

one word can change your life

ELEVATE

**unlock
your
extraordinary
potential**

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Elevate Your Strengths

What separates high performance and success from one human to another is the remarkable ability to not only recognise their strengths, but also harness them effectively to deliver exceptional results that align with their aspirations and goals. It is the understanding that strengths are not simply innate talents, but valuable resources that, when utilised skilfully, have the power to elevate performance and create a significant impact. High performers recognise the unique combination of strengths they possess and actively leverage them to push beyond boundaries, overcome challenges and consistently deliver outstanding outcomes. They strive to cultivate a deep understanding of their strengths, continually refine and develop them, and intentionally apply them in pursuit of their highest aspirations. It is through this deliberate utilisation of strengths that they unlock their full potential and achieve extraordinary levels of success and fulfilment. And you, too, can do the same.

One action you can take is to seek opportunities that allow you to utilise and enhance your strengths. This might involve taking on new projects or responsibilities that align with your strengths, seeking mentorship or training in areas where your strengths can be applied or finding ways to integrate your strengths into your daily activities.

As you consciously develop your strengths, you will begin to experience positive outcomes. You will feel a sense of fulfilment and engagement as you leverage your strengths to overcome challenges and achieve meaningful goals. Your confidence and self-belief will grow as you witness the impact you can make by utilising your strengths. Additionally, developing your strengths can lead to increased productivity, effectiveness and success in various areas of your life, whether that's your career, relationships or personal growth.

By developing your strengths with conscious awareness, you are investing in your personal growth and maximising your potential.

You are shaping a life that is aligned with your innate talents and passions, allowing you to thrive and make a positive impact. So, embrace the journey of developing your strengths, and unlock the limitless possibilities it holds for your elevated life:

- **Focus on your top three strengths:** Identify and prioritise your key strengths, dedicating time and effort to harness and leverage them in your personal and professional life.
- **Develop new skills to elevate your strengths:** Continuously seek out opportunities for growth and learning, acquiring new skills that complement and enhance your existing strengths.
- **Maintain balance with your strengths:** While emphasising your strengths, remember to maintain a balanced approach by also addressing areas that require improvement or development.

- Utilise your strengths for high performance: Apply your strengths intentionally and strategically, maximising their potential to achieve exceptional performance and success in your endeavours.

High-performing individuals understand the power of acknowledging their strengths and making them a visible part of their daily life. To align with your strengths and live with purpose and intention, create a habit of writing them down and ensuring you look at them regularly. You can incorporate them into your daily routine by setting them as a screen saver, recording them in your journal or seeking out quotes that resonate with your strengths.

The benefits of professional strength work

In the world of high performance, leaders will combine strengths such as teamwork, humour, fairness and honesty to take teams to the height of their success. Everyone in the team will bring their own individual strengths to elevate the team to success.

For example, a leader with 'honesty' will value giving constructive feedback to the team but may need to temper this slightly to not be hurtful. A leader with 'teamwork' may embed rituals such as shaking hands, high-fiving or celebration moments to keep morale high in the team. A leader with 'selfregulation' may use this in role modelling self-control when faced with a host of seemly unfair events out of their control.

Character strengths such as hope, perseverance, bravery and zest are a few strengths that, when habituated in an elite athlete, provide the greatest opportunity to improve performance, enjoyment and deliver outstanding world-class results. An athlete who has developed these strengths can call on the foundation of well-formed habits to support them in aspiring to true self-mastery and excellence.

Be Aware of the Shadow Side

Be aware that your strengths have what researchers call a 'shadow side'. When we overuse, or overplay, a character strength, we tip the scales from this strength being beneficial and delivering high-performance results, to being harmful and self-sabotaging.

Like many things in life, when we take something to the extreme, it can go from being a positive to a negative. Aristotle's work on virtues defines the 'Golden Mean' – where courage sits perfectly between the deficiency of cowardice and the excess of being overly rash – which underlines the idea that strengths should be used in just the right amount: not too much and not too little.

We all have a tendency to sometimes overuse our strengths to our detriment: be it too much 'kindness' that can leave us burnt out, neglecting our own needs and sacrificing personal growth, or too much 'hope' that can have us overcommitting.

You may find yourself overusing one of your strengths or using it in the wrong context or in a manipulative way: Here are some examples:

- A high achiever (+), but unable to enjoy the moment (-): learn to be more mindful.

- **Energetic (+), but restless and anxious (-):** embrace the pace.
- **Highly adaptable (+), but lack structure and consistency (-):** create basic plans.
- **Kindness (+), people take advantage of you (-):** set some boundaries.
- **Self-regulation (+), become obsessed, rigid (-):** find some flexibility.
- **Humility (+), conceal feelings of self-worth (-):** celebrate with others.

By consistently reinforcing your strengths, you can cultivate a mindset that allows you to leverage them effectively while remaining mindful of their shadow side. For example, if 'honesty' is one of your strengths, it is important to exercise discernment, ensuring that your honesty is delivered tactfully and considerately, taking into account the feelings and sensitivities of others. This practice empowers you to embrace your strengths authentically and unlock your full potential for success.

Take action

How is overusing your strengths detrimental to your success? s In what aspects of your life do you take your strengths to extremes that are harmful to you? s How can you use your strengths in a healthier and more balanced, high-performance way? If you want to stand out, supercharge your life and propel your career, believe deep down that you can improve, elevate and master your strengths, making them work for you every single day. Once you start flexing your strengths, that's when the magic starts to happen, and you'll be amazed at the difference it makes to your professional and personal life.

Shannah: My strengths are honesty, appreciation of beauty and excellence, and self-regulation. When I focused on understanding, really defining and living my strengths, my level of self-awareness increased and I could see clearly when overplay came in and self-sabotage appeared. For example, I was always told I was a straight shooter, but I've learnt to notice when I have to bring my answers back a little so as not to offend people.

I relish in appreciation of beauty and excellence in the smallest of details, and focusing further on this has enhanced my life in every way possible. It has also led to me living a much more mindful life, noticing the small things that really mean the most rather than racing past the beauty that is all around me.

Not paying attention to self-regulation led to burnout, chronic fatigue and depression as I was a master of using hard work and commitment as a badge of honour. The gift was to learn to find the sweet spot, to be able to pull back slightly to avoid sabotaging my own health, both mentally and physically.

I have spent time working on these top three strengths, really delving into them, thinking about them, feeling them, seeing them daily on the mirror in whiteboard marker, connecting with them, understanding them and finally using them to elevate my life both personally and professionally.

Strengths summary

1. Strengths focus on what you are already good at.

2. Fine-tune and upgrade your focus on your strengths, not your weaknesses.
3. You hit a state of flow when using your strengths.
4. Beware of overusing your strengths resulting in self-sabotage.
5. Develop your strengths with conscious awareness to elevate your life.