

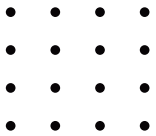
The Four Positions of Excellence



Matching Natural Strengths to
Championship Roles



> Introduction



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*"You're not running four
separate races.
You're running one race
with four parts."*

WHY STRATEGIC POSITIONING MATTERS

What if I told you the difference between good teams and championship teams isn't talent—it's alignment?

In relay racing, I learned this truth the hard way. Our team once had four exceptional runners but finished third because we were positioned incorrectly. When our coach strategically reassigned our positions based on our natural strengths rather than just our speed, everything changed. Same four runners. Different positions. Championship results.

This same principle transforms business performance. Organizations don't win by simply collecting star performers—they win by strategically positioning each person where their natural strengths create maximum impact. When team members operate in their optimal positions:

- Energy skyrockets instead of draining away
- Performance improves without additional effort
- Motivation becomes intrinsic rather than forced
- Handoffs between team members become seamless
- Results multiply rather than merely add up

Most teams leave 30-40% of their potential performance untapped simply because people are running in the wrong lanes.

This guide doesn't just describe positions—it transforms how you build teams by helping you identify, leverage, and optimize the four critical positions that determine championship performance.

Are you ready to stop leaving performance on the table?



The Four Positions of Excellence



POSITION 1: THE INITIATOR

Primary Strengths:

- Vision articulation and direction-setting
- Starting from zero with confidence
- Establishing foundational standards
- Self-motivation and independent action
- Comfort with ambiguity and blank-slate situations

Performance Indicators:

- Energized by new projects and fresh challenges
- Thrives when creating something from nothing
- Comfortable being the first to take action
- Articulates compelling visions that motivate others

Business Roles That Leverage Initiator Strengths:

- Innovation leaders and R&D specialists
- Business development and market expansion roles
- Strategic planning and vision-setting positions
- Crisis response and turnaround specialists

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POSITION 2: THE ACCELERATOR

Primary Strengths:

- Building momentum from established foundations
- System creation and optimization
- Scaling initial concepts with efficiency
- Technical implementation and improvement
- Real-time adaptation based on early feedback

Performance Indicators:

- Thrives when taking something good and making it better
- Excels at creating processes that scale
- Energized by growth and expansion challenges
- Adapts quickly to changing conditions while maintaining momentum

Business Roles That Leverage Accelerator Strengths:

- Operations and systems development
- Growth management and scaling specialists
- Product development and enhancement
- Process optimization and efficiency experts

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POSITION 3: THE MAINTAINER

Primary Strengths:

- Technical precision and consistent execution
- Navigating complexity with methodical approaches
- Anticipating and preventing problems
- Maintaining quality under pressure
- Preparing for successful transitions

Performance Indicators:

- Demonstrates exceptional attention to detail and consistency
- Maintains performance when others break down under pressure
- Thrives during the challenging "middle phase" of projects
- Anticipates problems before they occur

Business Roles That Leverage Maintainer Strengths:

- Quality assurance and compliance specialists
- Program and project management
- Customer success and retention management
- Risk management and mitigation experts

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POSITION 4: THE CLOSER

Primary Strengths:

- Performance under high-pressure situations
- Detail orientation during final execution
- Tactical adaptability based on current situation
- Assuming responsibility for final outcomes
- Competitive awareness and strategic finish

Performance Indicators:

- Performs at peak levels when stakes are highest
- Takes responsibility for final outcomes
- Thrives when given specific deliverables and deadlines
- Maintains focus on details while seeing the big picture

Business Roles That Leverage Closer Strengths:

- Sales and business development executives
- Crisis management and negotiation specialists
- Project completion and delivery managers
- Performance under deadline experts

IDENTIFYING YOUR TEAM'S POSITION STRENGTHS

QUICK ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

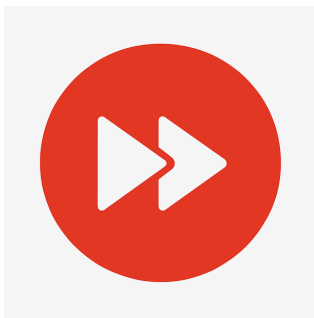
For each team member, consider which statements most accurately describe their natural tendencies:

INITIATOR TENDENCIES



- "I love starting new projects from scratch."
- "I'm energized by ambiguous situations that need direction."
- "I prefer creating new approaches rather than following established ones."
- "I'm comfortable setting direction with limited information."

ACCELERATOR TENDENCIES



- "I excel at taking initial ideas and developing them into robust solutions."
- "I enjoy creating systems that allow for growth and scale."
- "I'm energized by taking something promising and making it excellent."
- "I quickly spot improvement opportunities in newly established processes."

