



Human Resources

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO  
DENVER | ANSCHUTZ MEDICAL CAMPUS

# Learning and Development

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Participant Guide

## Lead With Your Strengths

# Lead With Your Strengths

## Course Objectives

By the end of today's session, participants will be able to:

- Describe the Strengths-Based Theory Concept
- Understand Your Strengths as a Leader
- Understand the Four Domains of Team Strengths
- Describe the Trust-Based Leadership Concept
- Understand How To Apply Your Themes in a Leadership Role to Achieve Team Success

## Course Etiquette

- Be present: minimal work distractions
- Listen actively and attentively (avoid multitasking)
- Ask for clarification if you are confused
- Challenge one another but do so respectfully
- Build on one another's comments; work toward shared understanding
- One person speaks at a time
- Speak from your own experience, without generalizing
- Consider personal stories that are shared in class to be strictly confidential

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## Group / Chat Exercise

Consider the **best leader** you have experienced.

- What made them **exceptional**?

## What is Strengths-Based Leadership

The central premise of strengths-based leadership is that leveraging a company's assets and human strengths will optimize performance. Strengths-based leadership shifts leaders' focus from obstacles to possibilities, so that instead of trying to improve deficits, they try to capitalize on available resources, such as people, systems, and tools, to maximize organizational productivity. Three essential principals to this theory:

- Successful leaders invest in their employees' strengths
- Successful leaders gather the right people to form teams that consist of people that complement each other
- Successful leaders work to understand and respond to their employees' needs

## The “Well-Rounded” Myth



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## Your Leadership Strengths

Goal of this report:

- Learn about your most powerful strengths
- Discover practical ways to apply them
- Use them to become a better leader

## CliftonStrengths® for Leaders

Welcome to CliftonStrengths for Leaders, the report that guides you through your unique talents and how you can use those talents to succeed in your role.

We designed this report to make your days easier, bring clarity to your role and strengthen your leadership effectiveness.

Use this report to learn about your results and better understand what you naturally do best as a leader. Then, go implement the action items into your role responsibilities — starting today.

### YOUR TOP 10 THEMES

#### 1. Achiever

Bring intensity and effort to the most important areas of your life.

#### 2. Learner

Use your passion for learning to add value to your own and others' lives.

#### 3. Analytical

Use your logical, objective approach to make important decisions.

#### 4. Relator

Connect deeply with the right people to gain friends for life.

#### 5. Responsibility

Take ownership for the things that matter most to you.

#### 6. Intellection

Think deeply. Think often.

#### 7. Strategic

Always have at least three options in mind so you can adapt if circumstances change.

#### 8. Input

Keep exploring; always be curious.

#### 9. Individualization

Appreciate the uniqueness in each person you meet.

#### 10. Maximizer

Strive for excellence, and encourage others to do the same.

### Each Theme Fits Into a Leadership Domain

**EXECUTING** themes help you make things happen.

**RELATIONSHIP BUILDING** themes help you build strong relationships that hold a team together.

**INFLUENCING** themes help you take charge, speak up and make sure others are heard.

**STRATEGIC THINKING** themes help you absorb and analyze information that informs better decisions.



## Applying a Strength as a Leader

### ACTION ITEMS

### How to Apply Achiever as a Leader

*This theme gives you an edge — here's how you can use it.*

- ☐ **Communicate what is important with your teams frequently.** You thrive when there is a lot to accomplish and can give others the clarity they need to start working. Your goals for the organization are considerable, so you'll need to communicate simple, clear expectations for those involved in achieving those goals. Clarity will inspire confidence in what others must do.
- ☐ **Set aside time to think.** Scheduling time on your calendar to just think — even if it's short — can help you feel more prepared to meet all your goals and adjust strategies if necessary. As you recruit teams and other leaders to help with these tasks, this thinking time will help you communicate the reasons behind your decisions better.
- ☐ **Invite others into conversations that involve meeting organizational needs.** Including other decision-makers or colleagues whom you trust in these types of conversations allows them to ask questions, brainstorm and make your visions more attainable. This helps you build momentum to achieve goals faster through collaboration. When others have a say in goals you set, they may feel more inclined to help them succeed.
- ☐ **Ask other leaders and managers how their teams are doing.** Because your focus on performance can create more work for others, you'll need to stay in touch with the people managers in your organization. Consider how much you have asked of the individuals around you, and be prepared to rethink your goals and prioritize tasks when others begin to feel overwhelmed.

Reflect to Plan for Action

What signs do you look for to know when your teams need bigger goals?

How much can your team realistically accomplish at once without needing a break?

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## Aiming Leadership Strengths at Goal Engagement

Consider how your leadership influences engagement of the team in order to reach goals. Use the below as a personal framework:

### Well

When am I at my best as a people leader?

