

FAMILY INSIGHTS™

Parent version

*"How blessed is the one who finds wisdom,
and the one who finds understanding".
Proverbs 3:13*

John Doe

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Understanding Strengths and Blending Differences

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome! You have just taken a significant step in the process of understanding the unique strengths that God has designed in you. This report will provide insight into your natural strengths and how those strengths are operating in your life. As you learn more about yourself and God's plan for the uniqueness of strengths, you will also begin recognizing and valuing the strengths in others.

There are several sections in this report and each contributes to the knowledge and understanding that will produce the greatest transformation in your relationships. Therefore, please commit yourself to read and explore this report completely.

In I Corinthians 12:12-18 we read that although the body is one, it is made up of many parts. Each part has a vital function and is no less a part of the body because it is different. As you study the passage, it is apparent that God not only intentionally created differences, but He designed them very specifically. God's desire in our relationships is for our differences to unite us not divide us. These Biblical principles establish a foundation for understanding ourselves, our spouse, our children and God's plan for our differences. As we start to see that our differences are strengths when allowed to function as God designed it will be truly transformational.

The mission of Ministry Insights is to transform relationships worldwide. We believe this transformation takes place as you discover God's plan for your unique strengths and the unique strengths of others he has placed in your life. As you learn more about yourself and others it is our prayer that your eyes will be opened to clearly see God's divine design for differences.

Additional supporting resources are available at www.ministryinsights.com.

THE SCALES

Interpreting Your Natural Strength Chart

Let's begin with a look at your natural strengths. Your Natural Strengths Chart presents a visual picture of the predictable ways that you naturally approach or respond to problems, information, change and risk. In each of these four scales, there are two different strengths that you may possess; therefore, there are eight strength possibilities.

There is a vertical line in the center of the chart that is referred to as the energy line. Proceeding in each direction from that line is a 10 point scale. The number on the scale indicates the intensity of the strength. There may be situations in which you utilize a strength different from your natural strength, but it will require energy for you to do so. (This will be discussed further in later sections)

If your score on any scale is within 1 points of the energy line, it is indicated as neutral. This means you can move towards either of the strengths outlined in the scales based on the current situation. As opposed to someone that exhibits a clearly observable strength in an area, it will not require as much energy for you to move from one strength to the other in that area. You will tend to take a neutral position until you understand clearly what strength is required.

These strengths are a part of who you are and will remain relatively consistent over time. Typically only very small changes in your natural strengths are observed throughout your life. It is not often that we see major shifts in someone's natural strengths, but it is possible. Such a shift is normally due to a major life changing event.

The Problem Solving Scale (L Scale)

Your score on this scale indicates whether your natural strength is more reflective or aggressive in the way in which you approach problems. If you plot on the reflective side of the scale, we can predict that you will take a more reflective or calculating approach to solving a problem or challenge. If you plot on the aggressive side of the scale, it is predictable that when a problem or challenge arises you will take a more aggressive or assertive approach to solving that problem. Depending on the problem or issue, each side of the scale can highlight an important strength.

THE SCALES

The Processing Information Scale (O Scale)

Your score on this scale indicates whether your natural strength is to be more optimistic or realistic in the way in which you process information. If you plot on the optimistic side of the scale, it is predictable that when processing new information you will be more trusting and accepting. If you plot on the realistic side of the scale, you will be more skeptical and want to validate information before trusting. Again, each side of the scale represents a strength in processing information.

The Managing Change Scale (G Scale)

Your score on this scale indicates whether your natural strength is to be more dynamic or predictable in the way you manage change. If you are on the dynamic side of this scale, you will tend to be fast-paced. You are comfortable managing many projects simultaneously, and you allow change to drive your plan. If you plot on the predictable side of the scale, you will lean toward a slower pace. You prefer to focus on one project at a time, and you tend to want to plan for change. Managing change effectively requires a combination of these strengths.

