

Management Concepts

Assignment 1: Personal Assessment of Strengths

Due Week 3 and worth 200 points

To prepare for this assignment, make sure to complete the StrengthsFinder quiz located in the back of your book. This will take approximately 30 to 45 minutes. Click [here](#) for a video tutorial on how to complete the quiz and view your results. Then, view information about your top five strengths at "Start Here - An Overview of the StrengthsFinder Movement," found at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=50J8DY07r44&list=PLhYBLDN6sURWX7h8IdebX2CYyR9QwqoDX>. Then view information about your top five strengths at "Strategic - Learn more about your innate talents from Gallup's Clifton StrengthsFinder!" found at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7sWM36m3d48&list=PLxDaK7wIyw9609RQulcVwcCtJ6j17hmO4&index=1>.

Write a one to three (1-3) page paper in which you: *→ base on the strengthsfinders test I have attached*

1. Describe your initial reaction to finding out your top five strengths.
2. Explain how your top five strengths relate to your leadership style. Determine how they relate to the key functions you would need to perform as a manager.
3. Determine what traits you need to work on the most to become a good leader. Then, explain whether these traits differ from the strengths you need to be a good manager.
4. Indicate which of your strengths you anticipate you will use the most in college or a future career.
5. Format your assignment according to the following formatting requirements:
 - a. Typed, double spaced, using Times New Roman font (size 12), with one-inch margins on all sides.
 - b. Include a cover page containing the title of the assignment, your name, your professor's name, the course title, and the date. The cover page is not included in the required page length.

The specific course learning outcomes associated with this assignment are:

- Describe the primary functions of management (planning, organizing, leading, controlling) and the associated skills, tools, and theoretical approaches that can be used to accomplish these functions.
- Use technology and information resources to research issues in management concepts.
- Write clearly and concisely about management concepts using proper writing mechanics.

Click [here](#) to view the grading rubric for this assignment.

Grading for this assignment will be based on answer quality, logic / organization of the paper, and language and writing skills, using the following rubric.

Points: 200		Assignment 1: Personal Assessment of Strengths			
Criteria	Unacceptable Below 60% F	Meets Minimum Expectations 60-69% D	Fair 70-79% C	Proficient 80-89% B	Exemplary 90-100% A
1. Describe your initial reaction to finding out your top five strengths. Weight: 20%	Did not submit or incompletely described your initial reaction to finding out your top five strengths.	Insufficiently described your initial reaction to finding out your top five strengths.	Partially described your initial reaction to finding out your top five strengths.	Satisfactorily described your initial reaction to finding out your top five strengths.	Thoroughly described your initial reaction to finding out your top five strengths.
2. Explain how your top five strengths relate to your leadership style. Determine how they relate to the key functions you would need to perform as a manager. Weight: 25%	Did not submit or incompletely explained how your top five strengths relate to your leadership style. Did not or incompletely determined how they relate to the key functions you would need to perform as a manager.	Insufficiently explained how your top five strengths relate to your leadership style. Insufficiently determined how they relate to the key functions you would need to perform as a manager.	Partially explained how your top five strengths relate to your leadership style. Partially determined how they relate to the key functions you would need to perform as a manager.	Satisfactorily explained how your top five strengths relate to your leadership style. Satisfactorily determined how they relate to the key functions you would need to perform as a manager.	Thoroughly explained how your top five strengths relate to your leadership style. Thoroughly determined how they relate to the key functions you would need to perform as a manager.
3. Determine what traits you need to work on the most to become a good leader. Then, explain whether these traits differ from the strengths you need to be a good manager. Weight: 25%	Did not submit or incompletely determined what traits you need to work on the most to become a good leader. Did not or incompletely explained whether these traits differ from the strengths you need to be a good manager.	Insufficiently determined what traits you need to work on the most to become a good leader. Insufficiently explained whether these traits differ from the strengths you need to be a good manager.	Partially determined what traits you need to work on the most to become a good leader. Partially explained whether these traits differ from the strengths you need to be a good manager.	Satisfactorily determined what traits you need to work on the most to become a good leader. Satisfactorily explained whether these traits differ from the strengths you need to be a good manager.	Thoroughly determined what traits you need to work on the most to become a good leader. Thoroughly explained whether these traits differ from the strengths you need to be a good manager.
4. Indicate which of your strengths you anticipate you will use the most in college or a future career. Weight: 20%	Did not submit or incompletely indicated which of your strengths you anticipate you will use the most in college or a future career.	Insufficiently indicated which of your strengths you anticipate you will use the most in college or a future career.	Partially indicated which of your strengths you anticipate you will use the most in college or a future career.	Satisfactorily indicated which of your strengths you anticipate you will use the most in college or a future career.	Thoroughly indicated which of your strengths you anticipate you will use the most in college or a future career.
5. Clarity, writing mechanics, and formatting requirements Weight: 10%	More than 8 errors present	7-8 errors present	5-6 errors present	3-4 errors present	0-2 errors present

