and for setting a date when the group will reconvene.
- Identify your role models. Write down in detail why you want to focus your career toward similar kinds of achievement.
- Allow others to think, act, and talk less efficiently than you do. Sometimes their “detours” will lead to discoveries and delights.
- Stretch your goal-setting beyond work. If you find yourself becoming too focused on work goals, set goals regarding your personal life as well. These goals will give weight to your personal priorities and thereby help restore balance in your life.

### How to Manage a Person Especially Talented in the Focus™ Theme

Set goals with timelines and then let this person figure out how to achieve them. He will work best in an environment where he can control his work events.

Check in with him on a regular basis, as often as he indicates would be helpful. He will thrive on these regular check-ins because he likes talking about goals and his progress toward them. Ask him how often you should meet to discuss goals and objectives.

Do not always expect him to be sensitive to the feelings of others because getting his work done often takes priority over feelings. If he also possesses Empathy, this effect will obviously be lessened. Nonetheless, always be aware of the possibility that he may trample on feelings as he marches toward his goal.

He does not revel in situations of constant change. To manage this, use language that he can understand when describing the change. For example, talk about change in terms of “new goals” and “new measures of success.” Terms like this give the change trajectory and purpose. This is the way he naturally thinks.

When there are projects with critical deadlines, ask him to get involved. He instinctively honors deadlines. As soon as he comes to own a project with a deadline, he will concentrate all his energies on it until it is completed.

Arrange for him to attend a time management seminar. He may not naturally excel at this, but because his Focus theme pushes him to move toward his goals as fast as possible, he will appreciate the greater efficiency that time management brings.

Be aware that unstructured meetings will bother him, so when he is in a meeting, try to follow the agenda.

#### NOTES

## FUTURISTIC®

### Theme Description

“Wouldn’t it be great if . . .” You are the kind of person who loves to peer over the horizon. The future fascinates you. As if it were projected on the wall, you see in detail what the future might hold, and this detailed picture keeps pulling you forward, into tomorrow. While the exact content of the picture will depend on your other strengths and interests — a better product, a better team, a better life, or a better world — it will always be inspirational to you. You are a dreamer who sees visions of what could be and who cherishes those visions. When the present proves too frustrating and the people around you too pragmatic, you conjure up your visions of the future and they energize you. They can energize others, too. In fact, very often people look to you to describe your visions of the future. They want a picture that can raise their sights and thereby their spirits. You can paint it for them. Practice. Choose your words carefully. Make the picture as vivid as possible. People will want to latch on to the hope you bring.

### Action Items

- Choose roles in which you can contribute your ideas about the future. For example, you might excel in entrepreneurial or start-up situations.
- Take time to think about the future. The more time you spend considering your ideas about the future, the more vivid your ideas will become. The more vivid your ideas, the more persuasive you will be.
- Seek audiences who appreciate your ideas for the future. They will expect you to make these ideas a reality, and these expectations will motivate you.
- Motivate your colleagues with things that can be done in the future. For example, include some Futuristic ideas in each of your group meetings, or write your vision for the future and share it with your colleagues.
- Find a friend or colleague who possesses this theme. Set aside an hour a month for “future” discussions. Together you can push each other to greater heights of creativity and vividness.
- When you have an opportunity to describe the future in a speech, an article, or a presentation, use as much detail as possible, because not everyone can intuitively fill the gaps like you can.
- Partner with someone with a strong Activator theme. This person can remind you that you do not discover the future; you create it with the actions that you take today.



### How to Manage a Person Especially Talented in the Futuristic® Theme

When you have career conferences or performance meetings with this person, keep in mind that she lives for the future. Ask her to share her vision with you — her vision about her career, about your organization, and about the marketplace/field in general.

Give her time to think, write about, and plan for the products and services needed in the future. Carve out opportunities for her to share her perspective in organization newsletters, meetings, or industry conventions.

Send her any data or articles you spot that would be of interest to her. She needs grist for her Futuristic mill.

Put her on the organization's planning committee. Have her present her data-based vision of what the organization might look like three years hence. Have her repeat this presentation every six months or so. In this way she can refine it with new data and insight.

Stimulate her by talking with her often about what could be. Ask lots of questions. Push her to make the future she sees as vivid as possible.

When the organization needs its people to embrace change, ask her to put these changes in the context of the organization's future needs. Have her make a presentation or write an internal article that puts these changes in perspective. She can help others rise above their present uncertainties and become almost as excited as she is about the possibilities of the future.

#### NOTES

# HARMONY®

## Theme Description

You look for areas of agreement. In your view there is little to be gained from conflict and friction, so you seek to hold them to a minimum. When you know that the people around you hold differing views, you try to find the common ground. You try to steer them away from confrontation and toward harmony. In fact, harmony is one of your guiding values. You can't quite believe how much time is wasted by people trying to impose their views on others. Wouldn't we all be more productive if we kept our opinions in check and instead looked for consensus and support? You believe we would, and you live by that belief. When others are sounding off about their goals, their claims, and their fervently held opinions, you hold your peace. When others strike out in a direction, you will willingly, in the service of harmony, modify your own objectives to merge with theirs (as long as their basic values do not clash with yours). When others start to argue about their pet theory or concept, you steer clear of the debate, preferring to talk about practical, down-to-earth matters on which you can all agree. In your view we are all in the same boat, and we need this boat to get where we are going. It is a good boat. There is no need to rock it just to show that you can.

## Action Items

- In discussions, look for the practical side of things. Help others see this practical side. It is the starting point of agreement.
- Use your Harmony strength to build a network of people with differing perspectives on whom you can rely when you need expertise. Your openness to these differing perspectives will help you learn.
- Accept the responsibilities of being a good team member. Your willingness to adjust and your tolerance for differing views can become significant strengths.
- When two people are arguing, ask others in the group to share their thoughts. By increasing the number of voices in the conversation, you are more likely to find areas where all parties can agree. You can draw people together.
- Avoid roles that will lead you to confront people on a daily basis. Sales roles based upon "cold calls," or roles within highly competitive workplaces, for example, will frustrate or upset you.
- Practice your techniques for resolving conflict without confrontation. Without these polished techniques you might find yourself simply running away from conflicts, leaving them unresolved. This could lead you to passive/aggressive behavior.
- Partner with someone with a strong Command or Activator theme. This person can help you confront the conflict head-on, when all your best efforts to resolve it have met with no success.

