

FAMILY INSIGHTS™

Parent version

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

Parent Doe

Middle School Minister

Dawson

9-10-2012

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 you 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)

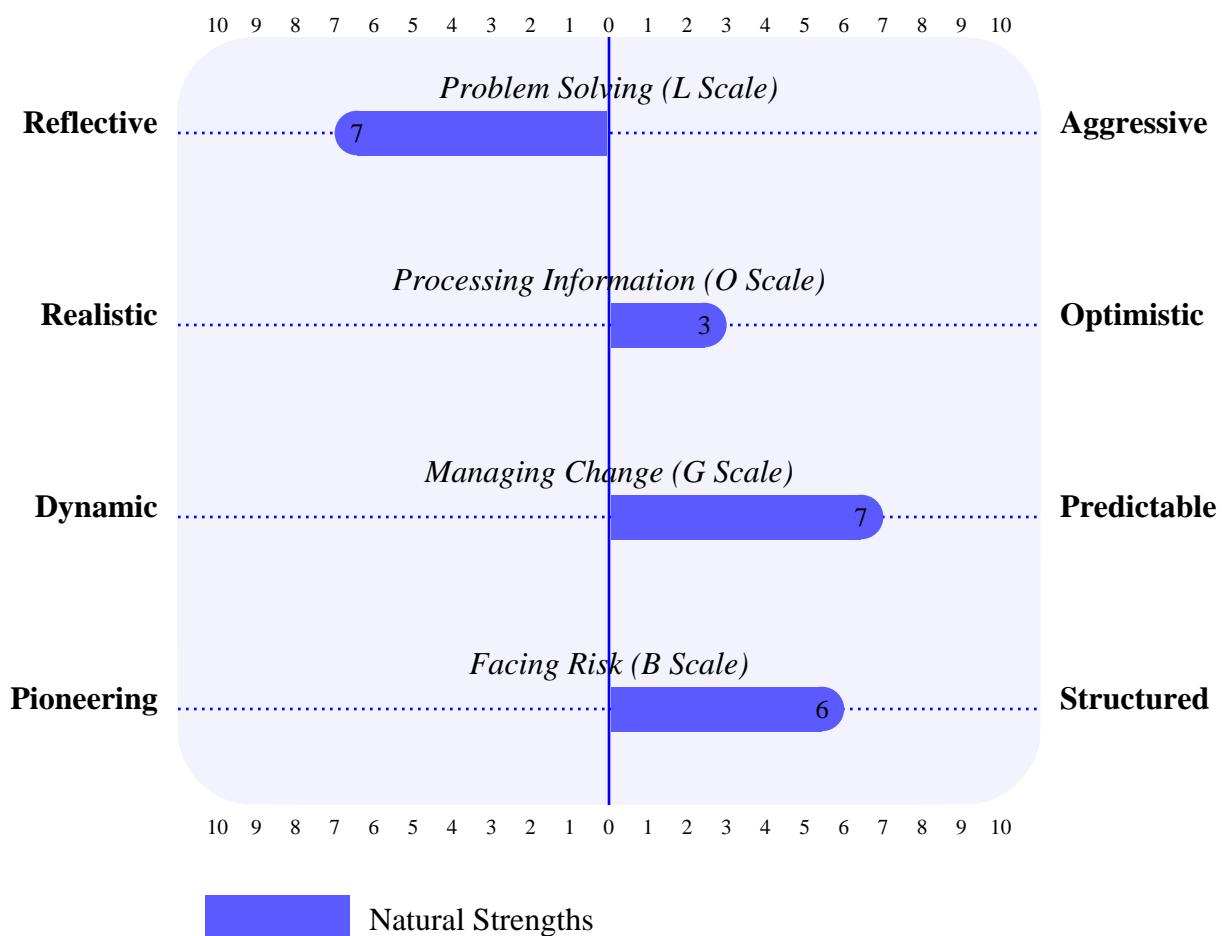
Your score on this scale indicates whether your natural strength is to be more structured or pioneering in the way you face risk. If you are on the structured side of the scale, you will tend to follow the established procedures and rules and see them as a source of protection. Therefore you will tend 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 Parent's responses, the report has selected statements to provide a basis for understanding her 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 need to be a little less sensitive to what other family members are thinking.
- You can be very influential with other family members because of your listening and questioning skills.
- You would rather withhold unpleasant information than run the risk of getting involved in a discussion that leads to conflict.
- Cleaning the house sometimes is not nearly as important to you as members of the family having fun and enjoying life.
- You may discover that you can be more dominant and still maintain those good feelings that you want in all your interpersonal relationships.
- As a parent you want to give your children everything that you possibly can and sometimes feel hurt because of the lack of appreciation for your giving nature.
- You find following the direction of others especially easy if you have respect for them.
- Sometimes family members can take advantage of you because you are a giver rather than a taker. They often fail to see some of your real wants and needs.
- You may want to consider being more assertive in your family role when you are sure of your position.
- You are quick to offer your friendship and help to others who need you.
- You are always willing to take the first step in supporting other family members.
- As a parent you generally assist others in understanding and tolerating a situation rather than engaging in an activity to attack the problem.
- You should assess your family duties and consider delegating those duties so that they can be shared with other family members.

