

Find Your Strengths
and Choose Your

Success



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Find Your Strengths And Choose Your Success

Everyone gets to various points in their life where they must do an evaluation to determine which direction to go. If you really want to be successful, you’ll need to take some time to really consider each choice and how it will affect you, not only today, but in the future, even 10 years from now. But, you want to work from a place of strength, not weakness.

The truth is that the only weaknesses you should be concerned with are those within the physical, mental, social and spiritual area of your life when and if they are interfering in your ability to achieve success. The three areas in which you can find strengths are play, personal and work. Unless the weaknesses affect these areas, they really don’t matter so much. That’s the best way to find true success not only today, but tomorrow, as well.

How to Evaluate Your Strengths and Weaknesses

While there are numerous tools that you can use, some of which you’ll learn about later, how can you evaluate your strengths and weaknesses as objectively as possible?

1. **What do you do every day?** – Most people tend to spend time on the things they like to do more than the things they do not like to do. It’s often the struggle between the two that causes strife, not the activities. If you find yourself easily

making time for activity A but avoiding activity B all the time that tells you something. People gravitate toward things they're naturally good at doing.

2. **What do other people think you do?** – The people around you likely have an opinion about what you are good at and what you're not good at. Usually, they have an idea in their minds about what they think you do all day long. Ask them. If you have a best friend or same sex sibling, it can help you truly identify what others think of you and think you're good at. Sometimes what people believe you're good at is a little different from your own opinion. It doesn't mean you are wrong, but if that happens, you should try to objectively identify why the difference in perception.
3. **What do other people say about you?** – What people think you do and what they say about you are two different things. For example, maybe they think you are painting all day long but they still think you're a horrible painter. So just because they see you as doing something particular with your days doesn't mean they think you're good. So you need to question people about that and tell them it's okay to tell the truth because this is about your personal development.
4. **What do you like to talk about?** – Usually, most people find themselves talking about the things they are good at doing and love to do. Now, occasionally you will find yourself focusing on negativity and talking about the things you dislike, hate, or are failing at. Those things are important to note, too. But if something makes you feel especially good, then you're likely good at it and like it. That's a very important thing to note.
5. **What is one mistake that you keep repeating?** – Often, you'll realize that you often do the same things over again, including your mistakes. This can usually be traced back to insisting on doing things that just aren't natural to you. As long as these things aren't part of the four elements (physical, mental, social and spiritual) that you need for succeeding at what you desire, you can let go of these types of weaknesses, thus avoiding more mistakes.

When you ask yourself these five questions, take notes - write it all down so that you can analyze it. It's likely that you will clearly see both your strengths and your weaknesses within the answers.

Capitalize on Your Strengths

Now that you know what your strengths and weaknesses are, you can begin to place focus on the strengths you want to develop and the weaknesses that matter within the physical, mental, social and spiritual realm, as far as they affect your ability to see your strengths through to success.

When you've finally determined what people compliment you for, what you're happiest doing, and how those things fit into your life, you'll be able to better approach your quest for success in the areas of play, personal and work. The truth is that the main area of importance is the personal. If your personal life feels successful, then your play and work will feel that way too. Your top qualities will be apparent across all three areas.

- **Say No** – If it's possible, start saying no to tasks that don't emphasize and take advantage of your strengths. You honestly do not need an excuse to say no, but if you're uncomfortable, just say you have to check with your calendar or your spouse first. Then say no later.
- **Cross Skills** – Are you super organized at work, but your home life is a little chaotic due to lack of organization? Why not share some of your work skill of organization with your home life to help you find more joy at home?
- **Keep Learning** – If you have a weakness that is interfering in one of your strengths, identify steps you can take for improvement. Don't stress about it, but take one step each day to learn something you need to know. For example, if you need to learn about a topic, find books and read at least 30 minutes each day. By the end of the year you'll have become an expert in at least one subject.
- **Don't Like Something? Stop.** – You really don't need an excuse, but if you really dislike doing something, you don't have to do it. You may feel as if you do for a job, but in reality you can start creating steps toward not having to do what you don't like. Start with the things you can easily stop doing right now. Identify the things that you want to give up and can't right now, create steps toward being able to give it up or delegate it.
- **Strengths First** – Make it your goal to spend more quality time doing things you enjoy doing that you are good at. If you make it a goal to spend your time for the most part with everything you like doing and are good at doing, your life will feel even more successful as every moment will be a pleasure.
- **Avoid Negative People** – If anyone in your life is a drag on your confidence, you need to consider letting the relationship go. Spend time with people who lift you up, make you feel good, and make you know you can do it. Whatever "it" is.
- **Leave Your Comfort Zone** – Focusing on your strengths doesn't mean you avoid leaving your comfort zone. For example, if you enjoy writing and fancy yourself a published author, make it a goal to write for at least one hour a day leading, to a published book at the end of the year. Push through anything uncomfortable.