### How to Manage a Person Especially Talented in the Harmony® Theme

As far as possible steer this person away from conflict. Do not include him in meetings where there will almost certainly be conflict because he is not at his best when confronting others.

Determine in what ways you agree with him and regularly review these agreements with him. Surround him with other people strong in Harmony. He will always be more focused, more productive, and more creative when he knows that he is supported.

Don't waste your time discussing controversial subjects with this person. He will not enjoy the debate for its own sake. Instead, keep your discussions focused on practical matters where clear action can be taken.

Don't always expect him to disagree with you even when you are wrong. For the sake of Harmony he may nod his head despite judging your idea a poor one. Consequently, you may need other people who instinctively voice their opinions to help keep your thinking clear.

Sometimes when others are locked in disagreement, he can unlock them. He will not necessarily resolve the subject under debate, but he will help them find other areas where they do agree. These areas of common ground can be the starting point for working productively together again.

He wants to feel sure about what he is doing. Help him find authoritative backup (expert opinion) for the actions he takes.

#### NOTES

## IDEATION®

### Theme Description

You are fascinated by ideas. What is an idea? An idea is a concept, the best explanation of the most events. You are delighted when you discover beneath the complex surface an elegantly simple concept to explain why things are the way they are. An idea is a connection. Yours is the kind of mind that is always looking for connections, and so you are intrigued when seemingly disparate phenomena can be linked by an obscure connection. An idea is a new perspective on familiar challenges. You revel in taking the world we all know and turning it around so we can view it from a strange but strangely enlightening angle. You love all these ideas because they are profound, because they are novel, because they are clarifying, because they are contrary, because they are bizarre. For all these reasons you derive a jolt of energy whenever a new idea occurs to you. Others may label you creative or original or conceptual or even smart. Perhaps you are all of these. Who can be sure? What you are sure of is that ideas are thrilling. And on most days this is enough.

### Action Items

- Seek work in which you will be paid for your ideas, such as marketing, advertising, journalism, design, or new product development. Find work in which you will be given credit for your ideas.
- Yours is the kind of mind that bores quickly, so make small changes in your work or home life. Experiment. Play mental games with yourself. All of these will help keep you stimulated.
- Seek brainstorming sessions. With your abundance of ideas, you will make these sessions more exciting and more productive.
- Schedule time to read, because the ideas and experiences of others can become your raw material for new ideas. Schedule time to think, because thinking energizes you.
- Discuss your ideas with other people. Their responses will help you keep refining your ideas.
- Finish your thoughts and ideas before communicating them. Lacking your Ideation strength, others might not be able to “join the dots” of an interesting but incomplete idea, and thus might dismiss it.
- Partner with someone with a strong Activator theme. This person can push you to put your ideas into practice. This kind of exposure can only be good for your ideas.
- Partner with someone with a strong Analytical theme. This person will question you and challenge you, therefore strengthening your ideas.

**How to Manage a Person Especially Talented in the Ideation® Theme**

This person has creative ideas. Be sure to position her where her ideas will be valued.

She will be particularly effective as a designer, whether of sales strategies, marketing campaigns, customer service solutions, or new products. Whatever her field, try to make the most of her ability to design.

Since she thrives on ideas, try to feed her new ideas that lie within the focus of your organization. She will not only be more excited about her work, but will also use these ideas to generate new insights and discoveries of her own.

Encourage her to think of useful ideas or insights that can be shared with your best customers. From Gallup's research it is clear that when a organization deliberately teaches its customers something, their level of loyalty increases.

She enjoys the power of words. Whenever you come across a word combination that perfectly captures a concept, idea, or pattern, share it with her. It will stimulate her thinking.

She needs to know that everything fits together. When decisions are made, take time to show her how each decision is rooted in the same theory or concept.

On those few occasions when a particular decision does not fit into the overarching concept, be sure to explain to her that this decision is an exception or an experiment. Without this explanation she may start to worry that the organization is becoming incoherent.

**NOTES**

# INCLUDER®

## Theme Description

“Stretch the circle wider.” This is the philosophy around which you orient your life. You want to include people and make them feel part of the group. In direct contrast to those who are drawn only to exclusive groups, you actively avoid those groups that exclude others. You want to expand the group so that as many people as possible can benefit from its support. You hate the sight of someone on the outside looking in. You want to draw them in so that they can feel the warmth of the group. You are an instinctively accepting person. Regardless of race or sex or nationality or personality or faith, you cast few judgments. Judgments can hurt a person’s feelings. Why do that if you don’t have to? Your accepting nature does not necessarily rest on a belief that each of us is different and that one should respect these differences. Rather, it rests on your conviction that fundamentally we are all the same. We are all equally important. Thus, no one should be ignored. Each of us should be included. It is the least we all deserve.

## Action Items

- Choose roles in which you are continuously working and interacting with people. You will enjoy the challenge of making everyone feel important.
- Consider roles in which you are responsible for representing voices that are not normally heard. You will derive a great deal of satisfaction from being their representative.
- Look for opportunities to bring together people of diverse cultures and backgrounds. You can be a leader in this area.
- Help those who are new to an organization get to know other people. You will always be adept at quickly making people feel accepted and involved.
- You naturally look for the best in people. Help your colleagues see what you see.
- Partner with someone with a strong Activator or Command theme. This person can help you deliver news that might hurt someone’s feelings.
- Explain what we all have in common. Help others understand that to respect the differences among us (our diversity) you must begin by appreciating what we all share (our similarity).

**How to Manage a Person Especially Talented in the Includer® Theme**

This person is interested in making everyone feel part of the team. Ask him to work on an orientation program for new employees. He will be excited to think about ways to welcome these new recruits.

Ask him to lead a task force to recruit minority persons into your organization. He is instinctively sensitive to those who are or have been left out.

When you have group functions, ask him to make sure that everyone is included. He will work hard to ensure that no individual or group is overlooked.

In the same vein, you can capitalize on this person's Includer theme by focusing it on your customers. Properly positioned, he may prove very effective at breaking the barriers between customer and organization.