IDENTIFYING YOUR TEAM'S POSITION STRENGTHS

QUICK ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

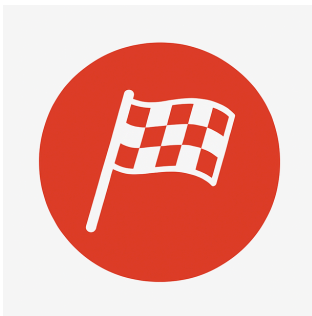
For each team member, consider which statements most accurately describe their natural tendencies:

MAINTAINER TENDENCIES



- "I take pride in consistent, high-quality execution."
- "I naturally spot potential problems before they occur."
- "I enjoy optimizing complex processes for reliability."
- "I maintain focus and quality when others are distracted by pressure."

CLOSER TENDENCIES

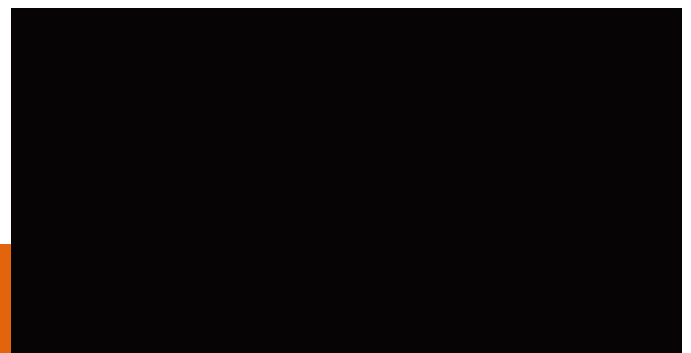


- "I perform my best when deadlines are tight and stakes are high."
- "I'm energized by the final push to complete critical objectives."
- "I naturally take responsibility for final outcomes."
- "I focus intensely on details during final execution phases."

STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT WORKSHEET

STEP 1: Position Assessment: For each team member, rate their natural alignment with each position (1-5 scale)

Team Member	Initiator	Accelerator	Maintainer	Closer	Primary Position	Secondary Position
[Name]						
[Name]						
[Name]						
[Name]						



STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT WORKSHEET

STEP 2: Current Role Mapping: For each critical role in your team, identify which position capabilities it primarily requires

Role/ Responsibility	Primary Position Required	Secondary Position Required	Current Role Holder	Position Aignment (1-5)
[Role]				
[Role]				
[Role]				

STEP 3: Alignment Optimization Identify opportunities to better align team members with their natural positions

Team Member	Current Position	Natural Position	Alignment Gap	Optimization Strategy
[Name]				
[Name]				
[Name]				

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

1. Position-Based Development

Create individual development plans that enhance capabilities in primary positions while building competencies in secondary positions.

2. Complementary Pairing

Strategically pair team members with complementary positions to create seamless transitions and knowledge transfer.

3. Progressive Position Exposure

Provide controlled opportunities for team members to experience different positions through low-stakes projects.

4. Position-Specific Recognition

Develop recognition systems that celebrate excellence in each position rather than only highlighting "closer" achievements.

5. Strategic Position Rotation

For long-term development, create intentional rotation plans that expand capabilities while respecting natural strengths.

CASE STUDY: POSITION OPTIMIZATION IN ACTION

A technology company struggled with project delivery despite having talented individuals. After implementing position-based optimization:

- Their natural initiator (previously in a maintainer role) was moved to new product development
- A strong accelerator (previously miscast as an initiator) took over scaling successful prototypes

CASE STUDY: POSITION OPTIMIZATION IN ACTION (continued)

- Their detail-oriented maintainer (previously in a closer role) was reassigned to quality assurance
- Their natural closer (previously in an accelerator role) was positioned to finalize and launch products

Results: Project completion rates increased by 34%, team satisfaction improved by 28%, and time-to-market decreased by 21% within six months.

NEXT STEPS

1. Complete the Position Assessment for your core team members
2. Identify 2-3 immediate optimization opportunities
3. Develop implementation plans for better position alignment
4. Schedule a 30-day review to measure impact





> **READY TO BUILD A CHAMPIONSHIP TEAM?**

01



COMPLETE THE CHAMPIONSHIP ASSESSMENT

Identify which formula components need immediate attention

02



SCHEDULE YOUR COMPLIMENTARY 30-MINUTE FORMULA CONSULTATION

Receive customized insights to identify your highest-leverage improvement opportunities

03



CONTACT YOLANDA HARPER

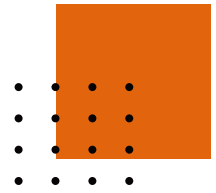


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About Yolanda



Yolanda Harper, author of "Relay Ready: Turning Individual Excellence into Championship Teams," combines collegiate championship relay experience with over two decades of business leadership. Through keynotes, workshops, and strategic advisory services, Yolanda helps organizations identify and eliminate the performance gaps that prevent talented individuals from achieving championship results.

Based on the book "Relay Ready: Turning Individual Excellence into Championship Teams" by Yolanda Harper

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