The Facing Risk Scale (B Scale)

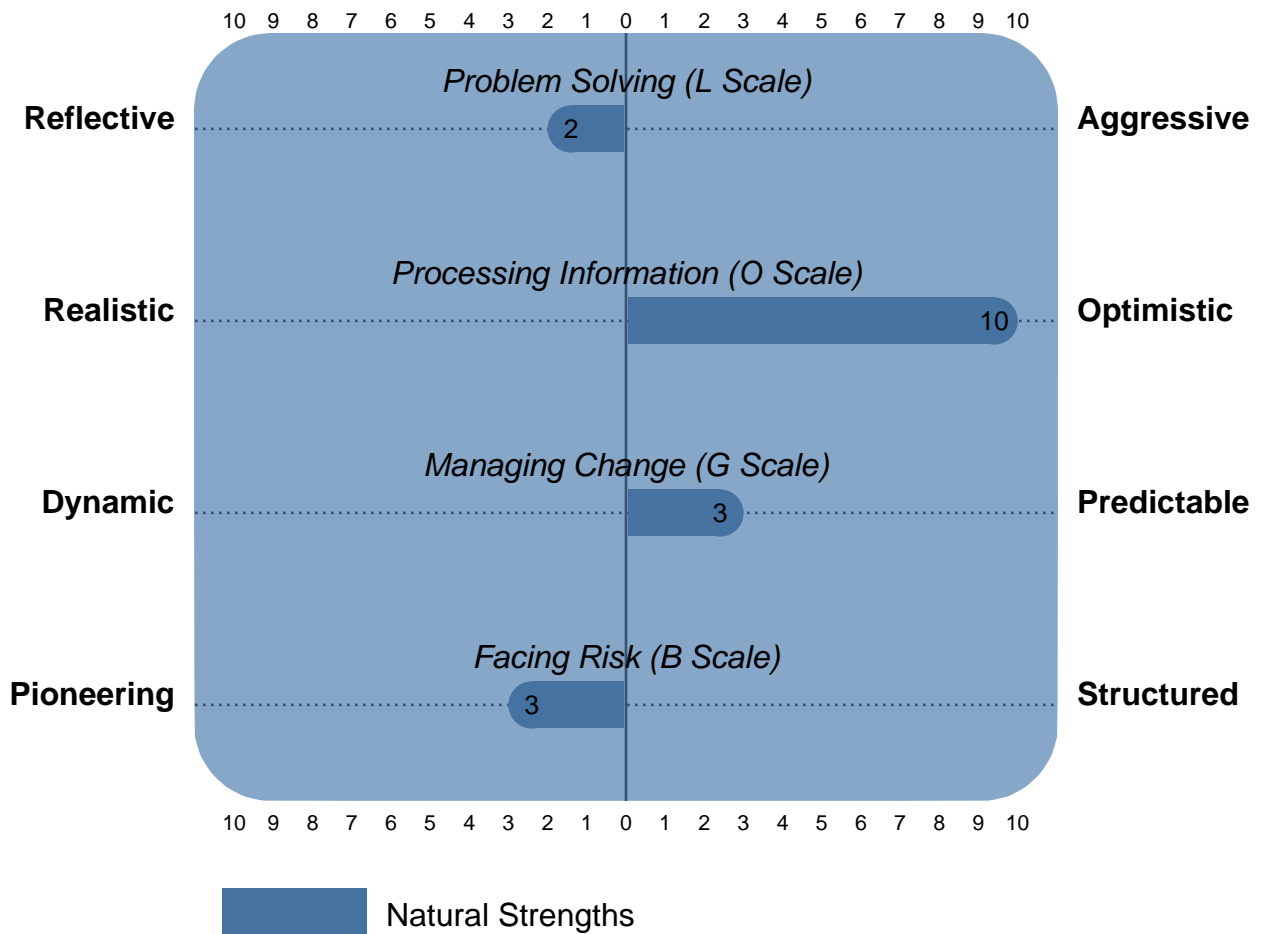
Your score on this scale indicates whether your natural strength is to be more structured or pioneering in the way you face risk. If you are on the structured side of the scale, you will tend to follow the established procedures and rules and see them as a source of protection. Therefore you will tend to be a lower risk taker. If you are on the pioneering side of this scale, you will tend to view rules and established procedures as broad guidelines and tend to push the envelope of risk. You may even view them as obstacles standing in the way of your progress. Each of these strengths is important and needed for balancing the risk scale.

