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Is There a Career That Best Matches My Top 5 CliftonStrengths?



This is one of the most common questions clients ask me, especially those **new to CliftonStrengths**. The short answer is, “No.” This is not a tool that will prescribe the right or wrong role for you. But the long answer can provide some meaningful insights into how you can shape your current role to better match your talents and improve your effectiveness.

For some clients, **seeing their CliftonStrengths results** is like looking in a career mirror. The pieces all fit together, and it’s clear why they pursued their path in the first place. It may lead to increased awareness about what types of tasks you like best, why you like them, and a way to articulate asking to do more of those things. When I first did this exercise, I noticed that the things I most like to do all involve a high level of my No. 1 talent theme, **Communication**. As a result of this new level of awareness, I have been seeking out more opportunities to be in front of a room sharing information, writing more blogs, and volunteering to lead workshops wherever and whenever I can. The days I get to engage in these activities are the days I look forward to most.

It’s possible, on the other hand, that delving into your CliftonStrengths results reveals a disconnect between your top talents and your current job. Maybe you have high **Context** but are expected to make decisions with little background information. Maybe your No. 1 is **Achiever**, and yet the type of work you do never really seems to have a clear point of completion -- no boxes ever get checked off of your list. Maybe you have high **Woo** but sit alone in an office and have little daily interaction with other people.

When it comes to aligning your talents with what you do every day, if something feels “off,” it probably is. But once you understand that **your CliftonStrengths** do not dictate your career path, the most promising place to look for greater talents-career alignment is in how you go about doing your role. Before you decide to change paths, it would serve you well to consider whether there is room in your current job to play more to your strengths. If there are opportunities to use your strengths more effectively in your current role, talk with your manager about how that might be possible.

Try this:

1. During a typical work week, what tasks do you perform with ease, excellence and enjoyment? Make a list of these tasks. You are likely capitalizing on your natural talents to get them done.
2. Of the items you listed, identify one that is the most important or produces the greatest success. Let’s call it your strongest moment.
3. Focus more closely on your strongest moment. What makes it great for you?
4. What would happen if you borrowed some of the ingredients that make your strongest moment so great and applied them to new ways of approaching the tasks you enjoy less?

You’ll notice I didn’t say, “Change jobs,” and I didn’t assume you have the freedom to go about your current role any differently. But all too often we assume we are locked into ways of working when, in reality, there is more flexibility for us to use our talents to excel at our role than we might have thought. It’s important to explore what might happen if you aim for the same outcome, just with different -- more authentic to your talent -- ways of getting there.

Whatever job you are in, whatever job you move into, the heart of who you are comes with you. Get to know that person.

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Amy's Top 5 strengths are: Communication, Competition, Maximizer, Significance and Focus.

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