Erica Smith

Strengths Insight and Action-Planning Guide

SURVEY COMPLETION DATE: 10-26-2016



DON CLIFTON

**Father of Strengths Psychology and
Inventor of CliftonStrengths**

Erica Smith

SURVEY COMPLETION DATE 10-26-2016

YOUR TOP 5 THEMES

- 1 Positivity
- 2 Relator
- 3 Learner
- 4 Input
- 5 Intellection

What's in This Guide?

SECTION I: AWARENESS

A brief Shared Theme Description for each of your top five themes

Your Personalized Strengths Insights, which describe what makes you stand out from others with the same theme in their top five

Questions for you to answer to increase your awareness of your talents

SECTION II: APPLICATION

10 Ideas for Action for each of your top five themes

Questions for you to answer to help you apply your talents

SECTION III: ACHIEVEMENT

Examples of what each of your top five themes "sounds like" -- real quotes from people who also have the theme in their top five

Steps for you to take to help you leverage your talents for achievement

Section I: Awareness

Positivity

SHARED THEME DESCRIPTION

People who are especially talented in the Positivity theme have an enthusiasm that is contagious. They are upbeat and can get others excited about what they are going to do.

YOUR PERSONALIZED STRENGTHS INSIGHTS

What makes you stand out?

It's very likely that you probably have a reputation for making individuals as well as entire groups smile and laugh. When difficulties arise, you often tell comical stories and light-hearted jokes. To cheer people up, you can reenact amusing situations or make funny faces. Because of your strengths, you normally tackle projects with gusto. New assignments or challenges energize your life. Facing mundane, tedious, or routine chores day after day eventually undermines your upbeat attitude. Instinctively, you naturally feel upbeat about life when you realize you can read several hundred pages of written material in a single sitting. Chances are good that you naturally inspire people to follow you. Many of them respond favorably to your cheerful disposition and upbeat outlook on life. By nature, you can help others easily fit into groups. You quickly establish good relationships with just about everyone you encounter. How? You spontaneously notice people's good qualities. When others hear your favorable comments about an individual, they are much more likely to make the person feel welcome.

QUESTIONS

1. As you read your personalized strengths insights, what words, phrases, or lines stand out to you?
2. Out of all the talents in this insight, what would you like for others to see most in you?

Relator

SHARED THEME DESCRIPTION

People who are especially talented in the Relator theme enjoy close relationships with others. They find deep satisfaction in working hard with friends to achieve a goal.

YOUR PERSONALIZED STRENGTHS INSIGHTS

What makes you stand out?

