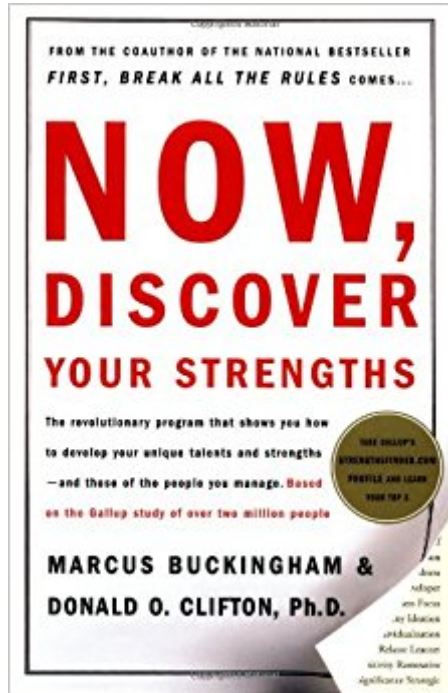


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# Now, Discover Your Strengths



## **Synopsis**

Unfortunately, most of us have little sense of our talents and strengths, much less the ability to build our lives around them. Instead, guided by our parents, by our teachers, by our managers, and by psychology's fascination with pathology, we become experts in our weaknesses and spend our lives trying to repair these flaws, while our strengths lie dormant and neglected. Marcus Buckingham, coauthor of the national bestseller *First, Break All the Rules*, and Donald O. Clifton, Chair of the Gallup International Research & Education Center, have created a revolutionary program to help readers identify their talents, build them into strengths, and enjoy consistent, near-perfect performance. At the heart of the book is the Internet-based StrengthsFinder<sup>®</sup> Profile, the product of a 25-year, multimillion-dollar effort to identify the most prevalent human strengths. The program introduces 34 dominant "themes" with thousands of possible combinations, and reveals how they can best be translated into personal and career success. In developing this program, Gallup has conducted psychological profiles with more than two million individuals to help readers learn how to focus and perfect these themes. So how does it work? This book contains a unique identification number that allows you access to the StrengthsFinder Profile on the Internet. This Web-based interview analyzes your instinctive reactions and immediately presents you with your five most powerful signature themes. Once you know which of the 34 themes -- such as Achiever, Activator, Empathy, Futuristic, or Strategic -- you lead with, the book will show you how to leverage them for powerful results at three levels: for your own development, for your success as a manager, and for the success of your organization. With accessible and profound insights on how to turn talents into strengths, and with the immediate on-line feedback of StrengthsFinder at its core, *Now, Discover Your Strengths* is one of the most groundbreaking and useful business books ever written. (Please note that the code for the Online Strengths Finder Test is found on the inside of the dust jacket or in the sealed sleeve bound into the book just before the endpaper)

## **Book Information**

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## Customer Reviews

Effectively managing personnel--as well as one's own behavior--is an extraordinarily complex task that, not surprisingly, has been the subject of countless books touting what each claims is the true path to success. That said, Marcus Buckingham and Donald O. Clifton's *Now, Discover Your Strengths* does indeed propose a unique approach: focusing on enhancing people's strengths rather than eliminating their weaknesses. Following up on the coauthors' popular previous book, *First, Break All the Rules*, it fully describes 34 positive personality themes the two have formulated (such as Achiever, Developer, Learner, and Maximizer) and explains how to build a "strengths-based organization" by capitalizing on the fact that such traits are already present among those within it. Most original and potentially most revealing, however, is a Web-based interactive component that allows readers to complete a questionnaire developed by the Gallup Organization and instantly discover their own top-five inborn talents. This device provides a personalized window into the authors' management philosophy which, coupled with subsequent advice, places their suggestions into the kind of practical context that's missing from most similar tomes. "You can't lead a strengths revolution if you don't know how to find, name and develop your own," write Buckingham and Clifton. Their book encourages such introspection while providing knowledgeable guidance for applying its lessons. --Howard Rothman

The premise of this new management study, a follow-up to Buckingham's *First, Break All the Rules* (S. & S., 1999), is that the most effective method for motivating people is to build on their strengths rather than correcting their weaknesses. The authors, researchers at the Gallup Organization, have analyzed results of interviews conducted by Gallup of over 1.7 million employees from 101 companies and representing 63 countries. When asked, only 20 percent of these employees stated that they were using their strengths everyday. So that they can take a test revealing their strengths, readers are given access to the StrengthsFinder web site and a special ID number; once they learn their profile, they can read the analysis in the book. A description of each type is included, together with case studies, and managers are shown how to handle various types. This book offers a unique

perspective on successful management strategy and developing employees' strengths.