Because he probably will not appreciate elite products or services made for a select category of customer, position him to work on products or services that are designed with a broad market in mind. He will enjoy planning ways to open the net wide.

In certain situations it may be appropriate to ask him to be your organization's link to community social agencies.

**NOTES**

# INDIVIDUALIZATION®

## Theme Description

Your Individualization theme leads you to be intrigued by the unique qualities of each person. You are impatient with generalizations or “types” because you don’t want to obscure what is special and distinct about each person. Instead, you focus on the differences between individuals. You instinctively observe each person’s style, each person’s motivation, how each thinks, and how each builds relationships. You hear the one-of-a-kind stories in each person’s life. This theme explains why you pick your friends just the right birthday gift, why you know that one person prefers praise in public and another detests it, and why you tailor your teaching style to accommodate one person’s need to be shown and another’s desire to “figure it out as I go.” Because you are such a keen observer of other people’s strengths, you can draw out the best in each person. This Individualization theme also helps you build productive teams. While some search around for the perfect team “structure” or “process,” you know instinctively that the secret to great teams is casting by individual strengths so that everyone can do a lot of what they do well.

## Action Items

- Select a vocation in which your Individualization theme can be both appreciated and used, such as counseling, supervising, teaching, writing human interest articles, or selling. Your ability to see people one by one is a special talent.
- Become an expert in describing your own strengths and style. For example, answer questions such as these: What is the best praise you ever received? How often do you like to check in with your manager? What is your best method for building relationships? How do you learn best?
- Ask these same questions of your colleagues and friends. Help them plan their future by starting with their strengths, then designing a future based on what they do best.
- Make your colleagues and friends aware of each person’s unique needs. Soon people will look to you to explain other people’s motivations and actions.
- Study successful people to discover the uniqueness that made them successful.
- Consider that you might be able to write a novel.
- Help others understand that true diversity can be found in only the subtle differences between each individual, regardless of race, sex, or nationality.
- Explain that it is appropriate, just, and effective to treat each person differently. Those without strong Individualization might not see the differences among individuals and might insist that Individualization is unequal and therefore unfair. You will need to describe your perspective in detail in order to be persuasive.



**How to Manage a Person Especially Talented in the Individualization® Theme**

Ask this person to serve on your selection committee for any number of positions. She will probably be a very good judge of each candidate's strengths and weaknesses.

Ask her to help improve the organization's productivity by figuring out the right roles for everyone according to their strengths and weaknesses.

Have her help design pay-for-performance programs where each employee can use his strengths to maximize his pay.

When you are having difficulty understanding a certain employee's perspective, turn to her for insight. She can show you the world through the employee's eyes.

When you are having performance problems with individual employees, discuss with her what might be done. Her intuitions about the appropriate action for each individual will be sound.

When appropriate, ask her to teach an internal training class or mentor a couple of new employees. She may well have a knack for spotting how each person learns a little differently.

Look at her other dominant themes. If her Developer and Arranger themes are also strong, she may have the potential to be a manager or supervisor. If her strength lies in Command and Woo, she will probably be very effective at turning prospects into customers.

**NOTES**

## INPUT®

### Theme Description

You are inquisitive. You collect things. You might collect information — words, facts, books, and quotations — or you might collect tangible objects such as butterflies, baseball cards, porcelain dolls, or sepia photographs. Whatever you collect, you collect it because it interests you. And yours is the kind of mind that finds so many things interesting. The world is exciting precisely because of its infinite variety and complexity. If you read a great deal, it is not necessarily to refine your theories but, rather, to add more information to your archives. If you like to travel, it is because each new location offers novel artifacts and facts. These can be acquired and then stored away. Why are they worth storing? At the time of storing it is often hard to say exactly when or why you might need them, but who knows when they might become useful? With all those possible uses in mind, you really don't feel comfortable throwing anything away. So you keep acquiring and compiling and filing stuff away. It's interesting. It keeps your mind fresh. And perhaps one day some of it will prove valuable.

### Action Items

- Look for jobs in which you are charged with acquiring new information each day, such as teaching, research, or journalism.
- Identify your areas of specialization and actively seek more information about them.
- Make time to read books and articles that stimulate you. Schedule the times.
- Deliberately increase your vocabulary. Intentionally collect new words and learn the meaning of each.
- Enjoy reading the dictionary and the encyclopedia — this might seem strange to some people, but for someone like you it is a good way to strengthen your self-concept.
- Devise a system to store and easily locate information. This can be as simple as a file for all the articles you have clipped, or as sophisticated as a computer database.
- Identify situations in which you can share the information you have collected with other people.
- Accept that you will never feel that you know enough.
- Partner with someone with a strong Focus or Discipline theme. This person will help you stay on track when your inquisitiveness leads you down intriguing but distracting avenues.

### How to Manage a Person Especially Talented in the Input® Theme

Focus this person's natural inquisitiveness by asking him to research a topic of importance to your organization. He enjoys the knowledge that comes from research.

Position him in roles with a heavy research component.

Pay attention to his other strong themes. If he is also strong in Developer, he may excel as a teacher or trainer by peppering his lesson with intriguing facts and stories.

Keep him posted on the news within your organization. He needs to be in the know. Pass along books, articles, and papers you think he would like to know about and read.

Encourage him to make use of the Internet. He will use it to find information he thinks he needs. Not all of his fact-finding will be immediately useful, but it will be important for his self-esteem.

Help him develop a system for storing the information he collects. This system will ensure that he can find it when he and the organization need it.

When you are in meetings, make a point of asking him for information. Look for opportunities to say something positive about his recall, such as "It's amazing. You always seem to have the facts we need."

#### NOTES

# INTELLECTION®

## Theme Description

You like to think. You like mental activity. You like exercising the “muscles” of your brain, stretching them in multiple directions. This need for mental activity may be focused; for example, you may be trying to solve a problem or develop an idea or understand another person’s feelings. The exact focus will depend on your other strengths. On the other hand, this mental activity may very well lack focus. The theme of Intellection does not dictate what you are thinking about; it simply describes that you like to think. You are the kind of person who enjoys your time alone because it is your time for musing and reflection. You are introspective. In a sense you are your own best companion, as you pose yourself questions and try out answers on yourself to see how they sound. This introspection may lead you to a slight sense of discontent as you compare what you are actually doing with all the thoughts and ideas that your mind conceives. Or this introspection may tend toward more pragmatic matters such as the events of the day or a conversation that you plan to have later. Wherever it leads you, this mental hum is one of the constants of your life.