Chances are good that you enjoy being busy, especially when you can assist someone in need. You are likely to be a good partner at home, in the workplace, at school, or in the community. You tend to do more than is expected of you. Why? You probably worry about wasting time. This explains your habits of volunteering for projects and asking for extra duties. By nature, you realize life is good after you have shared your knowledge and skills with novice players, students, teammates, or associates. You probably are most gratified by individuals who want to improve personally or professionally. Driven by your talents, you bond with and work well with people who tell you what they want to accomplish in life. Instinctively, you are determined to share your knowledge and skills with people you coach, mentor, or train. It's very likely that you fill your mind with new ideas by asking questions, reading, studying, observing, or listening. Normally, you accumulate facts, data, stories, examples, or background information from the people you meet. Determining what they want to accomplish in the coming weeks, months, or years generally satisfies your curiosity. These insights also allow you to understand why individuals behave the way they do in different situations.

QUESTIONS

- 1 As you read your personalized strengths insights, what words, phrases, or lines stand out to you?
- 2 Out of all the talents in this insight, what would you like for others to see most in you?

Learner

SHARED THEME DESCRIPTION

People who are especially talented in the Learner theme have a great desire to learn and want to continuously improve. In particular, the process of learning, rather than the outcome, excites them.

YOUR PERSONALIZED STRENGTHS INSIGHTS

What makes you stand out?

Because of your strengths, you might spend considerable time examining the details underpinning an idea. Rather than rush through your research, perhaps you stick with it until you are convinced everything makes sense. It's very likely that you usually equate education — formal and informal — with understanding more about something today than you understood about it yesterday. Instinctively, you probably started asking people questions as a child and continue to do so today. Others quickly notice you are genuinely interested in what they say. Your inquiries turn tense frowns into relaxed smiles. The warmth of your presence can transform a timid person into a talkative one. You intentionally offer compliments. Few things delight you as much as hearing a stranger say, "I really like you — and I've just met you!" Driven by your talents, you are intrigued by newcomers and outsiders. Unusual individuals capture your attention because they are different. Immediately, your curiosity impels you to ask lots of questions and attentively listen to their responses. You appear to study human beings the way others study for final tests. Your approach is direct. Your gaze is intense. Your interest is sincere. You probably are determined to introduce these people to your acquaintances, family, or friends. By nature, you prefer having quiet time to mull over ideas as well as read and examine interesting topics. Periods of uninterrupted thinking give you great pleasure. You probably excuse yourself from noisy, active, or distracting situations to thoroughly process your ideas.

QUESTIONS

- 1 As you read your personalized strengths insights, what words, phrases, or lines stand out to you?
- 2 Out of all the talents in this insight, what would you like for others to see most in you?

Input

UNPAID THEME DESCRIPTION

People who are especially talented in the Input theme have a craving to know more. Often they like to collect and archive all kinds of information.

YOUR PERSONALIZED STRENGTHS INSIGHTS

What makes you stand out?

By nature, you revel in having time alone to read. You probably search through books, publications, documents, or the Internet to find information you can use to organize things for people. The facts and insights you gain frequently enable you to coordinate activities such as trips, special events, or work-related projects. Chances are good that you characteristically read books, periodicals, documents, correspondence, or Internet sites. You are willing to be mentally stimulated by thought-provoking ideas, information, data, predictions, insights, characters, or plots. It's very likely that you are by nature someone who soothes people when they become upset, overwhelmed, angry, or fearful about life's uncertainties. Because you read so much, typically you can expand their view of a situation by sharing a fact, a thought, a quotation, or a story you have discovered. Because of your strengths, you are an avid reader. Collecting information, insights, and facts is your forte — that is, your strong point. You are quick to tell people about ideas or theories that strike you as correct. Driven by your talents, you hunger for new information to expand your knowledge base. You accumulate many insights from books, publications, or Internet sites. Reading is one of the ways you position yourself for professional or academic advancement.

QUESTIONS

- 1 As you read your personalized strengths insights, what words, phrases, or lines stand out to you?
- 2 Out of all the talents in this insight, what would you like for others to see most in you?

