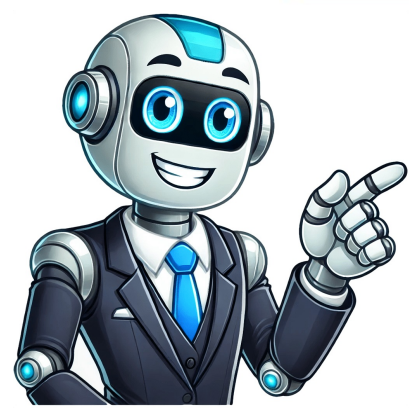


I'm not a robot



I recently decided to retake the Top 5 Clifton StrengthsFinder assessment in 2022 after first taking it five years ago, in 2017. Here's what I learned about myself and how I've changed over the past few years. Why I decided to take the Clifton StrengthsFinder assessment again # In a recent Boundless newsletter, a reader asked Paul Millerd about how to uncover their core strengths. Paul responded with his Top 5 StrengthsFinder results from 2015, which made me realize that I had also take the test several years ago. I logged into my account and found my results from 2017. The report definitely described my strengths at that point in time, but I was curious to see how I've evolved. On the Gallup StrengthsFinder website, they only recommend retaking the assessment under the following circumstances: When an individual took it right before or after a traumatic life event. When an individual took it in their non-native language. When an individual was distracted when they took it. When an individual took it in school or early in in life, and years 10+ have passed. When an individual was not authentic in their responses the first time that they completed the assessment. Based on these criteria alone, I probably didn't need to retake the assessment. But I did initially take the test when I was 24 years old and have since changed careers and spent a lot of time in therapy. I also just moved to a new city for the first time and have been looking for ways to figure out where I fit. So I went ahead and took the assessment again! Strengths Categories Key # – Executing – Influencing – Relationship Building – Strategic Thinking My Top 5 Clifton Strengths in 2017 # Achiever People exceptionally talented in the Achiever theme work hard and possess a great deal of stamina. They take immense satisfaction in being busy and productive. Responsibility People exceptionally talented in the Responsibility theme take psychological ownership of what they say they will do. They are committed to stable values such as honesty and loyalty. Discipline People exceptionally talented in the Discipline theme enjoy routine and structure. Their world is best described by the order they create. Focus People exceptionally talented in the Focus theme can take a direction, follow through and make the corrections necessary to stay on track. They prioritize, then act. Activator People exceptionally talented in the Activator theme can make things happen by turning thoughts into action. They want to do things now, rather than simply talk about them. My Top 5 Clifton Strengths in 2022 # Discipline People exceptionally talented in the Discipline theme enjoy routine and structure. Their world is best described by the order they create. Connectedness People exceptionally talented in the Connectedness theme have faith in the links among all things. They believe there are few coincidences and that almost every event has meaning. Intellection People exceptionally talented in the Intellection theme are characterized by their intellectual activity. They are introspective and appreciate intellectual discussions. Focus People exceptionally talented in the Focus theme can take a direction, follow through and make the corrections necessary to stay on track. They prioritize, then act. Empathy People exceptionally talented in the Empathy theme can sense other people's feelings by imagining themselves in others' lives or situations. What changed? # My top 5 strengths are now more balanced across categories # In 2017 my strengths were heavily weighted in the Executing category, with four of my five strengths coming from that bucket. Now, two of my strengths are in Executing, two in Relationship Building, and one in Strategic Thinking. This doesn't surprise me, and it was part of the reason I wanted to retake the assesment. Five years ago I was working as a project coordinator for a grant-funded nonprofit and it never felt like the right fit. I knew I wanted to be doing more building rather than managing other people who were doing the building. It was the next year that I completed a full-stack web development bootcamp and started doing the kind building I had been missing. Once I was able to exercise my strength as an executor, I believe a lot of my frustration was put to ease and my strengths shifted into a more balanced (and natural-to-me) placement. I've let go of some of my "achiever" tendencies # No longer seeing Achiever on my Top 5 list makes me incredibly proud—I've grown up! I've let go of chasing trophies, awards, and status symbols that don't mean anything to me! I'm no longer striving all the damn time. I take my time and aim to focus on what's really important (health, relationships, community, creativity). I'd reckon to bet that a lot of gifted, Type A recent college graduates also