In your relationship you'll find that understanding your natural strengths and those of others in these predictable measures is crucial to building trust, closeness, commitment and caring. In fact, by understanding where your spouse differs in these areas, you may even discover a "great secret" – that the differences of your spouse are actually designed to complement your strengths, enabling you to function in your relationship more fully.

THE SCALES

Here are some last thoughts before you examine and share your strengths chart. The order in which the information on the chart is presented is not an indication that one scale is more important than another. Also, you are a combination of strengths, so while each scale is important individually, they are not independent. Your unique combination of strengths will give you a better understanding of who you are. Therefore, the pages of text that follow your Natural Strengths Chart are essential to help you interpret your mix of strengths into a word picture that will give you a comprehensive understanding of your strengths. They will also serve as an objective platform to facilitate discussion with others.

YOUR NATURAL STRENGTHS CHART



GENERAL STATEMENTS

Understanding your strengths and those of your family members will help you develop effective communication. Based on John's responses, the report has selected statements to provide a basis for understanding his strengths and behavior. Read each statement and discuss it with other family members. Eliminate any statement which EVERYONE agrees does not apply.

- As a parent you often shy away from a confrontation problem than run the risk of offending a member of the family.
- You relate quite naturally to other family members and need the good will from all members.
- Your wild and creative imagination may lead you to hasty conclusions about other family members that may or may not be correct.
- At times you may come across so strongly with a particular idea that you actually oversell the idea to other family members.
- In looking at other family members you often seek a reflection of your own good feelings.
- You can be a very good host, as most people feel very comfortable with your informal and relaxed manner.
- You may have difficulty providing consistent discipline. You discipline the child, but later feel guilty and relax the discipline; for example, "Grounding the kids for two weeks but several days later reducing it to one week."
- You develop friendships easily and can be a great asset to other family members when they need a supportive person involved with their activities.
- Your style shows a natural tendency for a quick mind and you should develop a "think, pause and then talk" routine.
- One of your strengths is keeping the family members happy and satisfied from a human relations standpoint.
- As a parent you are very trusting and sometimes can be taken advantage of by your children.

GENERAL STATEMENTS

- As a parent you may be too indirect when disciplining the children. That is, they may not get the impression they were actually disciplined because you do not like to deal with negatives.
- You usually achieve greater results when other family members pitch in.
- As a parent, you are a good listener and display much empathy while listening to problems affecting other family members.
- You have a unique ability to balance feelings and logic of the situation.
- As a parent you are generally too indirect when giving orders or making demands of the kids.
- You prefer a casual, informal environment instead of a formal one. You might be uncomfortable in an environment where you could not relax and enjoy a friendly conversation with others.
- You have a strong need for personal interaction and involvement with other family members and find this far more rewarding than doing routine household chores.
- You tend to respond to other family members who give you personal attention and make sincere compliments for your role in the family.
- While you are not always aggressive, you will stand up for your beliefs and values when others are presenting a case that contradicts.
- You are sensitive to the interpersonal relationships of family members and you do not like family members engaged in conflict. Because of your skills in solving conflicts, you probably are called upon by the kids to assist in negotiating conflict.
- You may hesitate stating precisely what needs to be said when there is bad news to discuss. Consequently, you find it difficult to create an unfavorable environment.
- As a parent you must realize that others may try to manipulate you and lead you into areas of their own interest.

CHECKLIST FOR COMMUNICATING

This section of the report provides methods for communicating with John. Read and discuss each statement. Identify those statements which are most important to John. Share these statements with other family members. Make a list and practice using them in your daily communication with John.