Intellection

SHARED THEME DESCRIPTION

People who are especially talented in the Intellection theme are characterized by their intellectual activity. They are introspective and appreciate intellectual discussions.

YOUR PERSONALIZED STRENGTHS INSIGHTS

What makes you stand out?

Driven by your talents, you read for relaxation and pleasure. Your carefree, cheerful, and easygoing approach to life is apt to be reflected in the types of books or publications you regularly peruse — that is, examine studiously. Whenever you can pull together lots of information, ideas, or facts for later use, you feel quite content. It's very likely that you sometimes enjoy instructing others. Because you like to read, you probably have more information to share with your students than some educators do. The individuals you tutor benefit from the facts or insights you gather from the printed page or the computer screen. Instinctively, you enjoy reading. It allows you to gather information to expand your storehouse of knowledge. When surrounded by individuals who cannot sit still, giving your full attention to the printed word is apt to be difficult, if not impossible. You have a habit of avoiding the company of restless people when you want to give your undivided attention to a book, magazine article, newspaper account, personal correspondence, or official document. By nature, you are the team member who usually acquires lots of information by perusing all kinds of written material. These materials can include newspapers, books, memos, and electronic documents. Because of your strengths, you delve into intriguing subject matter. You read, write, listen to lectures, experiment, and research topics to broaden your understanding of them. Often you think of questions no one else has ever asked. Just as often, you find your own answers.

QUESTIONS

- 1 As you read your personalized strengths insights, what words, phrases, or lines stand out to you?
- 2 Out of all the talents in this insight, what would you like for others to see most in you?

Questions

- 1 How does this information help you better understand your unique talents?
- 2 How can you use this understanding to add value to your role?
- 3 How can you apply this knowledge to add value to your team, workgroup, department, or division?
- 4 How will this understanding help you add value to your organization?
- 5 What will you do differently tomorrow as a result of this report?

Section II: Application

Positivity

IDEAS FOR ACTION

You probably 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 make the most of 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."

Plan highlight activities for your friends and colleagues. For example, find ways to turn small achievements into events, plan regular celebrations that others can look forward to, or capitalize on the year's holidays and festivals.

Explain that your enthusiasm is not simple naivety. You know that bad things can happen; you simply prefer to focus on the good things.

You may get your greatest joy by encouraging people. Freely show your appreciation of others, and make sure that the praise is not vague. Consistently seek to translate your feelings into specific, tangible, and personal expressions of gratitude and recognition.

As you share your Positivity talents, be sure to protect and nurture them. As necessary, insulate yourself from chronic whiners and complainers, and intentionally spend time in highly positive environments that will invigorate and feed your optimism.

Don't pretend that difficulties don't concern you. Other people need to know that while you find the good in virtually every situation, you are not naïve. Recognize challenges, and communicate the reasons for your optimism. Your positive approach will be most powerful when others realize it is grounded in reality.

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.

Avoid negative people. They will bring you down. Instead, seek people who find the same kind of drama and humor in the world that you do. You will energize each other.

Deliberately help others see the things that are going well for them. You can keep their eyes on the positive.

QUESTIONS

1. Which of these action items speak to you? Highlight the actions that you are most likely to take.
2. How will you commit to taking action? Write your own personalized action item that you will take in the next 30 days.

Relator

IDEAS FOR ACTION

Find a workplace in which friendships are encouraged. You will not do well in an overly formal organization. In job interviews, ask about work styles and company culture.

Deliberately learn as much as you can about the people you meet. You like knowing about people, and other people like being known. By doing this, you will act as a catalyst for trusting relationships.

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 greatest talents and can serve as a model for others.

Let your caring show. For example, find people in your company to mentor, help your colleagues get 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. Giving honest feedback or encouraging your friend to move out of a role in which he or she is struggling is a compassionate act.

You probably prefer to be seen as a person, an equal, or a friend, rather than as a function, a superior, or a title. Let people know that they can address you by your first name, rather than formally.