have Achiever in their list of Top 5 strengths. We've been trained to chase the next big achievement, the next degree, the promotion, etc. And let me be clear, I don't think there's anything wrong with being a high achiever, I just don't think as many of us naturally possess this strength as much as American academic culture heavily encourages and rewards it. Connectedness, Intellection, and Empathy are new strengths in my Top 5 list # Replacing some of my achiever tendencies with these connectedness, intellection, and empathy is the biggest change in my top 5 strengths. This feels so right to me, since I have done some deep introspection over the past few years. Getting older, therapy, journaling, and reflection has led me to a deeper understanding of myself. In the past five years I have pushed against many of my people-pleasing tendencies that were the cause of much of my unhappiness, and I believe the result is that these relationship-building and strategic thinking strengths have been given space to take root. What stayed the same? # Discipline and Focus both remained in my list of top 5 strengths, although Discipline moved from position 3 up to number 1. Focus stayed in position 4. This doesn't surprise me. I thrive within the constraints of my routine and am able to prioritize on what is most important before acting. When I recently moved across the country from New Mexico to NYC, I really struggled to feel settled when we were staying in an Airbnb and then in our apartment for a few weeks without furniture. Because my routine wasn't predictable, I wasn't able to focus as deeply as I usually do. Focusing on my strengths # I'm using these new StrengthsFinder results as an opportunity to focus more on my strengths. For much of my life, I've tried to fortify my weaknesses. I've worked hard to be more analytical when my natural tendency is to balance this logical side with a softer, more relational and creative side. I don't want to supress this side of myself. After all, it is my unique mix of strengths that makes me effective at what I do. I am reminded of Scott Adams, the creator of the Dilbert comic, who has written about the value of combining skills. I succeeded as a cartoonist with negligible art talent, some basic writing skills, an ordinary sense of humor and a bit of experience in the business world. The "Dilbert" comic is a combination of all four skills. The world has plenty of better artists, smarter writers, funnier humorists and more experienced business people. The rare part is that each of those modest skills is collected in one person. That's how value is created. Lately I've started to view my sensitivities as strengths rather than weaknesses. I've always been sensitive to alcohol, drugs, external stimuli (mostly loud noises), and people. I read The Highly Sensitive Person: How to Thrive When the World Overwhelms You and was struck by the author's argument that HSPs often fill the role of thoughtful advisors. HSPs tend to fill that advisor role. We are the writers, historians, philosophers, judges, artists, researchers, theologians, therapists, teachers, parents, and plain conscientious citizens. What we bring to any of these roles is a tendency to think about all the possible effects of an idea. Often we have to make ourselves unpopular by stopping the majority from rushing ahead. Thus, to perform our role well, we have to feel very good about ourselves. We have to ignore all the messages from the warriors that we are not as good as they are. The warriors have their bold style, which has its value. But we, too, have our style and our own important contribution to make. This feels right to me, and has given me the opportunity to lean into this role more, whereas before I would supress this side of myself since I didn't want to come across as too sincere or overly thoughtful. HSPs also have a keen intuition and curiosity about inner life. Generally speaking, your keen intuition helps you uncover the most important hidden factors. You have greater access to your own unconscious and so a greater sense of others' and how you were affected. You can develop a good sense of the process itself—when to push, when to back off. You have curiosity about inner life. Above all, you have integrity. You remain committed to the process of individuation no matter how difficult it is to face certain moments, certain wounds, certain facts. I'm not sure where this will lead me, but I am excited to see. My hope is that by leaning into my sensitivities and focusing more on my strengths I'll be able to help more people live a thoughtful and creative life. I feel myself grounding and expanding—it feels like a deep exhale. -- Blog Soft Practice is about making art without an art degree, paying attention, and keeping the promises we make to ourselves. It's about practice. And quitting. And starting