- Use enough time to be stimulating, fun-loving, fast-moving.
- Provide a warm and friendly environment.
- Ask for his opinions/ideas regarding people.
- Show sincere interest in him as a person; be candid and open.
- Look for hurt feelings, personal reasons, if you disagree.
- Provide a friendly environment.
- Present your case softly, non-threateningly with a sincere tone of voice.
- Provide guarantees that his decision will minimize risks; give assurance that provides him with benefits.
- Ask "how?" questions to draw his opinions.
- Define clearly individual contributions.
- Leave time for relating, socializing.

DON'TS ON COMMUNICATING

This section of the report lists the things NOT to do when communicating with John. Read each statement and identify those that result in frustration or ineffective communication. Share them with all family members so they can refrain from using these methods.

- Don't talk down to him.
- Don't keep deciding for him, or he'll lose initiative; don't leave him without backup support.
- Don't waste time trying to be impersonal, judgmental, or too task-oriented.
- Don't spend excessive time on the details, put them in writing, and pin him to modes of action.
- Don't take credit for his ideas.
- Don't be abrupt and rapid.
- Don't be dogmatic.
- Don't be vague; don't offer opinions and probabilities.
- Don't manipulate or bully him into agreeing, because he probably won't fight back.
- Don't patronize or demean him by using subtlety or incentive.
- Don't rush headlong into the problems of the day.

COMMUNICATING WITH OTHERS

This section provides suggestions on methods which will improve John's communications with others. By understanding how other people like to communicate, John will become more effective in his communication. He may have to practice some flexibility in varying his communication style with others who may be different from himself. This blending and the ability to interpret the needs and strengths of others is the mark of a superior communicator.

<p>When communicating with a "Beaver" ... a person who is dependent, neat, conservative, perfectionist, careful and compliant:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Prepare your "case" in advance. ■ Stick to business. ■ Be accurate and realistic. <p>Factors that will create tension or dissatisfaction:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Being giddy, casual, informal, loud. ■ Pushing too hard or being unrealistic with deadlines. ■ Being disorganized or messy. 	<p>When communicating with a "Lion" ... a person who is ambitious, forceful, decisive, strong-willed, independent and goal-oriented:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Be clear, specific, brief and to the point. ■ Stick to business. ■ Be prepared with support material in a well-organized "package." <p>Factors that will create tension or dissatisfaction:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Talking about things that are not relevant to the issue. ■ Don't leave loopholes or cloudy issues. ■ Avoid appearing disorganized.
<p>When communicating with a "Golden Retriever" ... a person who is patient, predictable, reliable, steady, relaxed and modest:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Begin with a personal comment--break the ice. ■ Present your case softly, nonthreateningly. ■ Ask "how?" questions to draw their opinions. <p>Factors that will create tension or dissatisfaction:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Rushing headlong into business. ■ Being domineering or demanding. ■ Forcing them to respond quickly to your objectives. 	<p>When communicating with an "Otter" ... a person who is magnetic, enthusiastic, friendly, demonstrative and political:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Provide a warm and friendly environment. ■ Don't deal with a lot of details (put them in writing). ■ Ask "feeling" questions to draw their opinions or comments. <p>Factors that will create tension or dissatisfaction:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Being curt, cold or tight-lipped. ■ Controlling the conversation. ■ Driving on facts and figures, alternatives, abstractions.

PERCEPTIONS

A person's actions and feelings may be quickly telegraphed to others. This section provides additional information on your self-perception and how, under certain conditions, others may perceive your actions. Understanding this section will enable you to balance your emotions to be successful in different situations.

"See Yourself As Others See You"

SELF-PERCEPTION

You usually see yourself as being:

Enthusiastic
Charming
Persuasive

Outgoing
Inspiring
Optimistic

OTHERS' PERCEPTION

Under moderate pressure, tension, stress or fatigue, others may see you as being:

Self-Promoting
Overly Optimistic

Glib
Unrealistic

And, under extreme pressure, stress or fatigue, others may see you as being:

Overly Confident
Poor Listener

Talkative
Self-Promoter

ACTION PLAN

To relate more effectively with _____, I need to:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

To relate more effectively with _____, I need to:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

To relate more effectively with _____, I need to:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

The Communication skills I need to develop are:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

I agree to practice the listed communication techniques and develop communication skills in the areas indicated.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

STRENGTHS MOVEMENT

During your response to the online questionnaire we were able to identify more than just your natural strengths. We also identified your strengths movement. Strengths movement is a measure of how the current environment impacts your natural strengths. Some environmental issues impact your strengths in a positive way and some negative. The Strengths Movement Chart illustrates this impact on your natural strengths.