You might tend to withhold the most engaging aspects of your personality until you have sensed openness from another person. Remember, building relationships is not a one-way street. Proactively “put yourself out there.” Others will quickly see you for the genuine individual you are, and you will create many more opportunities to cultivate strong, long-lasting connections.

Make time for family and close friends. You need to spend quality moments with those you love in order to “feed” your Relator talents. Schedule activities that allow you to get even closer to the people who keep you grounded and happy.

Make an effort to socialize with your colleagues and team members outside of work. It can be as simple as lunch or coffee together. This will help you forge more connected relationships at work, which in turn can facilitate more effective teamwork and cooperation.

QUESTIONS

1. Which of these action items speak to you? Highlight the actions that you are most likely to take.
2. How will you commit to taking action? Write your own personalized action item that you will take in the next 30 days.

Learner

IDEAS FOR ACTION:

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, find this quiet time.

Develop ways to track the progress of your learning. If there are distinct levels or stages of learning within a 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).

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 action. Take this responsibility seriously.

Seek roles that require some form of technical competence. You will enjoy the process of acquiring and maintaining this expertise.

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 quickly.

Research supports the link between learning and performance. When people have the opportunity to learn and grow, they are more productive and loyal. Look for ways to measure the degree to which you and others feel that your learning needs are being met, to create individualized learning milestones, and to reward achievements in learning.

At work, take advantage of programs that subsidize your learning. Your organization may be willing to pay for part or all of your instructional coursework or for certifications. Ask your manager for information about scholarships and other educational opportunities.

Honor your desire to learn. Take advantage of adult educational opportunities in your community.

Discipline yourself to sign up for at least one new academic or adult learning course each year.

Time disappears and your attention intensifies when you are immersed in studying or learning. Allow yourself to "follow the trail" by scheduling learning sessions during periods of time that will not be interrupted by pressing engagements.

QUESTIONS

- 1 Which of these action items speak to you? Highlight the actions that you are most likely to take.
- 2 How will you commit to taking action? Write your own personalized action item that you will take in the next 30 days.

Input

IDEAS FOR ACTION

Look for jobs in which you are charged with acquiring new information each day, such as teaching, research, or journalism.

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.

Partner with someone with dominant Focus or Discipline talents. This person will help you stay on track when your inquisitiveness leads you down intriguing but distracting avenues.

Your mind is open and absorbent. You naturally soak up information in the same way that a sponge soaks up water. But just as the primary purpose of the sponge is not to permanently contain what it absorbs, neither should your mind simply store information. Input without output can lead to stagnation. As you gather and absorb information, be aware of the individuals and groups that can most benefit from your knowledge, and be intentional about sharing with them.

You might naturally be an exceptional repository of facts, data, and ideas. If that's the case, don't be afraid to position yourself as an expert. By simply following your Input talents, you could become known as the authority in your field.

Remember that you must be more than just a collector of information. At some point, you'll need to leverage this knowledge and turn it into action. Make a point of identifying the facts and data that would be most valuable to others, and use this information to their advantage.

Identify your areas of specialization, and actively seek more information about them.

Schedule time to read books and articles that stimulate you.

Deliberately increase your vocabulary. Collect new words, and learn the meaning of each of them.

Identify situations in which you can share the information you have collected with other people. Also make sure to let your friends and colleagues know that you enjoy answering their questions.

QUESTIONS

- 1 Which of these action items speak to you? Highlight the actions that you are most likely to take.
- 2 How will you commit to taking action? Write your own personalized action item that you will take in the next 30 days.

Intellection

CONSIDER ACTION:

Consider beginning or continuing your studies in philosophy, literature, or psychology. You will always enjoy subjects that stimulate your thinking.

List your ideas in a log or diary. These ideas will serve as grist for your mental mill, and they might yield valuable insights.