What Strengths would my team say have a positive impact on their engagement?

### Better

What blind spots get in the way of me being effective leading people or creating psychological safety?



What would my team say they wish was stronger in my leadership?

**Next**

What shifts can I make to positively impact engagement?

What strengths strategies will help?



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## Group / Breakout Room Activity – How To Apply As A Leader

### Part 1: Top 10 Strength (10 Minutes):

- Select a note taker and spokesperson for your group.
- In round robin fashion, each person discuss the Strength they selected from their top 10 pre-work assignment and how they could apply it.

### Part 2: Aiming Your Strengths (10 Minutes)

- In your group:
- Using the information from each person's strength discussed in part one, discuss the questions from the previous section on Aiming Your Leadership Strengths at Goal Engagement.





- How can your collective team strengths be used to influence goals and engagement?
- Pick a spokesperson for the group to discuss what you learned about your team members' action plans.

**Zoom Breakout Room Instructions:**

Use Padlet to record your answers.

**Table Group Instructions for In-Person Session:**

Select a note taker and a spokesperson.

Each table's spokesperson will be asked to give a debrief to the rest of the group.

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## Four Domains of Team Strengths

EXECUTING	INFLUENCING	RELATIONSHIP BUILDING	STRATEGIC THINKING
Those with dominant themes in the Executing domain know how to make things happen. When the team needs someone to implement a solution, these are the people who will work tirelessly to get it done. Those with a strength to execute have the ability to “catch” an idea and make it a reality.	Those with dominant themes in the Influencing domain help their team reach a much broader audience. These individuals can sell the team’s ideas inside and outside the organization. When the team needs someone to take charge, speak up, and make sure the group is heard, look to someone with the strength to influence.	Those with dominant themes in the Relationship Building domain can provide the essential glue to hold a team together. Without these strengths on a team, in many cases, the group is simply a composite of individuals. In contrast, team members with exceptional Relationship Building strength have the unique ability to help the group become much greater than the sum of its parts.	Those with dominant Strategic Thinking themes are the ones who keep the team focused on what could be. They are constantly absorbing and analyzing information and helping the team make better decisions. People with strength in this domain continually stretch the team’s thinking for the future.
Achiever Arranger Belief Consistency Deliberative Discipline Focus Responsibility Restorative	Activator Command Communication Competition Maximizer Self-Assurance Significance Woo	Adaptability Connectedness Developer Empathy Harmony Includer Individualization Positivity Relator	Analytical Context Futuristic Ideation Input Intellection Learner Strategic

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## Fostering a Culture of Trust

Leadership	Authenticity	Transparency	Culture
The ability to be trustworthy as leaders can be learned	To foster trust, be more of who you already are	Open information flow and objective decision-making	Trust-based cultures are based on values, transparency and openness

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As a leader, when you *choose to trust*, you open things up *for you to be trusted*.

## Establishing Trust – A Simple Formula

TRUST = CREDIBLE + RELIABLE + INTIMACY

valid, trustworthy information      clear, transparent, dependable information      emotionally engaging

### SELF ORIENTATION

One-way dialogue, vested interest, self-serving objectives

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## A Strengths Lens on Becoming a Trust Advisor

Your Strengths	Credibility	Reliability	Intimacy	Self Orientation
Ideation	I demonstrate how new ways of thinking and working can improve us as a team and make work easier.	I show how my ideas can improve our performance reliably.	I help personalize my ideas by first understanding what ideas others have.	I am fully focused on my ideas and blind to what others might think about my ideas
Maximizer	Others can trust me because I am always striving for excellence—no shortcuts or half measures!	I always find ways of measuring my performance of my team and staying accountable to high standards.	I study what makes others successful by getting to know them and replicating their strategies and approaches to my work.	No solution is ever “good enough” for me, so I keep cycling through options and never really settle on one.

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## Group / Breakout Room Activity – How To Use Strengths to Become a Trust Advisor

In your groups/breakout rooms discuss the following:

How can knowing your strengths help you develop trust?

Using your top 10 strengths, discuss the following questions in your groups:

- Which strength can help you build credibility with others?
- Which strength can ensure others see you as reliable?
- Which strength can you use to develop greater intimacy?

### Zoom Session Instructions:

Use the Padlet feature to record your answers.

Pick a spokesperson to share highlights of your team discussion with the group

### Table Group Instructions for In-Person Session:

Pick a note taker.

Pick a spokesperson to share highlights of your team discussion with the group.