## Action Items

- Consider beginning or continuing your studies in philosophy, literature, or psychology. You will always enjoy subject matter areas that stimulate your thinking.
- Thinking can be energizing for you, so schedule times for thinking. Use these times to muse and reflect.
- List your ideas in a log or a diary. These ideas will serve as grist for your mental mill, and might yield valuable insights.
- Take time to write. Writing might be the best way to crystallize and integrate your thoughts.
- Find people who like to talk about the same issues you do. Organize a discussion group that addresses subjects of interest to you.
- Deliberately build relationships with people you consider to be “big thinkers.” Their example will inspire you to focus your own thinking.
- Explain to others why you need your time for introspection. Although it might seem to others that you aren’t doing anything, introspection allows you to refine your ideas; thus, for you it is productive behavior.
- Allow others time to think through your new idea after you have presented it for the first time. Realize that they might not immediately understand this new idea because they have not spent as much time as you have pondering it.

**How to Manage a Person Especially Talented in the Intellection® Theme**

Capitalize on the fact that thinking energizes this person. For example, when you have a need to explain why something has to be done, ask her to think it through for you and then provide you with the perfect explanation.

Don't hesitate to challenge her thinking. She should not be threatened by this. On the contrary she should take it as a sign that you are paying attention to her and be stimulated by it.

Encourage her to find a few long stretches of time when she can simply muse. For some people, pure thinking time is not productive behavior, but for her it is. She will have more clarity and self-confidence as a result.

When you are faced with books, articles, or proposals that need to be evaluated, ask her to read them and give you a report. She loves to read.

Have a detailed discussion with her regarding her strengths. She will probably enjoy the introspection and self-discovery.

Give her the opportunity to present her thinking to other people in the department. The pressure of communicating her thinking to others will force her to refine and clarify her thoughts.

Be prepared to partner her with someone strong in Activator. This partner will push her to act on her thoughts and ideas.

**NOTES**

## LEARNER®

### Theme Description

You love to learn. The subject matter that interests you most will be determined by your other themes and experiences, but whatever the subject, you will always be drawn to the process of learning. The process, more than the content or the result, is especially exciting for you. You are energized by the steady and deliberate journey from ignorance to competence. The thrill of the first few facts, the early efforts to recite or practice what you have learned, the growing confidence of a skill mastered — this is the process that entices you. Your excitement leads you to engage in adult learning experiences — yoga or piano lessons or graduate classes. It enables you to thrive in dynamic work environments where you are asked to take on short project assignments and are expected to learn a lot about the new subject matter in a short period of time and then move on to the next one. This Learner theme does not necessarily mean that you seek to become the subject matter expert, or that you are striving for the respect that accompanies a professional or academic credential. The outcome of the learning is less significant than the “getting there.”

### Action Items

- Seek roles that require some form of technical competence. You will enjoy the process of acquiring and maintaining this competence.
- As far as possible, shift your career toward a field with constantly changing technologies or regulations. You will be energized by the challenge of keeping up.
- Because you are not threatened by unfamiliar information, you might excel in a consulting role (either internal or external), in which you are paid to go into new situations and pick up new competencies or languages very quickly.
- Refine how you learn. For example, you might learn best by teaching; if so, seek out opportunities to present to others. You might learn best through quiet reflection; if so, carve out this quiet time.
- Find ways to track the progress of your learning. If there are distinct levels or stages of learning within the discipline or skill, take a moment to celebrate your progression from one level to the next. If no such levels exist, create them for yourself (e.g., reading five books on the subject, or making three presentations on the subject).
- Honor your desire to learn. If you can't fulfill this need at work, take advantage of the adult educational opportunities in your community. Discipline yourself to sign up for at least one new academic or adult learning course each year.
- Be a catalyst for change. Others might be intimidated by new rules, new skills, or new circumstances. Your willingness to soak up this “newness” can calm their fears and spur them to engage. Take this responsibility seriously.

### How to Manage a Person Especially Talented in the Learner® Theme

Position this person in roles that require him to stay current in a fast-changing field. He will enjoy the challenge of maintaining his competency.

Regardless of his role, he will be eager to learn new facts, skills, or knowledge. Explore new ways for him to learn and remain motivated, lest he start hunting for a richer learning environment. For example, if he lacks opportunities to learn on the job, encourage him to take courses that interest him at the local college or association. Remember, he doesn't necessarily need to be promoted; he just needs to be learning. It is the process of learning, not the result, that energizes him.

Help him track his learning progress by identifying milestones or levels that he has reached. Celebrate these milestones.

In the same vein, encourage this person to become the “master of trade” or “resident expert” in his field. Arrange for him to take the relevant classes. Be sure to recognize his learning with the appropriate certificates and plaques.

Have this person work beside a master who will continuously push him to learn more.

Ask him to conduct internal discussion groups or presentations. There may be no better way to learn than to teach others.

Help him secure financial support to continue his education.

#### NOTES

# MAXIMIZER®

## Theme Description

Excellence, not average, is your measure. Taking something from below average to slightly above average takes a great deal of effort and in your opinion is not very rewarding. Transforming something strong into something superb takes just as much effort but is much more thrilling. Strengths, whether yours or someone else's, fascinate you. Like a diver after pearls, you search them out, watching for the telltale signs of a strength. A glimpse of untutored excellence, rapid learning, a skill mastered without recourse to steps — all these are clues that a strength may be in play. And having found a strength, you feel compelled to nurture it, refine it, and stretch it toward excellence. You polish the pearl until it shines. This natural sorting of strengths means that others see you as discriminating. You choose to spend time with people who appreciate your particular strengths. Likewise, you are attracted to others who seem to have found and cultivated their own strengths. You tend to avoid those who want to fix you and make you well rounded. You don't want to spend your life bemoaning what you lack. Rather, you want to capitalize on the gifts with which you are blessed. It's more fun. It's more productive. And, counterintuitively, it is more demanding.

