



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

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8-27-2009

Understanding Strengths and Blending Differences

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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 and our relationships and to see that our differences are strengths when allowed to function as God designed.

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. 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](http://www.ministryinsights.com).



## 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 2 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.

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### 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.

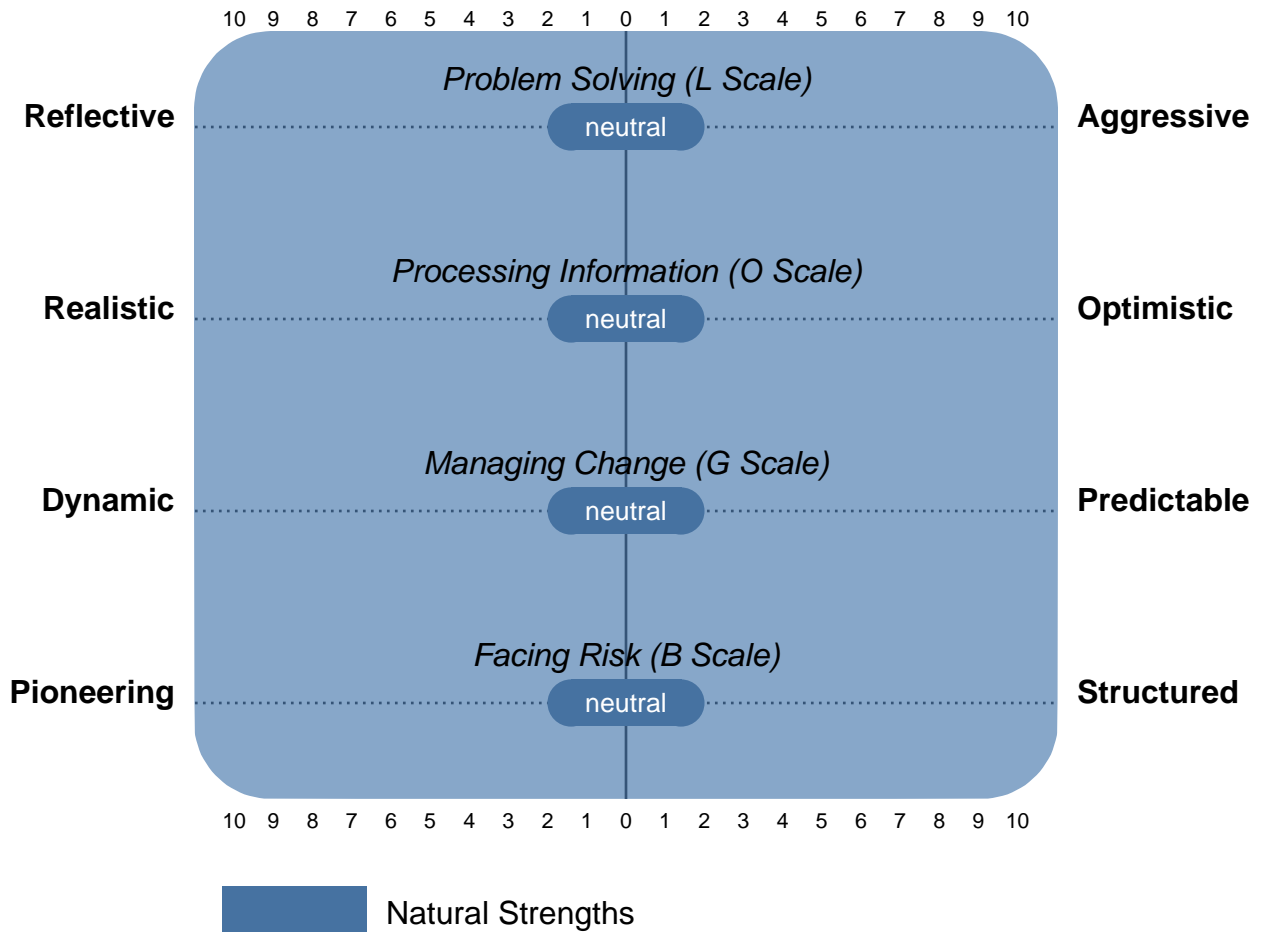
In any relationship – from the team you work with, to your closest friendships, to your marriage, or even your relationship with your children – you'll find that understanding your natural strengths and those of others in these predictable measures is crucial to building trust, closeness, commitment and caring. In fact, by understanding where people differ in these areas, you may even discover a “great secret” – that the differences of others are actually designed to complement your strengths, enabling you to function in that relationship more fully. Living out our strengths and valuing the strengths of others allows us to be more than we can be on our own.