As stated earlier, your natural strengths will typically remain stable over time. However, it is common for you to adapt to your current environment based on your perception of whether your strengths are being valued or discounted, or whether they are different than what may be required by your current role.

The Strengths Movement Chart provides a picture of how much you feel you need to "change" or "adapt" your natural strengths to match the needs or requirements of your current environment. You will see the same strength indicators from your natural strengths chart, but an additional indicator is overlaid that displays a measurement of your strengths movement. That movement can be positive or negative, or there may be areas where there is no movement.

Areas without any movement could indicate that your natural strengths are in alignment with your environment. Areas that have positive movement could indicate that the environment may require you to use more of that strength. In both of these scenarios, you will typically feel valued and comfortable.

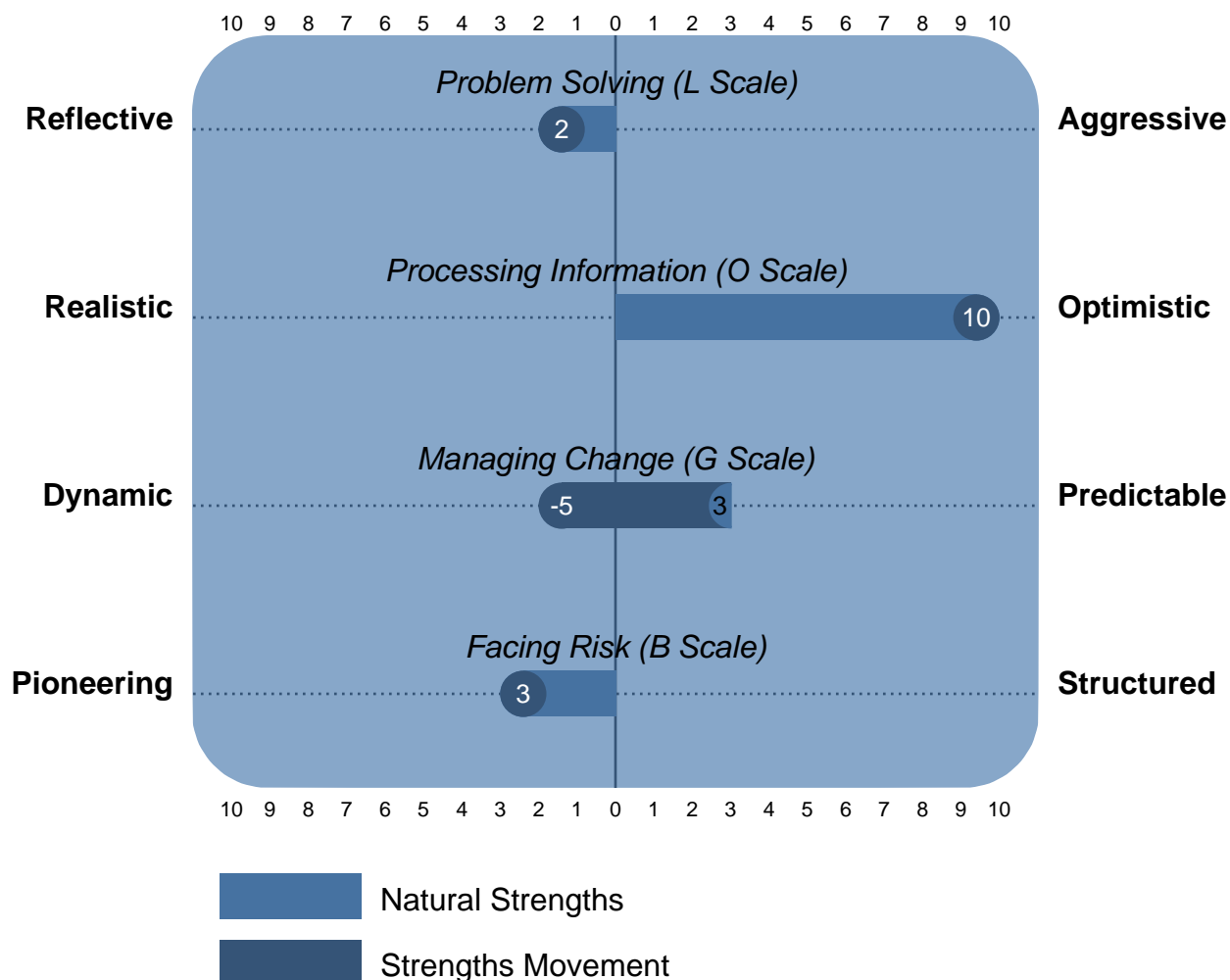
If there is negative movement in a scale, you may feel that your environment requires you to be something other than what you naturally are. You may want to explore these areas further. As you do, keep in mind that some adaptation is good and also necessary. However, long term adaptation consumes energy and can lead to stress and frustration. The greater the degree of movement away from your natural strength, the greater the degree of energy you are expending to adapt.

