CliftonStrengths®

Career Development Guide

It doesn't matter if you're fresh out of school, looking to move up at your current organization or thinking about a career change — career decisions can be intimidating.

This guide will help you make better career decisions based on your interests and your unique strengths, no matter where you're at on your career journey.

First, review your top strengths and the insights from your CliftonStrengths® report — it will help you along the way.

Begin With Self-Assessment

Before taking the next (or first) step in your career path, use these reflective questions to help you better understand yourself and what you want (or need) from a career.

What is most important to you in a job (e.g., salary, work-life balance, job security, social impact)?

What kind of work environment do you thrive in (e.g., collaborative, independent, structured, flexible)?

What do people consistently depend on you for (e.g., facilitating teamwork, timeliness, creating buy-in, generating ideas)?

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How You Work Best

Now that you've thought about the bigger picture, ask yourself these questions about how your strengths express themselves at work.

How do you feel about relationships at work?

- ◯ **1)** They encourage teamwork and create a positive workplace environment. Working collaboratively and facing challenges together builds trust and respect, fostering partnerships and open communication.
- ◯ **2)** Workplace relationships are opportunities to network and build alliances to advance professional objectives and influence outcomes.
- ◯ **3)** They are inevitable but should be managed professionally and discreetly.
- ◯ **4)** You are open to them if they do not interfere with productivity and the relationships built help in the overall effort of team goals.

What are your views on flexibility in the workplace? (9-5?)

- ◯ **1)** Flexibility builds a culture of trust and empowerment within the workplace.
- ◯ **2)** Flexibility enables you to lead by example by embracing adaptable approaches and fostering a dynamic and innovative work culture.
- ◯ **3)** Flexibility is essential for adapting to changing circumstances and maximizing productivity.
- ◯ **4)** You prefer a more structured work environment with fixed schedules and routines.

What are you naturally good at?

- ◯ **1)** Do you connect with others, or could you be classified as a people person?
- ◯ **2)** Are you a natural leader who advocates for others around you?
- ◯ **3)** Are you a problem-solver who formulates effective solutions?
- ◯ **4)** Do you achieve your goals and set new ones regularly?

How do you usually make decisions?

- ◯ **1)** You care about the input of others around you and want to feel supported in your decision-making.
- ◯ **2)** You want to pave the way with innovative ideas and stray from the traditional route of making decisions.
- ◯ **3)** You tend to make decisions by putting emotions aside and taking a logical approach to evaluating your options.
- ◯ **4)** You want to get the job done in the most efficient manner.

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What would the best day at work look like?

- ◯ **1)** The best day involves team-building activities that highlight everyone's strengths, fostering a collaborative environment where trust grows through shared successes and mutual support during challenges.
- ◯ **2)** The best day is marked by taking initiative to ensure diverse voices are heard and integrated, leading brainstorming sessions that inspire new approaches and empower others to rally behind common goals, resulting in meaningful outcomes.
- ◯ **3)** The best day includes deep dives into data and insights that inform pivotal decisions, whether through uncovering trends in thorough research, contributing to innovative solutions in strategic planning sessions, or presenting findings that drive informed, forward-thinking direction for the organization.
- ◯ **4)** The best day centers on effectively managing projects from start to finish, collaborating seamlessly with team members to exceed expectations, and achieving tangible results that bring a profound sense of accomplishment and pride, whether through launching initiatives or delivering flawless presentations.

What kind of tasks or interactions would make up your dream job?

- ◯ **1)** Facilitating team-building exercises and collaborative projects that strengthen trust and camaraderie, making the team greater than the sum of its parts.
- ◯ **2)** Leading discussions and advocating for innovative ideas, ensuring diverse perspectives are heard and integrated to drive critical outcomes.
- ◯ **3)** Analyzing data to inform strategic decisions, contributing to planning sessions that anticipate trends and drive sustainable growth.
- ◯ **4)** Taking ownership of projects, managing timelines and resources effectively to achieve measurable results from inception to completion.

What are you passionate about?