GENERAL STATEMENTS

- You need to develop interpersonal skills on how to say "NO" when you feel "NO" even though you are not certain at the time why you feel that "NO" is the best answer.
- You have difficulty saying "NO", especially if it will lead to confrontation.
- Sometimes you may need to be more independent and assert yourself. Especially express your own personal interest and feelings.
- You should practice being more direct and open and sharing your thoughts and ideas with other family members.
- Depending upon the style of other family members, you need to develop the interpersonal skills of facing confrontation.
- As a parent you must realize that tension and conflict are unavoidable and that you can produce the desired results if you plan and manage the conflict.
- Others see you as a hard worker, but they may not understand just how hard you will work when they give you personal attention that you need in your relationship.
- Many family members will see you as a satisfier. That is, you like an environment where everyone is happy and you usually provide the services that will help maintain that environment.
- You may require developing skills to challenge your spouse and children instead of just acquiescing and agreeing with them.
- As a parent you tend to think things through before taking action.
- Your listening skills often put other family members totally at ease.

CHECKLIST FOR COMMUNICATING

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

- Provide solid, tangible, practical evidence.
- Keep conversation at a discussion level.
- Be prepared.
- Provide a friendly environment.
- Patiently draw out personal goals and work with her to help her achieve those goals; listen; be responsive.
- Provide personal assurances, clear, specific solutions to problems.
- Take time to be sure that she is in agreement and understands what you said.
- Look for hurt feelings, personal reasons, if you disagree.
- Define clearly individual contributions.
- Limit your use of gestures.
- Talk casually, informally.
- Be sincere and use a tone of voice that shows sincerity.
- Give her time to ask questions.

DON'TS ON COMMUNICATING

This section of the report lists the things NOT to do when communicating with Parent. 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 in a loud voice or use confrontation.
- Don't patronize or demean her by using subtlety or incentive.
- Don't be abrupt and rapid.
- Don't debate about facts and figures.
- Don't be domineering or demanding; don't threaten with position power.
- Don't keep deciding for her, or she'll lose initiative; don't leave her without backup support.
- Don't make promises you cannot deliver.
- Don't give your presentation in random order.
- Don't push too hard, or be unrealistic with deadlines.
- Don't be vague; don't offer opinions and probabilities.
- Don't be haphazard.
- Don't offer assurance and guarantees you can't fulfill.

COMMUNICATING WITH OTHERS

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

When communicating with a "Beaver" ... a person who is dependent, neat, conservative, perfectionist, careful and compliant:

- Prepare your "case" in advance.
- Stick to business.
- Be accurate and realistic.

Factors that will create tension or dissatisfaction:

- Being giddy, casual, informal, loud.
- Pushing too hard or being unrealistic with deadlines.
- Being disorganized or messy.

When communicating with a "Lion" ... a person who is ambitious, forceful, decisive, strong-willed, independent and goal-oriented:

- Be clear, specific, brief and to the point.
- Stick to business.
- Be prepared with support material in a well-organized "package."

Factors that will create tension or dissatisfaction:

- Talking about things that are not relevant to the issue.
- Don't leave loopholes or cloudy issues.
- Avoid appearing disorganized.

When communicating with a "Golden Retriever" ... a person who is patient, predictable, reliable, steady, relaxed and modest:

- Begin with a personal comment--break the ice.
- Present your case softly, nonthreateningly.
- Ask "how?" questions to draw their opinions.

Factors that will create tension or dissatisfaction:

- Rushing headlong into business.
- Being domineering or demanding.
- Forcing them to respond quickly to your objectives.

When communicating with an "Otter" ... a person who is magnetic, enthusiastic, friendly, demonstrative and political:

- 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.

Factors that will create tension or dissatisfaction:

- 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:

Considerate
Good-Natured
Team player

Thoughtful
Dependable
Good listener

OTHERS' PERCEPTION

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

Nondemonstrative
Unconcerned

Hesitant
Inflexible

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

Possessive
Detached

Stubborn
Insensitive

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.