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## Developing Trust-Based Leadership Skills

- Trustworthy leaders focus on how their strengths can **help them trust others and be trusted.**
- Trust-based leaders **regularly examine their own biases** and intentionally adapt to what followers need in different situations.
- Trust-based leaders **constantly hone their skills and competencies** to become more trustworthy.
- Leaders build trust **mostly through their actions** and through an orientation toward doing what is right while doing so with heart.
- Leaders can also build trust through their willingness **to be candid about difficult news or even about their own flaws.**

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## Ask Questions That Build a Trusting Relationship

Questions for your team:

- When you feel **most trusted**, what is happening to make you feel that way?
- What do I **currently do** as a leader that I should have you take more responsibility for, or completely own?
- When you **feel a lack of trust**, what do you feel is missing?
- How **often** should we meet to have conversations about what you are working on, and how can I **support** you?
- When faced with a complex problem, what is the **best way** for me to **offer support** that helps us build trust with one another?

## Self-Reflection Exercises

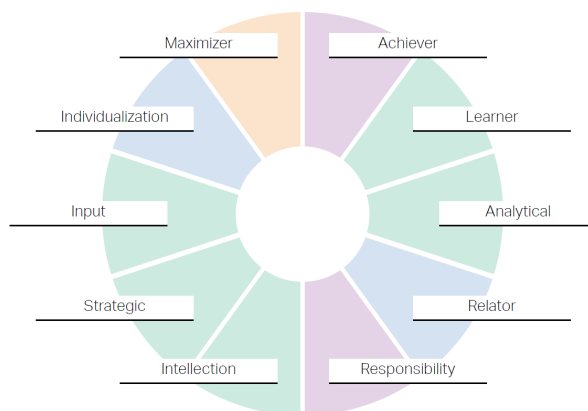
### Part 1: A Strengths Lens on Becoming a Trust Advisor

Pick two of your top 5 strengths and complete the chart. Use this as a way to reflect on how you are becoming a “trust advisor” for your team.

Your Strengths	Credibility	Reliability	Intimacy	Self-Orientation

### Part 2: Accomplish Your Challenge

- Write your most Leadership Challenge in the center
- Identify what themes you can use to achieve this leadership challenge
- Answer the following questions:
  - How will you use your strengths to reach this goal?
  - How will you know you have been successful?



*Note: See page 22 of your report for your grid*



## Post-Work – 7 Expectations for Leaders

### 7 Expectations for Leaders: Reflect and Act

*Read each of the leader expectations and related reflection questions to help you think about how you do each of these things. Record your thoughts in the spaces provided. You will find that you naturally do some of these things very well, while others might not come as easily. After reflecting, consider a partner you have who could help you grow in the areas where you aren't as strong.*

#### **Build Relationships**

Establish connections with others to build trust, share ideas and accomplish work.

How do you form strong connections with others? What patterns do you notice in your relationships?

#### **Develop People**

Help others become more effective by developing their strengths, providing clear expectations and encouraging and coaching them.

What is your approach to development? How often do you recognize others' good work and strengths?

#### **Lead Change**

Recognize that change is essential, set goals for change and lead purposeful efforts to adapt work that aligns with the stated vision.

How do you decide when it's time for a change? How do you help others prepare for that change?

In preparation for September's session, use this form to complete:

- How can you connect your Strengths and your Leadership Challenge in each of these areas?
- As a Leader, how can you grow in these areas by focusing on your Strengths.
- How might your Strengths cross-over into another Leadership Domain?

Come prepared to discuss in small groups in September along with your Leadership Challenge.





## Closing Discussion – What questions do you have for me?

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## Summary

After today's session, you are encouraged to read back through your entire participant guide and the "Clifton Strengths for Leaders's Report". Be sure to also check out the additional resources section of the participant guide for further ways to enhance your learning. Continue to use this material as a tool for professional and personal growth.

Should you have questions, please contact your instructor or  
[hr.trainingregistration@cuanschutz.edu](mailto:hr.trainingregistration@cuanschutz.edu).

Check out our Learning and Development [website](#) for additional course offerings, online training resources, custom workshop opportunities, and so much more!

Thank you for attending today's session.