Deliberately build relationships with people you consider to be "big thinkers." Their example will inspire you to focus your own thinking.

People may think you are aloof or disengaged when you close your door or spend time alone. Help them understand that this is simply a reflection of your thinking style, and that it results not from a disregard for relationships, but from a desire to bring the most you can to those relationships.

You are at your best when you have the time to follow an intellectual trail and see where it leads. Get involved on the front end of projects and initiatives, rather than jumping in at the execution stage. If you join in the latter stages, you may derail what has already been decided, and your insights may come too late.

Engaging people in intellectual and philosophical debate is one way that you make sense of things. This is not the case for everyone. Be sure to channel your provocative questions to those who similarly enjoy the give and take of debate.

Schedule time for thinking; it can be energizing for you. Use these occasions to muse and reflect.

Take time to write. Writing might be the best way for you to crystallize and integrate your thoughts.

Find people who like to talk about the same issues you do. Organize a discussion group that addresses your subjects of interest.

Encourage people around you to use their full intellectual capital by reframing questions for them and by engaging them in dialogue. At the same time, realize that there will be some who find this intimidating and who need time to reflect before being put on the spot.

YOUR ACTIONS

1. Which of these action items speak to you? Highlight the actions that you are most likely to take.
2. How will you commit to taking action? Write your own personalized action item that you will take in the next 30 days.

Section III: Achievement

Look for signs of achievement as you read these real quotes from people who share your top five themes.

POSITIVITY SOUNDS LIKE THIS:

Gerry L., flight attendant: "There are so many people on an airplane that I have made it a point over the years to single out one or two on a flight and make it something special for them. Certainly, I will be courteous to everybody and extend to them the kind of professionalism that I would like given to me, but over and above that, I try to make one person or family or small group of people feel particularly special, with jokes and conversation and little games that I play."

Andy B., Internet marketing executive: "I am one of those people who loves creating buzz. I read magazines all the time, and if I find something fun — some new store, new lip gloss, whatever — I will charge around telling everyone about it. 'Oh, you just have to try this store. It is so-o-o cool. Look at these pictures. Check them out.' I am so passionate when I talk about something that people just have to do what I say. It's not that I am a great salesperson. I'm not. In fact, I hate asking for the close. I hate bothering people. It's just that my passion about what I say makes people think, 'Gosh, it must be true.'"

Sunny G., communications manager: "I think the world is plagued with enough negative people. We need more positive people — people who like to zero in on what is right with the world. Negative people just make me feel heavy. In my last job, there was a guy who came into my office every morning just to unload on me. I would purposely dodge him. I'd see him coming, and I'd run to the bathroom or go some other place. He made me feel as if the world was a miserable place, and I hated that."

RELATIONSHIP SOUNDS LIKE THIS:

Gavin T., flight attendant: "I have many wonderful acquaintances, but as for true friends that I hold dear, not very many. And I'm real okay with that. My best times are spent with the people I'm tightest with, like my family. We are a very tight-knit Irish Catholic family, and we get together every chance we can. It's a large family — I have five brothers and sisters and ten nieces and nephews — but we all get together about once a month and yuk it up. I'm the catalyst. When I'm back in Chicago, even if there is no birthday or anniversary or whatever, I become the excuse for getting together and hanging out for three or four days. We really enjoy one another's company."

Tony D., pilot: "I used to fly in the Marines, and, boy, you had better be comfortable with the word 'friend' in the Marines. You had better feel good about trusting someone else. I can't tell you how

many times I put my life in someone else's hands. I was flying off my friend's wing, and I'd be dead if he couldn't get me back safely."