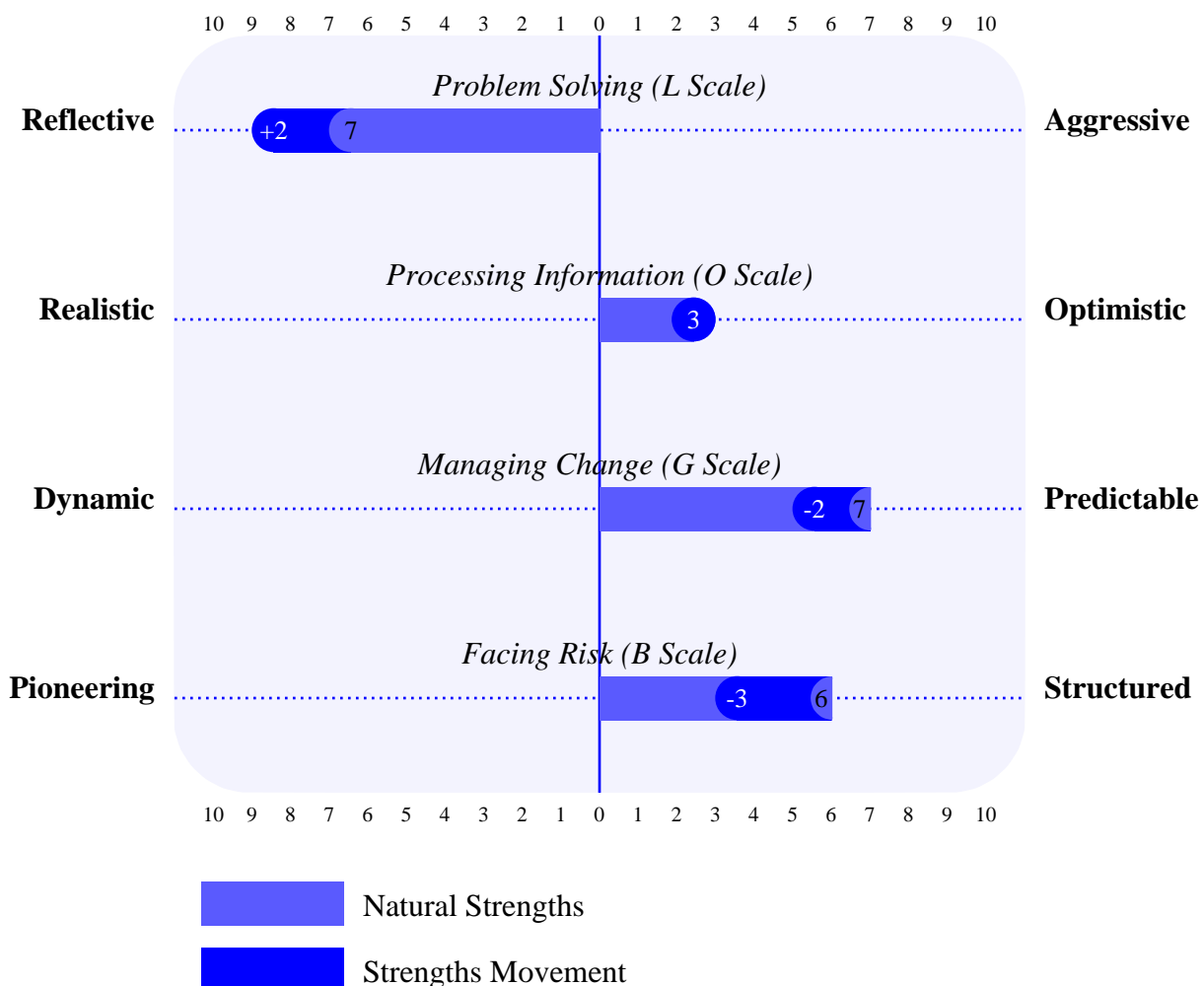
If there is negative movement in a scale, you may feel that your environment requires you to be something other than what you naturally are. You may want to explore these areas further. As you do, keep in mind that some adaptation is good and also necessary. However, long term adaptation consumes energy 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 approachable and helpful when dealing with issues and new ideas.
- Logical solutions.
- Undemanding of family's time and attention.
- Presenting a practical, proven approach to decision making.
- Being a good "team player."
- Limited or prepared changes in routine.
- Exhibiting patience and good listening skills with your children.
- Freedom from confrontation in parent-child relationships.
- Being conservative, not competitive, in nature.
- Striving faithfully to meet the expectations of your children and extended family.
- Diplomatic cooperation in family interaction.