The benefit of focusing on your strengths over weaknesses is a life lived of pleasure, happiness and success over one of frustration and unrequited goals. By nurturing your talents, you'll avoid the risk of them fading away and the pain of regret.

Develop Your Skills

The idea of developing your skills, by leaving your comfort zone, has been mentioned. But let's take that a little further. Some people may misunderstand and think avoiding your weaknesses means not learning anything new. But nothing could be further from the truth. Even among your strengths there is much to learn.

- **Identify Your Strengths** – Know which strengths you want to develop. Some things you may be a natural talent in that have nothing to do with what you want to accomplish in life. Perhaps you're really great at crafts or cooking but it has nothing to do with your career or what will lead you to success. It's great to focus on that in your leisure time but instead focus on the important strengths that will help you in your career.
- **Think Baby Steps** – Then, take small steps each day to become even better. For example, let's say you're great at public speaking. You love public speaking. You know it can be a real asset to your chosen profession. Join a speaker's group, read about speaking, practice speaking even if you need to go out and do it for free. The more you do it, the better you will become. Push yourself out of your comfort zone and plan an event of your own that you can showcase your speaking talents at.
- **Act Like A Manager** – Successful CEOs know how to identify the strengths of their core players and use them at their best. Much like you can't change how the pieces of a chess game move, managers believe in using each person to their best ability. You should think that way, too, when it comes to your own strengths. No sense in trying to be well-rounded when playing to your strengths will get you to the success and happiness you desire.
- **Define Your Expectations** – Once you've chosen a couple of talents and skills to develop, decide what you expect the end result to be of your efforts. Do you plan to start a speaking business or do you plan to use your speaking skills to get a promotion at work? What are the end results of perfecting your skill set?

Working toward your goals little by little, day by day, can make a huge impact on your life. You don't have to make a huge change right this moment, just make a small one each day. It may help you to map out the changes you want to make using a monthly calendar starting with the end date and working your way backward toward today for each skill you want to develop. Focus on only one or two skills at a time and you'll improve your expertise exponentially.

Do Your Weaknesses Matter?

You can be successful based on what you know and can do rather than trying to be good at things you're not naturally good at. However, that doesn't mean you can't improve or develop weaknesses, or even delegate them to someone else, it just means you don't need to give your weaknesses as much attention as you may think. You can instead focus on working from a place of strength.

Understand the Truth

Make choices based on what is, not what might be, or what you think it will be in a few months. Instead, make your choices based on now. Now, what are your strengths? Now, what can you do? This gives you an opportunity to realize what you can't do, or that your weaknesses really don't matter. Success is based on who you are and what you know right now, not what you don't know.

For example, if a student who wants to be a surgeon thought they should know everything about that profession before starting school, they would fail on day one. Instead, a smart student focuses on what they know and their skill set. Perhaps the medical student is good at memorization - they'll use that skill to succeed at school. They know what they're capable of learning and how they learn best. They don't focus on what they don't have yet, or don't know yet. They focus on taking steps toward a future they know they want - being a surgeon.

Center Your Activity on What You Can Do

Rather than focusing on how guts make you throw up, focus on how much you want to make your patients feel better. Many people are able to overcome fear of heights to become a pilot, fear of water to learn to dive, even natural sea sickness and more to follow their dreams to be a ship captain. It happens all the time. You can do it too.

Focusing on your strengths doesn't mean you have permission to give up if something is hard, or you have a road block. It just means you have to find a way around the hard part to the good part. For example, if you want to be a romance writer, but you work 5 days a week, 10 hours a day. You may have to write one hour a day on Sunday until you're done with your book to see success. But, the point is, it can be done if you have a plan. Focus on can, not can't.

You Can Do More Than You Think You Can

Remember, you can always push yourself just a little farther than you think you're capable of going. One more push up, one more page of a book, one more step on your walk. It can always be done.