## Additional Resources

### Clifton Strengths Themes (34)

<b>Achiever*</b>	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.
<b>Activator*</b>	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.
<b>Adaptability*</b>	People exceptionally talented in the Adaptability theme prefer to go with the flow. They tend to be "now" people who take things as they come and discover the future one day at a time.
<b>Analytical*</b>	People exceptionally talented in the Analytical theme search for reasons and causes. They have the ability to think about all of the factors that might affect a situation.
<b>Arranger*</b>	People exceptionally talented in the Arranger theme can organize, but they also have a flexibility that complements this ability. They like to determine how all of the pieces and resources can be arranged for maximum productivity.
<b>Belief*</b>	People exceptionally talented in the Belief theme have certain core values that are unchanging. Out of these values emerges a defined purpose for their lives.
<b>Command*</b>	People exceptionally talented in the Command theme have presence. They can take control of a situation and make decisions.
<b>Communication*</b>	People exceptionally talented in the Communication theme generally find it easy to put their thoughts into words. They are good conversationalists and presenters.
<b>Competition*</b>	People exceptionally talented in the Competition theme measure their progress against the performance of others. They strive to win first place and revel in contests.
<b>Connectedness*</b>	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.
<b>Consistency*</b>	People exceptionally talented in the Consistency theme are keenly aware of the need to treat people the same. They try to treat everyone with equality by setting up clear rules and adhering to them.
<b>Context*</b>	People exceptionally talented in the Context theme enjoy thinking about the past. They understand the present by researching its history.



<b>Deliberative*</b>	People exceptionally talented in the Deliberative theme are best described by the serious care they take in making decisions or choices. They anticipate obstacles.
<b>Developer*</b>	People exceptionally talented in the Developer theme recognize and cultivate the potential in others. They spot the signs of each small improvement and derive satisfaction from evidence of progress.
<b>Discipline*</b>	People exceptionally talented in the Discipline theme enjoy routine and structure. Their world is best described by the order they create.
<b>Empathy*</b>	People exceptionally talented in the Empathy theme can sense other people's feelings by imagining themselves in others' lives or situations.
<b>Focus*</b>	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.
<b>Futuristic*</b>	People exceptionally talented in the Futuristic theme are inspired by the future and what could be. They energize others with their visions of the future.
<b>Harmony*</b>	People exceptionally talented in the Harmony theme look for consensus. They don't enjoy conflict; rather, they seek areas of agreement.
<b>Ideation*</b>	People exceptionally talented in the Ideation theme are fascinated by ideas. They are able to find connections between seemingly disparate phenomena.
<b>Includer*</b>	People exceptionally talented in the Includer theme accept others. They show awareness of those who feel left out and make an effort to include them.
<b>Individualization*</b>	People exceptionally talented in the Individualization theme are intrigued with the unique qualities of each person. They have a gift for figuring out how different people can work together productively.
<b>Input*</b>	People exceptionally talented in the Input theme have a craving to know more. Often they like to collect and archive all kinds of information.
<b>Intellection*</b>	People exceptionally talented in the Intellection theme are characterized by their intellectual activity. They are introspective and appreciate intellectual discussions.
<b>Learner*</b>	People exceptionally talented in the Learner theme have a great desire to learn and want to continuously improve. The process of learning, rather than the outcome, excites them.



<b>Maximizer*</b>	People exceptionally talented in the Maximizer theme focus on strengths as a way to stimulate personal and group excellence. They seek to transform something strong into something superb.
<b>Positivity*</b>	People exceptionally talented in the Positivity theme have contagious enthusiasm. They are upbeat and can get others excited about what they are going to do.
<b>Relator*</b>	People exceptionally talented in the Relator theme enjoy close relationships with others. They find deep satisfaction in working hard with friends to achieve a goal.
<b>Responsibility*</b>	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.
<b>Restorative™</b>	People exceptionally talented in the Restorative theme are adept at dealing with problems. They are good at figuring out what is wrong and resolving it.
<b>Self-Assurance*</b>	People exceptionally talented in the Self-Assurance theme feel confident in their ability to manage their own lives. They possess an inner compass that gives them confidence that their decisions are right.
<b>Significance*</b>	People exceptionally talented in the Significance theme want to be very important in others' eyes. They are independent and want to be recognized.
<b>Strategic*</b>	People exceptionally talented in the Strategic theme create alternative ways to proceed. Faced with any given scenario, they can quickly spot the relevant patterns and issues.
<b>Woo*</b>	People exceptionally talented in the Woo theme love the challenge of meeting new people and winning them over. They derive satisfaction from breaking the ice and making a connection with someone.

## Articles

- Does a Specific Career Best Match My Clifton Strengths Results? Click this [link](#) to navigate to the article.
- The Strengths of Leadership: You've already got what you need to lead -- but do you know what that is? Click this [link](#) to navigate to the article.
- Finding Your Leadership Strengths: Why effective leaders must possess a high level of self-awareness? Click this [link](#) to navigate to the article.

## YouTube Series

- Gallup Theme Thursday's – Season 1. Take a deeper dive into all 34 strengths. Click this [link](#) to navigate to the series.



## Resource Guide

- This is a fantastic resource that includes all 34 theme descriptors, action items for all themes, tips on how supervisors can best manage each theme, and sample conversations starters. Access the Resource Guide via this [link](#).