again. It arrives in your inbox once a month (usually on a Sunday) and is best consumed with a hot beverage. In each newsletter I will share all the messy parts along my journey to becoming a full-time artist and maker, help you get organized to better manage your creative projects, and offer up some thoughtful (and sometimes weird) recommendations. Watch interviews with leaders from around the world as they reveal the hidden layers of their own unique strengths and how they've used them to be successful. View Leaders Developed in the 1980s with a rigid 4-domain system Executing Influencing Relationship Building Strategic Thinking Fixed categorization of strengths Abstract terminology (e.g., "Woo," "Ideation") Predates remote work, startups, digital economy Limited application to emerging career paths No pathway for strength development Created for today's professionals with a dynamic 5-domain system Get It Done Make an Impact Connect & Elevate Think Big Growth Mindset Dynamic strengths that evolve between domains Intuitive, action-oriented terminology Built for remote work, startups, digital transformation Includes modern capabilities like "Growth Hacker" Unique Growth Mindset domain for continuous development TAKE FREE STRENGTHS TEST TEAM & GROUP SOLUTIONS See Sample Report Modern execution strengths that help you implement plans and achieve results, including breakthrough capabilities like "Growth Hacker" and "Bootstrapper" that reflect today's lean, agile workplace. 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Key strengths include: Cause-effect, Continuity, Visionary, Inventor, Researcher, Thinker, Strategic, Big Picture Our exclusive domain that represents the ability to adapt, learn continuously, and thrive in changing environments—perhaps the most critical meta-skill for today's professionals. Key strengths include: Flexibility, Curiosity, Resilience, Resourcefulness, Self-Improvement You were born with unique talents that make you different from anyone else. Discover what those talents are and how they show up in your life with the CliftonStrengths Top 5 report. The new CliftonStrengths Top 5 report reveals your top five strengths based on your responses to the CliftonStrengths assessment. The report includes: your top five CliftonStrengths a guide for using the report today and in the future how your strengths are unique to you how your top five strengths combine to make you unique action items that you can implement immediately a practical outline to use your most dominant strengths a guide to having conversations with others about your strengths Your strengths and the way they interact with each other are unique, so the content in your report will be unique to you -- no one else's insights will look exactly like yours. Buy Now View Sample Report 6x as likely to be engaged in their job 6x as likely to strongly agree that they have the chance to do what they do best every day 3x as likely to report having an excellent quality of life Leaders Whether you're a leader or aspire to be one, your strengths are the best strengths for you to lead with. Discover your unique strengths and use them to become a better leader. Managers Your top strengths -- the things you naturally do best -- can help you manage better, meet your goals and improve your team's success. Students Discovering what you do best can help you succeed in the classroom and beyond. Teams Teams that use their strengths perform better than teams that don't. Introduce strengths to have stronger team dynamics and better collaboration. See what these individuals had to say after discovering their strengths for the first time. "Personally, it's given me permission to live into who I am in a stronger way. It gives you self-awareness and the lenses through which you see yourself to be able to become more of who you are." -- Lisa Cummings "It's changed my life for the better. It's given me confirmation and affirmation to what has intuitively lived in me for many years. It's changed my life." -- Helen Holton "Strengths have changed my life in a very profound way. I always knew that I was high energy and had a passion for people. When I read about my Woo, I thought about my role as a faculty member and how I make a commitment to get to know all my students by name. All my strengths play into my role as an educator." -- Mike Finnegan Buy Now CliftonStrengths 34 report Embrace greater confidence, empowerment and success by learning your rank order of the 34 themes. _CliftonStrengths assessment If you haven't already completed the assessment, you will be given the opportunity to do so after purchasing this report. _Custom strengths insights _Action items _Your areas of excellence _Navigating blind spots _Managing your lesser strengths _Unique domain distribution View Sample Report of CliftonStrengths 34 report Skip to content