

How To Understand Your Natural Strengths (400)

It is the involvement of and contribution from your individual members that allows your route to grow and make a good impact. It is the route's ability to organise this involvement and contribution based on the strengths of each of the members that will determine how effective the route becomes and how big an impact it will have.

This Guide is an introduction to the idea that people will flourish if they concentrate on doing the things they are naturally good at and that they enjoy doing. If it is possible for a route member to do what he or she is best at, and this is combined with others who are doing what they are best at, the route is bound to become a strong team. In fact, thinking of the route as a sports team is a good analogy – each member should 'play' the 'position' he or she is most suited for...

How to understand your strengths

There are many ways to use your strengths to achieve better results. For instance, you may have realised over time that you find some things much easier to do than others, or you may have noticed that what comes naturally to you, others find difficult to do.

The reason for this is that you embody a unique combination of characteristics, some based on your experience, skills and knowledge you built up over time, and others by the things that you are just naturally good at.

The way that many of us are raised is based on trying to make up for the things we are not good at. For instance, we are told to study extra-hard at the school subjects we are not so good at; we are not encouraged to forget about those we are

bad at, so that we can really get ahead with the ones we are good at. In our professional environments, we tend to do the same: we work hard at the things we know that must get done but which we do not enjoy, and then there is little time left to do what we really love doing!

In developing ourselves based on what we are already naturally good at, we are likely to achieve better results. But how do we know what it is that we should focus on, or how do we determine what it is that our natural strengths direct us towards?

Strengths test tools

One way is to use “strength-finder tools” to provide feedback on what we are naturally good at and what it is that we are inclined to enjoy more.

Here are some of the commonly used tools:

- Enneagram (see e.g. www.integrative.co.za).
- Disc Profile (see www.discprofile.com).
- Meyers-Briggs Personality Type (see www.myersbriggs.org).
- Strengths Finder (www.strengthsfinder.com).
- VIA Character Strengths (www.viacharacter.org).

Each of these systems have their own advantages and disadvantages as tools to help you find your best game. However, the underlying understanding of energies found in another system – called the Five Energy Dynamics – is also the foundations of some of the other tools used in the Open Africa Route Toolkit. It is therefore recommended that the Five Energy Dynamic tool is used as a starting point in your exploration of finding your best game.

In addition to Five Energy Dynamics, the above-mentioned tools may well help you to add more dimensions of understanding, but

the reports provided to users who complete the Five Energy Dynamics Questionnaire will find reference to the five energies elsewhere in the toolkit much easier to understand if they start out by doing this short test. For instance, the one-page planning tool covered in the [How To Compile A One-Page Plan](#) also uses the five energies as a primary reference point.

You can get free access to the Five Energy Dynamics Questionnaire here: www.flowfinders.com/energy

What is the Five Energy Dynamics?

The Five Energy Dynamics is based on ancient Chinese Energetics. It is a personal development framework that helps you to understand who you are and how you relate to others.

In measuring your individual balance of the five different energies used by the ancient Chinese civilisations more than 5 000 years ago, the Five Energy Dynamics offers you insights into both those aspects you can excel at and those you are likely to find challenging.

How to get an Energy Dynamics report

When you complete a [Five Energy Dynamics Questionnaire](#), you also receive a report on your dominant energies and how you can apply these insights in your business life. It will also give you pointers you can apply to your involvement in the Open Africa routes.

You can get free access to a detailed report on your dominant energies when you complete the www.flowfinders.com/energy questionnaire.

Other Factsheets

You may also want to have a look at the following Guides and Examples covering related topics:

- Guide: [How To Lead Your Route](#)
- Video: [Introduction To Five Energy Dynamics](#)

Other Resources