Changes in your current environment can dramatically impact the movement in your strengths. Therefore, it is our recommendation that you retake this assessment on an annual basis, or sooner, if there are significant changes in your current environment. This will provide an objective point of reference and help you to focus your natural strengths.

Following the Strengths Movement Chart are pages that interpret your strength movement mix into a word picture to help you explore this movement in your strengths. These subsequent text pages and the strengths movement chart can serve as an objective platform to facilitate discussion with others in your current environment.

YOUR STRENGTHS MOVEMENT CHART

As you review this chart, pay special attention to areas where the movement is away from your natural strengths. Negative movement of 5 points or more and especially movement across the center (energy) line are areas that could be costing you energy and should be explored further.



HOW ARE YOU HAVING TO "ADAPT?"

This list of descriptions can give you a picture of the way you feel you may need to respond to your current home environment and parenting duties to be successful. If these statements DO NOT sound related, explore the reasons why as a key to understanding your current situation and need to "adapt" in your home environment.

- Being more flexible.
- Responding well to challenges: "You say I can't do it? Just watch me!"
- Exhibiting independence.
- Using a direct, forthright and honest approach in his communications.
- Being creative and unconventional in making a point.
- Maintaining an ever-changing, friendly, home environment.
- Optimistic, future-oriented outlook.
- Making tactful decisions concerning family matters.
- Willing to take risks when your other family members may be more hesitant.
- Using a creative approach in decision making.
- Acting independently and without precedent.
- Dedicated to "going it alone" when necessary.
- Positive, outgoing, friendly behavior.

THE STRENGTHS WHEEL

The Strengths Wheel is a powerful visual tool to help you see the natural strengths of your relationship or family. It can also help you understand how the relationship or family is moving their strengths collectively to meet the demands of the current environment.

To take advantage of the Strengths Wheel create a master Strengths Wheel that contains each person's "Natural Strengths" and "Strengths Movement". This allows for quick identification of potential issues and alignment.