- ◯ **1)** You are passionate about fostering inclusive team environments where collaboration and synergy enhance collective achievements beyond individual capabilities.
- ◯ **2)** You are passionate about advocating for diverse perspectives to drive meaningful change and innovation through effective communication and leadership.
- ◯ **3)** You are passionate about analyzing data to inform decisions and contribute to strategic initiatives that promote organizational growth and success.
- ◯ **4)** You are passionate about project management and delivering measurable results that contribute directly to achieving organizational objectives and excellence.

What kind of impact do you want to make?

- ◯ **1)** You want to foster a collaborative team environment where trust and synergy lead to collective success greater than the sum of its parts.
- ◯ **2)** You want to ensure diverse voices are heard and integrated into decision-making processes, driving positive change and outcomes through effective advocacy.
- ◯ **3)** You want to provide critical insights that inform strategic decisions, enabling organizational adaptation and success in a dynamic environment.
- ◯ **4)** You want to effectively manage projects to achieve tangible outcomes that contribute significantly to organizational success and growth.

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You may have noticed a theme — each answer correlates with one of the four CliftonStrengths domains. The four domains are the natural groupings of CliftonStrengths based on how strengths help people work together to accomplish goals.

Each answer correlates with one of the four CliftonStrengths domains.

1	2	3	4
Relationship Building	**Influencing**	**Strategic Thinking**	**Executing**

Take a minute to look back over your answers and add up your responses below.

Relationship Building	Influencing	Strategic Thinking	Executing

Which domain(s) appeared most frequently in your responses?

Here's what your dominant domain(s) says about you and how you work best.

1) Relationship Building

High-performing teams rely on people with strong Relationship Building themes to bring individuals together and make the team greater than the sum of its parts. When your team needs to become stronger and more cohesive, look to people with Relationship Building themes. They can unite the group and galvanize them to achieve shared success. They are the bond that holds great teams together.

2) Influencing

High-performing teams rely on people with strong Influencing themes because they take charge, speak up and make sure others are heard. When your team needs to sell its ideas and persuade others, look to people with Influencing themes. They can help your team reach a much broader audience and convince others to aid in accomplishing your goals.

3) Strategic Thinking

High-performing teams rely on people with strong Strategic Thinking themes to absorb and analyze information that informs better decisions. When your team needs to become more creative and innovative, look to people with Strategic Thinking themes. They can stretch the team's thinking for the future and inspire new ideas that can lead to high performance.

4) Executing

High-performing teams rely on people with strong Executing themes because they make things happen. When your team needs to get things done, look to people with Executing themes. They can take an idea and make it a reality. And they'll work tirelessly to accomplish the goal.

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How to Determine If a Job Is the Right Fit for You

RB **If you lead with Relationship Building strengths, you may want to consider asking these questions in an interview:**

- What is the culture like?
- Can you describe the onboarding process for new employees and how it helps them integrate into the team and build relationships?
- How does the company support employee wellbeing and work-life balance?
- What does communication and feedback look like within the workplace?

I **If you lead with Influencing strengths, you may want to consider asking these questions in an interview:**

- What resources are available for employees who want to enhance their leadership skills or pursue leadership training?
- What opportunities are there for employees to lead or contribute to cross-functional projects or initiatives?
- How have employees been able to lead positive change within the organization?
- How are leadership roles assigned and developed here?
- Can you describe the leadership style within the company?

ST **If you lead with Strategic Thinking strengths, you may want to consider asking these questions in an interview:**

- What metrics or key performance indicators (KPIs) does the company use to measure the success of its strategic initiatives?
- Can you provide examples of recent strategic projects or decisions that have had a significant impact on the company's success?
- What support or resources are available for employees who want to enhance their strategic thinking skills?
- How does the company adapt its strategy in response to changes in the market or industry?

E **If you lead with Executing strengths, you may want to consider asking these questions in an interview:**

- What project management methodologies or frameworks does the company use, and how are they applied in practice?
- What support or resources are available to project teams to help them overcome obstacles and ensure successful project delivery?
- How does the company measure the success of its projects, and what lessons are learned from both successes and failures?
- How does the company foster a culture of accountability and ownership among project team members?

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Now that you've thought about what's important to you, how you work best and what roles fit your strengths, take some time to note what you've learned about yourself and what you're looking for in your career.

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