## Action Items

- Seek roles in which you are helping other people succeed. In coaching, managing, mentoring, or teaching roles, your focus on strengths will prove particularly beneficial to others. For example, because most people find it difficult to describe what they do best, start by arming them with vivid descriptions.
- Devise ways to measure your performance and the performance of your colleagues. These measures will help you spot strengths, because the best way to identify a strength is to look for sustained levels of excellent performance.
- Once you have identified your own strengths, stay focused on them. Refine your skills. Acquire new knowledge. Practice. Keep working toward mastery in a few areas.
- Develop a plan to use your strengths outside of work. In doing so, consider how your strengths relate to the mission in your life, and how they might benefit your family or the community.
- Study success. Deliberately spend time with people who have discovered their strengths. The more you understand how marshaling strengths leads to success, the more likely you will be to create success in your own life.
- Make your weaknesses irrelevant. For example, find a partner, devise a support system, or use one of your stronger themes to compensate for one of your weaker ones.
- Explain to others why you spend more time building on strengths rather than fixing weaknesses. Initially, they might confuse what you are doing with complacency.



### How to Manage a Person Especially Talented in the Maximizer® Theme

This person is interested in taking something that works and figuring out ways to maximize its performance. She may not be particularly interested in fixing things that are broken.

Avoid positioning her in roles that demand continual problem solving.

She will expect you to understand her strengths and to value her for those strengths. She will become frustrated if you spend too much time focusing on her weaknesses.

Schedule time to discuss her strengths in detail and to strategize how and where these strengths can be used for the organization's advantage. She will enjoy these conversations and offer many practical suggestions for how her strengths can best be used.

As much as possible, help her develop a career path and a compensation plan that will allow her to keep growing toward excellence in her current role. She will instinctively want to stay on her strengths' path and thus may dislike career structures that force her off this path in order to increase her earning power.

Ask her to lead a task force to investigate the best practices within your organization. She is naturally inquisitive about excellence.

Ask her to help design a program for measuring and celebrating the productivity of each employee. She will enjoy thinking about what excellence should look like in each role.

#### NOTES

## POSITIVITY®

### Theme Description

You are generous with praise, quick to smile, and always on the lookout for the positive in the situation. Some call you lighthearted. Others just wish that their glass were as full as yours seems to be. But either way, people want to be around you. Their world looks better around you because your enthusiasm is contagious. Lacking your energy and optimism, some find their world drab with repetition or, worse, heavy with pressure. You seem to find a way to lighten their spirit. You inject drama into every project. You celebrate every achievement. You find ways to make everything more exciting and more vital. Some cynics may reject your energy, but you are rarely dragged down. Your Positivity won't allow it. Somehow you can't quite escape your conviction that it is good to be alive, that work can be fun, and that no matter what the setbacks, one must never lose one's sense of humor.

### Action Items

- You will excel in any role in which you are paid to highlight the positive. A teaching role, a sales role, an entrepreneurial role, or a leadership role will utilize your ability to make things dramatic.
- You tend to be more enthusiastic and energetic than most people. When others become discouraged or are reluctant to take risks, your attitude will provide the impetus to keep them moving. Over time, others will start to look to you for this “lift.”
- Deliberately help others see the things that are going well for them. You can keep their eyes on the positive.
- Because people will rely on you to help them rise above their daily frustrations, arm yourself with good stories, jokes, and sayings. Never underestimate the effect that you can have on people.
- Plan highlight activities for your colleagues. For example, find ways to turn small achievements into “events,” or plan regular “celebrations” that others can look forward to, or capitalize on the year's holidays and festivals.
- Increase the recognition you give to others. Try to tailor it to each person's need.
- Avoid negative people. They will bring you down. Instead, seek people who find in the world the same kind of drama and humor that you do. You will energize each other.
- Explain that your enthusiasm is not simple naivety. You know that bad things can happen; you simply prefer to focus on the good things. Pessimists might superficially seem wiser; they might even sometimes be right — but they are rarely achievers (and, incidentally, optimists have more fun).

### How to Manage a Person Especially Talented in the Positivity® Theme

This person brings drama and energy to the workplace. Find ways to position him as close to your customers as possible. He will make your organization seem more positive and more dynamic.

Ask him to help plan events in which your organization hosts your best customers, such as new product launches or user groups.

The Positivity theme does not imply that he is always in a good mood. It does imply that through his humor and attitude he can make people more excited about their work. Remind him of this strength and encourage him to use it.

He will quickly be sapped of energy by cynics. Don't expect him to enjoy cheering up negative people. He will do better when asked to energize basically positive people who are simply in need of a spark.

His enthusiasm is contagious. Consider this when placing him on project teams.

He likes to celebrate. When certain milestones of achievement have been reached, ask him for ideas about how to recognize and celebrate the achievement. He will be more creative than most.

Pay attention to his other strong themes. If he also possesses strength in Developer, he may prove to be an excellent trainer or teacher, because he brings excitement to the classroom. If Command is one of his strongest themes, he may excel in selling because he is armed with a potent combination of assertiveness and energy.

#### NOTES

## RELATOR®

### Theme Description

Relator describes your attitude toward your relationships. In simple terms, the Relator theme pulls you toward people you already know. You do not necessarily shy away from meeting new people — in fact, you may have other themes that cause you to enjoy the thrill of turning strangers into friends — but you do derive a great deal of pleasure and strength from being around your close friends. You are comfortable with intimacy. Once the initial connection has been made, you deliberately encourage a deepening of the relationship. You want to understand their feelings, their goals, their fears, and their dreams; and you want them to understand yours. You know that this kind of closeness implies a certain amount of risk — you might be taken advantage of — but you are willing to accept that risk. For you a relationship has value only if it is genuine. And the only way to know that is to entrust yourself to the other person. The more you share with each other, the more you risk together. The more you risk together, the more each of you proves your caring is genuine. These are your steps toward real friendship, and you take them willingly.