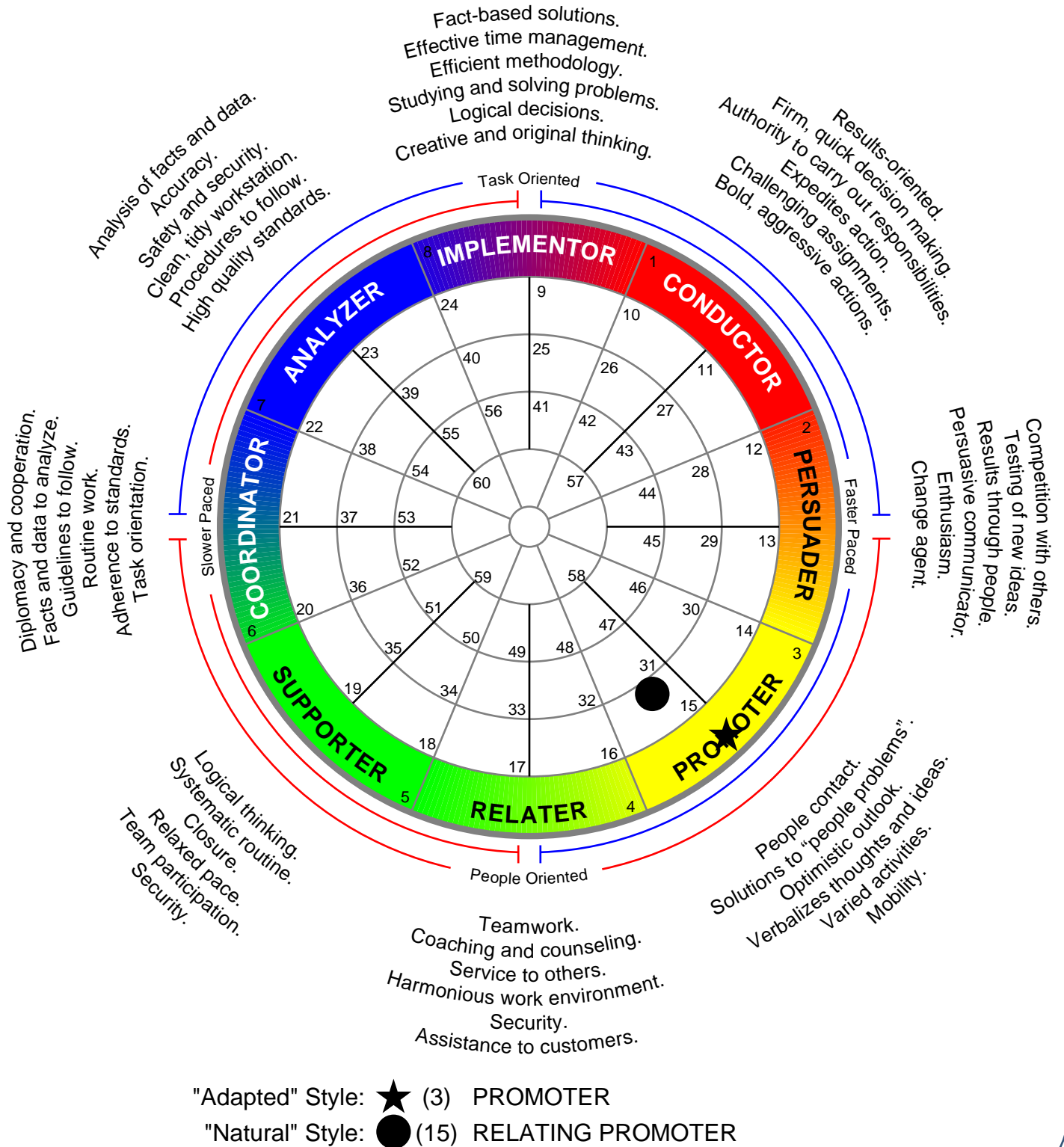
The circle represents your natural strengths. The star represents your strengths movement. The Strengths Wheel is divided down and across the middle. By looking at the top of the Strengths Wheel you will see that the L and B scales have something in common. They both represent task orientation. At the bottom of the wheel you will see that the G and O scales represent people orientation.

Taking another look at the wheel and you will see on the left side the B and G scales have something in common as well. They are slower paced. The opposite side of the wheel you will see that the L and O scales are faster paced.

Putting all the pieces together can give us a powerful picture of your relationship or family. It can drive objective discussion about what the natural strengths are and how each person feels they need to move, as a whole, to succeed in the current environment.

Remember this is not designed to be absolute but to drive discussion.

THE STRENGTHS WHEEL



YOUR STYLE ANALYSIS GRAPH

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