“The mind is the limit. As long as the mind can envision the fact that you can do something, you can do it, as long as you really believe 100 percent.” -- Arnold Schwarzenegger

To prove this truth is the fact that so many people do so much with so little. Just take a little time to search the Internet for some examples of people who have accomplished amazing feats due to talent, skill, and love of what they do.

Take Amanda Mercer, a mom who spent years training to swim in a relay race across the English Channel in order to bring awareness to Lou Gehrig’s disease. She came down with breast cancer during training and still did not stop. She met her goal just a couple of weeks after finishing her last round of chemo. She broke the world record by four minutes.

How about Rick Hohn? He has cerebral palsy but is a motivational speaker from California. He’s also an accomplished artist, a pastor, teacher and author. He doesn’t allow his limited mobility to stop him from achieving much in life that even the most able-bodied person would be proud to accomplish.

If there is something you really want to succeed at doing, and you can find a way there with your natural talents and abilities, you can do it. Don’t let lack of training, time or anything else get in your way. You can push just a little bit more and make it happen if you really love it and really want to.

Don’t Make Excuses

It can be easy to fall into excuse territory. Life does give you lemons. Sometimes you may need to find a way to leverage other people’s talent where yours is lacking. You may need to work just a little harder than someone else to get the same results. But, given time and effort, you can take your talents and turn them into great success. It’s your choice.

There are, of course, some weaknesses that you should work on. If they have to do with your physical, mental, social and spiritual self, then it is important that you continue to try to improve, at least in as much as it affects your ability to choose your success. For example, if you are scared of water, but you really want to be in a triathlon, you’ll have to overcome that mental block. If you aren’t good with computers but this doesn’t affect your ability to become a brain surgeon, then it doesn’t really matter.

The fact is, that most of the time when you focus on capitalizing on your strengths over worrying about your weaknesses, you will experience success that much faster. Many people who aren’t well-rounded are successful, but one thing is sure, they don’t play it safe. Therefore, being well-rounded isn’t needed for success.

Place your trust in what you can do, know (or are capable of learning), but first focus on what you know right now to seek real success in the present. Starting with what you know is the best formula for long-term success and choosing the right path to that success. Start by avoiding excuses.

If you become the type of person who takes responsibility for your actions, you can become the type of person who chooses success over excuses. In addition, you need to learn to believe in yourself and your abilities to succeed. The way you develop belief in yourself is much the same as you develop belief in others -through experiences you have. The more you actually experience feelings of success, the more you'll believe you can keep experiencing it.

Even if you're scared, start small. Take the time to visualize how success looks, rather than focusing on any roadblocks getting in your way. Most roadblocks are mental, anyway. You can overcome them in order to get to the point of success if you stay focused on your strengths instead of weaknesses. The main trick is to just get started. Everything else later will be easier than getting started.

Tools to Help You Identify Your Strengths

There are numerous tools that you can use to help you understand yourself better, assist you in getting to know your own strengths, and help you know what first steps you need to take to choose your road to success.

- [16 Personalities](#) – This website offers some free and paid online tests to help you learn your personality better. It's based on the work of Jung and Myers personality types. The test is designed to give insight into your own natural abilities and skills. Be as honest as you are capable of being when taking the test. There are no wrong answers. Be truthful.
- [Truity.com](#) – Also based on Myers Briggs, this personality test has a free version, too. It focuses on finding your four letter personality type so that you can understand how you work with yourself and others.
- [Sharecare.com](#) – Your health is an important part of being successful. Take these health assessments to find out where you stand in terms of your age, risks and more. Staying healthy gives you more time to choose your success.
- [Gallup Strengths Center](#) – Gallup strength finder has been around more than 50 years. They're experts at helping you discover your strengths because they created the idea in the first place.

- **Read a Book** – There are several books about finding your strengths and the advantages of doing so. A book like [StandOut 2.0: Assess Your Strengths, Find Your Edge, Win at Work by Marcus Buckingham](#) can help you find your way.
- **Find a Life Coach** – Sometimes you may need some outside help finding your strengths with a non-biased, well-trained person such as a life or business coach. You can find a coach using an online directory like [The Coach Connection](#) or you can ask your colleagues if they can recommend someone.
- **Get a Mentor** – Seek out a mentor who will help you determine and improve upon your strengths. Remember, mentors are not strangers that you ask. They are people who are ahead of you in the career (or personal) track that you want to be on and know your potential.
- **Your Community** – Check with your local college or university to find out if they have career or personal development centers. Often they'll have guest speakers, or other programs to help you learn your strengths.