### Action Items

- Find a workplace in which friendships are encouraged. You will not do well in an overly formal organization. In a job interview, ask about work styles and organization culture.
- Deliberately learn as much as you can about the people that you meet. You like knowing about people, and other people like being known. In this way, you will be a catalyst for trusting relationships.
- Show people that you trust them and they will be more likely to trust others. You can be an important role model in this area.
- Let it be known that you are more interested in the character and personality of others than in their status or job title. This is one of your strengths and can serve as model for others.
- Let your caring show. For example, find people in your organization to mentor, or help your colleagues to know each other better, or extend your relationships “beyond the office.”
- No matter how busy you are, stay in contact with your friends. They are your fuel.
- Be honest with your friends. True caring means helping the other person be successful and fulfilled. Thus, giving honest feedback or encouraging your friend to move out of a role in which he or she is struggling is a caring act.
- Forgive a close friend. When someone lets you down, you take it seriously, and might become skittish about renewing the relationship. Honor this reluctance, but don't let it stop you from extending trust again.

**How to Manage a Person Especially Talented in the Relator® Theme**

Tell this person directly that you care about her. More than likely this language will not sound inappropriate and will be welcomed by her. She organizes her life around her close relationships, so she will want to know where she stands with you.

She will enjoy developing genuine bonds with the people with whom she works. These relationships take time to build, so don't place her in a role that uproots her frequently from her colleagues and customers.

Help her know the goals of her colleagues. She is more likely to bond with them when she knows their goals.

Trust her with confidential information. She is loyal, places a high value on trust, and will not betray yours.

Ask her to build genuine trusting relationships with the critical people that you want to retain. She can be one of the human ties that bind good people to your organization.

Pay attention to her other strong themes. If she also shows strong evidence of Focus or Arranger or Self-Assurance, she may have the potential to manage others. Employees will always work harder for someone whom they know will be there for them and who wants them to succeed. She can easily establish these kinds of relationships.

Generosity is often a talent of hers. Draw attention to her generosity and show her how it helps her impact and connect with those around her. She will appreciate your noticing, and thus your own relationship will be strengthened.

**NOTES**

# RESPONSIBILITY®

## Theme Description

Your Responsibility theme forces you to take psychological ownership for anything you commit to, and whether large or small, you feel emotionally bound to follow it through to completion. Your good name depends on it. If for some reason you cannot deliver, you automatically start to look for ways to make it up to the other person. Apologies are not enough. Excuses and rationalizations are totally unacceptable. You will not quite be able to live with yourself until you have made restitution. This conscientiousness, this near obsession for doing things right, and your impeccable ethics, combine to create your reputation: utterly dependable. When assigning new responsibilities, people will look to you first because they know it will get done. When people come to you for help — and they soon will — you must be selective. Your willingness to volunteer may sometimes lead you to take on more than you should.

## Action Items

- Emphasize your sense of Responsibility when job hunting. During interviews, describe your desire to be held fully accountable for the success or failure of projects, your intense dislike of unfinished work, and your need to “make it right” if a commitment is not met.
- Keep volunteering for more responsibility than your experience seems to warrant. You thrive on Responsibility and can deal with it very effectively.
- Align yourself with others who share your sense of Responsibility. You will thrive on the feeling of being surrounded by hands as strong as your own.
- Tell your manager that you work best when given the independence and freedom to follow through on your commitments. Tell your manager that you don’t need to check in during a project, just at the end. You can be trusted to get it done.
- Take time to enjoy the completion of your commitments. Responsibility is a source of motivation for you.
- Push yourself to say “no.” Because you are instinctively responsible, it might sometimes be very difficult to refuse opportunities. For this reason you must be selective. Ask for more responsibility in only the areas that matter most to you.
- Partner with someone with a strong Discipline or Focus theme. This person can help you stay on track and prevent you from becoming overloaded.

### How to Manage a Person Especially Talented in the Responsibility® Theme

This person defines himself by his ability to live up to his commitments. It will be intensely frustrating for him to work around people who don't. As far as possible try to avoid putting him in team situations with lackadaisical teammates.

He defines himself by the quality of his work. He will resist if you force him to rush his work so much that quality suffers. He dislikes sacrificing quality for speed.

In discussing his work, talk about its quality first.

Recognize that he is a self-starter and requires little supervision to ensure that assignments are completed.

Put him in positions requiring unimpeachable ethics. He will not let you down.

Periodically ask him what new responsibility he would like to assume. It is motivational for him to volunteer, so give him the opportunity.

Protect him from taking on too much, particularly if he lacks a theme such as Discipline. Help him see that one more burden may result in his dropping the ball, a notion he will loathe.

He may well impress you with his ability to deliver time and again. You may be so impressed that you decide to promote him to management. Be careful. He may much prefer to do a job himself than be responsible for someone else's work, in which case he will find management frustrating. Faced with this situation, help him find other ways to grow.

#### NOTES

## RESTORATIVE™

### Theme Description

You love to solve problems. Whereas some are dismayed when they encounter yet another breakdown, you can be energized by it. You enjoy the challenge of analyzing the symptoms, identifying what is wrong, and finding the solution. You may prefer practical problems or conceptual ones or personal ones. You may seek out specific kinds of problems that you have met many times before and that you are confident you can fix. Or you may feel the greatest push when faced with complex and unfamiliar problems. Your exact preferences are determined by your other themes and experiences. But what is certain is that you enjoy bringing things back to life. It is a wonderful feeling to identify the undermining factor(s), eradicate them, and restore something to its true glory. Intuitively, you know that without your intervention, this thing — this machine, this technique, this person, this organization — might have ceased to function. You fixed it, resuscitated it, rekindled its vitality. Phrasing it the way you might, you saved it.

### Action Items

- Seek roles in which you are paid to solve problems. You might particularly enjoy roles in medicine, consulting, computer programming, or customer service, in which your success depends on your ability to restore and resolve.
- Study your chosen subject closely to become adept at identifying what causes certain problems to recur. This sort of expertise will lead you to the solution that much faster.
- In all of your relationships, do not be afraid to let others know that you enjoy fixing problems. It comes naturally to you, but many people shy away from problems. You can help.
- Think through the ways you can improve your skills and knowledge. Identify the courses you can take to plug your gaps.
- Make a list of ways that you could help people who are disadvantaged, such as volunteering in your community or fund-raising.
- Give yourself a break. Your strong Restorative theme might lead you to be overly self-critical. Try to redirect this theme either toward things about yourself that can be fixed, such as knowledge or skills (but not talent), or toward external, tangible problems.
- Allow other people to solve their own problems. You might want to rush in and solve things for them, but in so doing you might hinder their learning. Watch out for this, particularly if you are in a manager, coach, teacher, or parenting role.