Jamie T., entrepreneur: "I'm definitely selective about my relationships. When I first meet people, I don't want to give them very much of my time. I don't know them; they don't know me — so let's just be pleasant and leave it at that. But if circumstances make it so that we get to know each other better, it seems like a threshold is reached where I suddenly start wanting to invest more. I'll share more of myself, put myself out for them, do things for them that will bring us a little closer, and show that I care. It's funny because I am not looking for any more friends in my life. I have enough. And yet with each new person I meet, as soon as that threshold is reached, I feel compelled to go deeper and deeper. Now I have ten people working for me, and I would call each of them my very good friend."

LEARNING SOUNDS LIKE THIS

Annie M., managing editor: "I get antsy when I am not learning something. Last year, although I was enjoying my work, I didn't feel as though I was learning enough. So I took up tap dancing. It sounds strange, doesn't it? I know I am never going to perform or anything, but I enjoy focusing on the technical skill of tapping, getting a little better each week, and moving up from the beginners' class to the intermediate class. That was a kick."

Miles A., operations manager: "When I was seven years old, my teachers would tell my parents, 'Miles isn't the most intelligent boy in the school, but he's a sponge for learning, and he'll probably go really far because he will push himself and continually be grasping new things.' Right now, I am just starting a course in business-travel Spanish. I know it is probably too ambitious to think I could learn conversational Spanish and become totally proficient in that language, but I at least want to be able to travel there and know the language."

Tim S., coach for executives: "One of my clients is so inquisitive that it drives him crazy because he can't do everything he wants to. I'm different. I am not curious in that broad sense. I prefer to go into greater depth with things so that I can become competent in them and then use them at work. For example, recently one of my clients wanted me to travel with him to Nice, France, for a business engagement. So I started reading up on the region, buying books, and checking the Internet. It was all interesting and I enjoyed the study, but I wouldn't have done any of it if I wasn't going to be traveling there for work."

KNOWLEDGE SOUNDS LIKE THIS

Ellen K., writer: "Even as a child, I found myself wanting to know everything. I would make a game of my questions. 'What is my question today?' I would think up these outrageous questions, and then I would go looking for the books that would answer them. I often got in way over my head, deep into books that I didn't have a clue about, but I read them because they had my answer someplace. My

questions became my tool for leading me from one piece of information to another.”

John F., human resources executive: “I’m one of those people who thinks that the Internet is the greatest thing since sliced bread. I used to feel so frustrated, but now if I want to know what the stock market is doing in a certain area or the rules of a certain game or what the GNP of Spain is or other different things, I just go to the computer, start looking, and eventually find it.”

Kevin F., salesperson: “I am amazed at some of the garbage that collects in my mind, and I love playing Jeopardy and Trivial Pursuit and anything like that. I don’t mind throwing things away as long as they’re material things, but I hate wasting knowledge or accumulated knowledge or not being able to read something fully if I enjoy it.”

INTELLECTION SOUNDS LIKE THIS:

Lauren H., project manager: “I suppose that most people who meet me in passing presume that I am a flaming extrovert. I do not deny the fact that I love people, but they would be amazed to know how much time alone, how much solitude, I need in order to function in public. I really love my own company. I love solitude because it gives me a chance to allow my diffused focus to simmer with something else. That’s where my best ideas come from. My ideas need to simmer and ‘perk.’ I used this phrase even when I was younger: ‘I have put my ideas in, and now I have to wait for them to perk.’”

Michael P., marketing executive: “It’s strange, but I find that I need to have noise around me or I can’t concentrate. I need to have parts of my brain occupied; otherwise, it goes so fast in so many directions that I don’t get anything done. If I can occupy my brain with the TV or my kids running around, then I find I concentrate even better.”

Jorge H., factory manager and former political prisoner: “We used to get put into solitary confinement as a punishment, but I never hated it as much as the others did. You might think that you would get lonely, but I never did. I used the time to reflect on my life and sort out the kind of man I was and what was really important to me: my family, my values. In a weird way, solitary actually calmed me down and made me stronger.”

QUESTIONS

1. Talk to friends or coworkers to hear how they have used their talents to achieve.
2. How will you use your talents to achieve?