Using these tools to help you determine your strengths will go far in helping you know how to leverage your strengths to choose the type of success you want to experience in your life. That's right, you really do choose to be successful and choose what you'll be successful doing if you know how to leverage your skills and strengths.

Choosing Your Career, Entrepreneurial & Relationship Path Based on Your Strengths

One thing is clear, when you know what your strengths are you can start to make choices that affect the course of your life in a positive way. Working from strength instead of weakness allows you to positively move forward in life without focusing on your weaknesses, which are likely not even relevant in the first place. When you know your strengths, you will have a better work life and personal life because you'll be making choices based on knowledge and fact, not hopes and dreams.

Career / Entrepreneurship

There are many factors that affect your competence in your career. Whether you work for someone else or you own your own business, your strengths play a huge part in whether you're successful or not. Many factors affect the choices you have in front of you when it comes to work.

Ability and experience, even more than education, play a huge role in what you choose to do in your life for money. Most people are drawn to a certain type of work based on their parent given genetic material that gives them some form of innate ability or love for

a particular form of work. You may not even realize that you're drawn to a field due to your inborn abilities, but more than likely you are.

But, unfortunately, some people are taught either accidentally or on purpose that they should become "well-rounded" or dabble in other career areas that don't interest them because it's something popular today. This can actually drain your resources and is not unlike trying to fit a square peg into a round hole. Instead, analyze what it is that you love doing, and do well already. This is where you want to find your career choice. Whether it's entrepreneurial or not will also depend on whether you're cut out for it or not, but it's not right or wrong. It just is.

Play

Your strengths also affect how you play. What do you like doing? Some people are drawn to computer games, some people are drawn to physical sports. The reason is that you are either naturally good at the thing you want to do and like to do already, or you're good enough that you can practice and become better. Remember, having a love for something and an ability for something doesn't mean you never have to practice or learn, it just means that it likely comes more easily to you than some other things you have tried. Plus, you like it more.

You hear it all the time, be yourself. Don't try to be someone else. But then you're often forced to do things that you find make you miserable. For example, if you're an introvert, you are likely often asked to do things that are hard to do and drain you of your energy because it's weird not to. But, what if you were told to play how you want to play and only do things you love as far as that's allowed? This is how you find success and feel successful.

Now, don't misunderstand. You need to sometimes do things you dislike. The paperwork always has to be done. The toilets have to be cleaned. But, if you really dislike cleaning you can work toward a life where you don't have to clean. You can work toward a life where you outsource those tasks that you hate, for the most part, so you can play even harder.

Personal Relationships

The one area of life that requires you to move forward and do things that are uncomfortable at times is your personal relationships. But, if you understand what you're strong at, you can focus on those things and do more of those things so the items you're weak at aren't as noticeable. Obviously, if you don't like doing some things, you're still going to have to do them if you want to have relationships. But the fact is some people are better at them than others.

Thankfully, you can learn to do better at personal relationships. Regardless of your innate ability, you can learn to be an equal partner in all your relationships. But, you can also be honest about your skillset in this area so that you do a better job choosing the right people to move forward with in your life. For example, if you're an introvert and would hate going out every weekend, you might not want to marry someone who needs that kind of social life. While they say opposites attract, opposites also get divorced.

What Should You Do Now?

First, take some time to think about what you've read. It's different than what you may have heard in this past. This is likely even more true if you went to college or plan to go to college. Nothing is wrong with college, but college is designed to make you a well-rounded person, often learning things that you dislike, aren't good at and even hate doing. Whereas you would not experience any less success (and maybe more) if you simply focus on what you already know you love and probably have some form of innate ability doing.

Choosing success is about finding your strengths, focusing on those, building them up, and letting go of any ideas of weakness. Everyone on earth has both strengths and weaknesses. Not everyone is going to be a rocket scientist and not everyone is going to be an artist. Neither profession is better than the other. They are simply different. What would you do with your life if you could only do what you really love doing, and are good at doing?

How much more successful would you be if you could let go of trying to improve on your weaknesses and instead focused on developing your strengths? Get started by first analyzing what it is that you know you're good at, what other people say you're good at and what you love doing. This will go far in helping you determine how to move forward. Start with identifying your strengths, and then start to identify which of your strengths you want to develop to get to where you want to be in life.

"Don't die by your weaknesses, live through your strengths." -- Mark S. Kerr