### How to Manage a Person Especially Talented in the Restorative™ Theme

Ask this person for her observations when you want to identify a problem within your organization. Her insights will be particularly acute.

Position her where she is paid to solve problems for your best customers. She enjoys the challenge of discovering and removing the obstacles.

When a situation within your organization needs immediate improvement, turn to her for help. She will not panic but instead will respond in a focused, businesslike way.

When she resolves a problem, make sure to celebrate the achievement. Every wrong situation righted is a success for her, and she will need you to view it as such. Show her that others have come to rely on her ability to dismantle obstacles and move forward.

Offer your support when she meets a particularly thorny problem. Since she defines herself by her ability to cope, she may well feel personally defeated if the situation remains unresolved. Help her through it.

Ask her in what ways she would like to improve. Agree that these improvements should serve as goals for the following six months. She will appreciate this kind of attention.

#### NOTES

## SELF-ASSURANCE®

### Theme Description

Self-Assurance is similar to self-confidence. In the deepest part of you, you have faith in your strengths. You know that you are able — able to take risks, able to meet new challenges, able to stake claims, and, most important, able to deliver. But Self-Assurance is more than just self-confidence. Blessed with the theme of Self-Assurance, you have confidence not only in your abilities but in your judgment. When you look at the world, you know that your perspective is unique and distinct. And because no one sees exactly what you see, you know that no one can make your decisions for you. No one can tell you what to think. They can guide. They can suggest. But you alone have the authority to form conclusions, make decisions, and act. This authority, this final accountability for the living of your life, does not intimidate you. On the contrary, it feels natural to you. No matter what the situation, you seem to know what the right decision is. This theme lends you an aura of certainty. Unlike many, you are not easily swayed by someone else's arguments, no matter how persuasive they may be. This Self-Assurance may be quiet or loud, depending on your other themes, but it is solid. It is strong. Like the keel of a ship, it withstands many different pressures and keeps you on your course.

### Action Items

- Seek start-up situations for which no rule book exists. You will be at your best when you are asked to make many decisions.
- Seek roles in which you are charged with persuading people to see your point of view. Your Self-Assurance (especially when combined with strong Command or Activator themes) can create an extremely persuasive combination. Therefore, leadership, sales, legal, or entrepreneurial roles might be appropriate.
- Appeal to your own internal guidance system to determine appropriate actions. Trust your instinct.
- Let your self-confidence show. It will be reinforcing to your colleagues.
- Help others find the positives in your certainty. For example, when you have decided what you are going to do, they can trust that you will do it.
- Realize that sometimes you will find it hard to put your certainty or intuition into words, possibly leading others to see you as self-righteous. Explain that your certainty does not mean that they should withhold their opinions. It might not seem like it to them, but you do want to hear their views. Your certainty at the moment doesn't mean that you are unwilling to accommodate their views.
- Partner with someone with a strong Strategic, Deliberative, or Futuristic theme. This person can help you assess the goals to which you commit. You need this help because once you set your sights on a goal you are very likely to stay with it until it is achieved.

**How to Manage a Person Especially Talented in the Self-Assurance® Theme**

Give this person a role where he has the leeway to make meaningful decisions. He will neither want nor require close hand-holding.

Position him in a role where persistence is essential to success. He has the self-confidence to stay the course despite pressure to change direction.

Put him in a role that demands an aura of certainty and stability. At critical moments this inner authority will calm his colleagues and his customers.

Support his self-concept that he is an agent of action. Reinforce it with comments such as “It’s up to you. You make it happen” or “What is your intuition saying? Let’s go with your intuition.”

Help him know that his decisions and actions do produce outcomes. He is most effective when he believes he is in control of his world. Highlight practices that work.

Understand that he may have beliefs about what he can do that might not relate to his actual strengths. Although his self-confidence can often prove useful, if he overclaims or makes some major misjudgments, be sure to point these out immediately. He needs clear feedback to inform his instincts.

Pay attention to his other strong themes. If he is strong in themes such as Futuristic, Focus, Significance, or Arranger, he may well be a potential leader within your organization.

**NOTES**

# SIGNIFICANCE™

## Theme Description

You want to be very significant in the eyes of other people. In the truest sense of the word you want to be recognized. You want to be heard. You want to stand out. You want to be known. In particular, you want to be known and appreciated for the unique strengths you bring. You feel a need to be admired as credible, professional, and successful. Likewise, you want to associate with others who are credible, professional, and successful. And if they aren't, you will push them to achieve until they are. Or you will move on. An independent spirit, you want your work to be a way of life rather than a job, and in that work you want to be given free rein, the leeway to do things your way. Your yearnings feel intense to you, and you honor those yearnings. And so your life is filled with goals, achievements, or qualifications that you crave. Whatever your focus — and each person is distinct — your Significance theme will keep pulling you upward, away from the mediocre toward the exceptional. It is the theme that keeps you reaching.

## Action Items

- Choose jobs or positions in which you can determine your own tasks and actions. You will enjoy the exposure that comes with independence.
- Your reputation is important to you, so decide what it should be and tend to it in the smallest detail. For example, identify and earn a designation that will add to your credibility, write an article that will give you visibility, or volunteer to speak in front of a group who will admire your achievements.
- Make a list of the goals, achievements, and qualifications you crave and post them where you will see them every day. Use this list to inspire yourself.
- Identify your best moment of recognition or praise. What was it for? Who gave it to you? Who was the audience? What do you have to do to recreate that moment?
- Share your dreams and goals with your family or closest colleagues. Their expectations will keep you reaching.
- Stay focused on performance. Your strong Significance theme will drive you to claim outstanding goals. Your performance had better match these goals, or others might come to label you as only a big talker.
- Write down your strengths and refer to them frequently. Heightened awareness of your strengths will give you the confidence you need to rebound, when, for whatever reason, your “audiences” are not giving you the feedback you need.
- Accept that, unless you possess a strong Self-Assurance theme, you might fear failure. Don't let this fear prevent you from staking claims to excellence. Instead, use it to focus on ensuring that your performance matches your claims.

### How to Manage a Person Especially Talented in the Significance™ Theme

Be aware of this person's need for independence. Do not overmanage her.