Recommended especially for public libraries, which should also consider Buckingham's *First, Break All the Rules*; students of business administration may also wish to consult this book. DLucy Heckman, St. John's Univ. Lib., Jamaica, NY Copyright 2001 Reed Business Information, Inc.

Yes, you read the title correctly, I have purchased dozens of copies of this book. Why? Because every time I cross paths with someone, often a mid-to-late teen, who is not sure who she is, or what makes her happy, I give her a copy. It's not just for teens. I didn't read it and take the test until I was in my late 40's, but it should be required reading and part of a career planning course in ALL high schools. 'nough said! The concept is simple. By the time you are entering primary grades in school, you are fairly hard wired to excel and enjoy specific interests and abilities, only at that age, you probably don't recognize them. And those around you don't help. Teachers, peers and parents can knowingly or unknowingly guide you away from the very capabilities that will make you productive and happy for the rest of your life. Buy the book. Read the intro chapters. Take the test. Read the other chapters that apply to your results. Start living the life you were destined to live. It's never "too late." Find the mountain on the horizon that was meant to be your destination and start making choices based on whether they will help you reach your mountain.

The followup book to "*First, Break All the Rules*", this book takes those theories and helps the reader discover what it is that they as an individual are talented in. "*Now, Discover Your Strengths*" corrects the lie many of us were told as children that "anyone can be anything they want to be", and while that may be unsettling at first for some of us to hear, it's remarkably freeing. Rather than pursue vocations that we have no hope for being successful at or find joy in doing, this book teaches that if we pursue those things we're wired to do not only will we be happier, we'll be successful. When your child comes home with 4 A's, a B a D and an F, are you spending all of your time and energy all over them for the low grades, or praising them for what they excel in? Are you trying them to fix weaknesses they have no desire (and perhaps no ability) to fix? Or are you encouraging them to work on their strengths? To take those things for which they show interest and talent and desire and grow those? This book may very well change the way you've been thinking. Each copy comes with a code that will let you take the online quiz to find out what your top five themes, or strengths, are. Well written and thought provoking, make sure you get a new copy so you don't run the risk of getting one that has had the code for the online test already used. Stick with this original. *Strengths Finder 2.0* lacks substance, IMHO.

This book quite simply can change your life. Since I took the StrengthsFinder test, I have dramatically increased my effectiveness in my current job. Donald Clifton has spent twenty years monitoring and discovering patterns of strength in the best of the best. This testing and research shows in the accuracy and precision of this test. Whether you have achiever, context, futuristic, empathy, restorative, or whatever, this book and test is going to dramatically change the way you look at the world. I currently work in the field of Leadership Identification and Development and this test time and time again shows students and young adults ages 18-30, a new way to approach life. If there is a weakness in this book, it is that it does not go deeper. Clifton does a great job showing how he and others developed this process over years and years of study. Personally I want to be compared against the best, and this is what the book and test do. Have you ever wondered why you always size yourself up against everyone else and if you knew you could not win you did not even play? --Competition. The beauty of this book is that your personal combination of strengths can put you as unique as 1 in millions, and the chances of meeting someone that is your exact double is next to impossible. How great is it that we are all so unique? Does not lend much credence to the theory that we are all here by some cosmic accident. Our society, educational systems, businesses, and so many other institutions always try to build us up where we are weak. I worked at a company in Washington, DC and was utilized as an office manager and executive assistant, a job I was clearly not wired to do. With the themes of competition, achiever, activator and significance, how could I ever handle ordering pens and pencils and organizing a contact database? I could not! I want to change the world, and now I know why-- I was wired to do it. Do you know instantly how people are feeling when you walk in a room? I cannot, and I know my empathy is low or non-existent. My dreams of becoming a counselor were misguided at best. This book, and the test will help you find out how you are wired and what a perfect job for you would be. Can you wake up and say, I am doing what I was created to do and enjoying it? If not, I suggest you read this book and meditate over the information you receive back from it. Thanks to Donald Clifton for an excellent and cutting edge work.

Buy the book! A code found on the book jacket that lets you take the StrengthsFinder instrument, and print out the results and supporting documentation is worth the price of the book. As you read through the interpretation material, you will discover a bias in the research with which you may agree or disagree. I had both feelings simultaneously. The StrengthsFinder was incredibly accurate for me personally. However, being a professional survey, questionnaire, and inventory taker, I found

that I could guess the answers that fit my self-perception. I highly regard a complex way of considering human personality that allows for a deep level of individuality. This complex way looks at gifts, skills, and preferences. Therefore, I find that-like all instruments-the StrengthsFinder is inadequate alone for making holistic life decisions. Even so, finding your strengths can mean finding lasting satisfaction in your field. So this book, the instrument, and the interpretation of each strength will help you focus yourself. I also found helpful a section that talked about how to have a strengths-focused organization.

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