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.

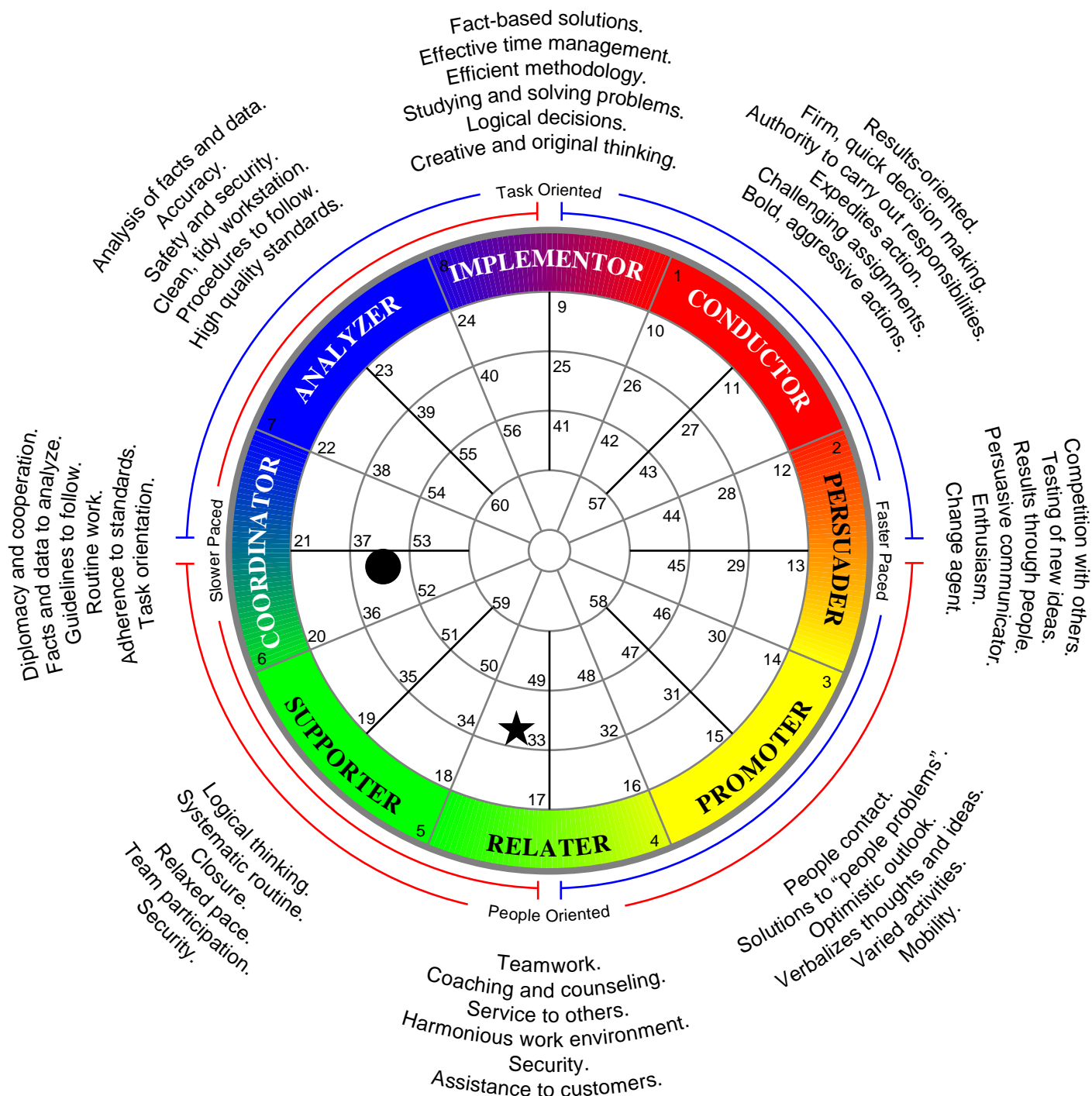
The circle represents your natural strengths. The star represents your strengths movement. The Strengths Wheel is divided down and across the middle. By looking at the top of the Strengths Wheel you will see that the L and B scales have something in common. They both represent task orientation. At the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



"Adapted" Style: ★ (33) SUPPORTING RELATER

"Natural" Style: ● (36) SUPPORTING COORDINATOR

YOUR STYLE ANALYSIS GRAPH

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