Acknowledge that she thrives on meaningful recognition for her contributions. Give her room to maneuver, but never ignore her. Be sure to feed all compliments through to her.

Give her the opportunity to stand out, to be known. She enjoys the pressure of being the focal point of attention. Arrange for her to stand out for the right reasons, or she will try to make it happen herself, perhaps inappropriately.

Position her so that she can associate with credible, productive, professional people. She likes to surround herself with the best.

Encourage her to praise other top achievers in the group. She enjoys making other people feel successful.

When she makes claims to excellence — and she will — help her picture the strengths she will have to develop in order to realize these claims. When coaching her, don't ask her to lower her claims; instead, suggest that she keep benchmarks for developing the relevant strengths.

Because she places such a premium on the perceptions of others, her self-esteem can suffer when others do not give her the recognition she deserves. At these times draw her attention back to her strengths and encourage her to set new goals based on these strengths. These goals will help reenergize her.

#### NOTES

## STRATEGIC™

### Theme Description

The Strategic theme enables you to sort through the clutter and find the best route. It is not a skill that can be taught. It is a distinct way of thinking, a special perspective on the world at large. This perspective allows you to see patterns where others simply see complexity. Mindful of these patterns, you play out alternative scenarios, always asking, “What if this happened? Okay, well what if this happened?” This recurring question helps you see around the next corner. There you can evaluate accurately the potential obstacles. Guided by where you see each path leading, you start to make selections. You discard the paths that lead nowhere. You discard the paths that lead straight into resistance. You discard the paths that lead into a fog of confusion. You cull and make selections until you arrive at the chosen path — your strategy. Armed with your strategy, you strike forward. This is your Strategic theme at work: “What if?” Select. Strike.

### Action Items

- Take the time to fully reflect or muse about a goal that you want to achieve until the related patterns and issues emerge for you. Remember that this musing time is essential to Strategic thinking.
- You can see repercussions more clearly than others. Take advantage of this ability by planning your range of responses in detail. There is little point in knowing where events will lead if you are not ready when they do.
- Talk with others about the alternative directions you see. Detailed conversations like this can help you become even better at anticipating.
- Trust your intuitive insights as often as possible. Even though you might not be able to explain them rationally, your intuitions are created by a brain that instinctively anticipates and projects. Have confidence in these intuitions.
- When the time comes, seize the moment and state your strategy with confidence.
- Find a group that you think does important work and contribute your Strategic thinking. You can be a leader with your ideas.
- Learn how to describe what you see “down the road.” Others who do not possess a strong Strategic theme may not anticipate often or well. You will need to be very persuasive if you are to help them avoid future obstacles, or to exploit the opportunities you have seen.
- Partner with someone with a strong Activator theme. With this person’s need for action and your need for anticipation, you can forge a powerful partnership.

### How to Manage a Person Especially Talented in the Strategic™ Theme

Position this person on the leading edge of your organization. His ability to anticipate problems and their solutions will be valuable. For example, ask him to sort through all of the possibilities and find the best way forward for your department. Suggest that he report back on the best strategy.

Involve him in organizational planning. Ask him, “If this happened, what should we expect?” “If that happened, what should we expect?”

Always give him ample time to think through a situation before asking for his input. He needs to play out a couple of scenarios in his mind before voicing his opinion.

Recognize this person’s strength in the Strategic theme by sending him to a strategic planning or futurism seminar. The content will sharpen his ideas.

This person is likely to have a talent for putting his ideas and thoughts into words. To refine his thinking, ask him to present his ideas to his colleagues or to write them for internal distribution.

When you hear or read of strategies that worked in your field, share them with this person. It will stimulate his thinking.

#### NOTES

## WOO™

### Theme Description

Woo stands for winning others over. You enjoy the challenge of meeting new people and getting them to like you. Strangers are rarely intimidating to you. On the contrary, strangers can be energizing. You are drawn to them. You want to learn their names, ask them questions, and find some area of common interest so that you can strike up a conversation and build rapport. Some people shy away from starting up conversations because they worry about running out of things to say. You don't. Not only are you rarely at a loss for words; you actually enjoy initiating with strangers because you derive satisfaction from breaking the ice and making a connection. Once that connection is made, you are quite happy to wrap it up and move on. There are new people to meet, new rooms to work, new crowds to mingle in. In your world there are no strangers, only friends you haven't met yet — lots of them.

### Action Items

- Choose a job in which you can interact with many people over the course of a day.
- Deliberately build the network of people who know you. Tend to it by checking in with each person at least once a month.
- Join local organizations, volunteer for boards, and find out how to get on the social lists of the influential people where you live.
- Learn the names of as many people as you can. Build a card file of the people you know and add names as you become acquainted. Include a snippet of personal information — such as their birthday, favorite color, hobby, or favorite sports team.
- Consider running for an elected office. You are a natural campaigner. Understand, however, that you might prefer the campaigning more than holding the office.
- Recognize that your ability to get people to like you is very valuable. Do not be afraid to use it to make things happen.
- In social situations, take responsibility for helping put more reserved people at ease.
- Practice ways to charm and engage others. For example, research people before you meet them so you can find the common ground.
- Find the right words to explain to people that networking is part of your style. If you don't claim this theme, others might mistake it for insincerity and wonder why you are being so friendly.
- Partner with someone with a strong Relator or Empathy theme. This person can solidify the relationships that you begin.



### How to Manage a Person Especially Talented in the Woo™ Theme

Try to position this person in a role where she has a chance to meet new people every day. Strangers energize her.

Place her at your organization's initial point of contact with the outside world. She can put strangers at ease and help them feel comfortable with your organization.

Help her refine her system for remembering the names of the people she meets. Set a goal for her to learn the names and a few personal details about as many customers as possible. She can help your organization make many connections in the marketplace.

Unless she is also strong in themes such as Empathy and Relator, do not expect her to enjoy a role where she is asked to build close relationships with your customers. Instead, she may well prefer to meet and greet, win over, and move on to the next.

Her strength in Woo will win you over and cause you to like her. When considering her for new roles and responsibilities, make sure that you look past your liking of her to her genuine strengths. Don't let her Woo dazzle you.

If possible, ask her to be the builder of goodwill for your organization within the community. Have her represent your organization at community clubs and meetings.

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