Here are some last thoughts before you move on to 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 CHARACTERISTICS

*Based on John's responses, the report has selected general statements to provide a broad understanding of his strengths. These statements identify the "Natural" strengths that he brings to the position or relationship. That is, if left on his own, these statements identify how he would choose to carry out his work and relate to others. Use the general characteristics to gain a better understanding of John's "Natural" strengths.*

John is forward-looking, aggressive and competitive. His vision for results is one of his positive strengths. He will work hard at achieving his goals. He loves to succeed and hates to fail. He embraces visions not always seen by others. John's creative mind allows him to see the "big picture." He likes people, but can be seen occasionally as cold and blunt. He may have his mind on project results, and sometimes may not take the time to be empathetic toward others. Some may view him as being stubborn and opinionated. He views it as the price you must pay for success. He may try to "explain" his unyielding persistence in positive terms. He can be successful at many things, not because of versatility but rather because of his determination to succeed. He is an aggressive individual who succeeds through hard work and persistence; that is, he will come up with a good idea and follow through. He establishes many standards for himself and others. His high degree of confidence in himself demands that his standards will be met. John appreciates others who are team players and will reward those who are loyal. He prefers being a team player, and wants each player to contribute along with him.



## GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS

John can be direct in his approach to discovering the facts and data. He maintains his focus on results. He has the unique ability of tackling tough problems and following them through to a satisfactory conclusion. Logic and people who have the facts and data to support this logic influence him. He admires the patience required to gather facts and data. He finds it easy to share his opinions on solving work-related problems. John is a good problem solver and troubleshooter, always seeking new ways to solve old problems. Sometimes he may be so opinionated about a particular problem that he has difficulty letting others participate in the process. He is logical, incisive and critical in his problem-solving activities. He should realize that at times he needs to think a project through, beginning to end, before starting the project.

John may lose interest in what others are saying if they ramble or don't speak to the point. His active mind is already moving ahead. When communicating with others, John must carefully avoid being excessively critical or pushy. He tries to get on with the subject, while others may be trying to work through the details. He could improve his communication with others by being more flexible and showing a sincere interest in what they are saying. He is not influenced by people who are overly enthusiastic. They rarely get his attention. John is influenced by people who communicate with a logical presentation of the facts, impressed by the apparent efficiency involved. He likes people



## GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS

who present their case effectively. When they do, he can then make a quicker assessment or decision. He challenges people who volunteer their opinions. He likes people who give him options as compared to their opinions. The options may help him make decisions, and he values his own opinion over that of others!



## VALUE TO THE TEAM

*This section of the report identifies the specific talents and strengths John brings to the ministry. By looking at these statements, one can better identify his role. Understanding these strengths can help capitalize on John's God-given strengths that make him an integral part of the team.*

- Excellent troubleshooter.
- Self-starter.
- Tenacious.
- Challenge-oriented.
- Tough-minded.
- Creative in his approach to solving problems.
- Often joins organizations or clubs to represent the ministry.
- Objective and realistic.
- Innovative.



## CHECKLIST FOR COMMUNICATING

*Many people find this section to be extremely accurate and important for enhancing communication with John. Whether at work, home or in the ministry, understanding how best to communicate with others can be a great relationship asset. This page provides a list of things to DO when communicating with John. Review each statement with John to identify the statements which are most important to him. We recommend highlighting the most important "DO's" and provide this list to those who communicate with John frequently.*

### Do:

- Motivate and persuade by referring to objectives and results.
- Be clear, specific, brief and to the point.
- Provide details in writing.
- Use the proper buzz words that are appropriate to his expertise.
- Be prepared with the facts and figures.
- Stick to business--let him decide if he wants to talk socially.
- Respect his quiet demeanor.
- Take issue with facts, not the person, if you disagree.
- Support and maintain an environment where he can be efficient.
- Show him a sincere demeanor by careful attention to his point of view.
- Be patient and persistent.
- Listen to him.
- Use expert testimonials.



# DON'TS ON COMMUNICATING

*This section of the report is a list of things NOT to do while communicating with John. Review each statement with John and identify those methods of communication that result in frustration or reduced performance. By sharing this information, both parties can negotiate a communication system that is mutually agreeable.*

## Don't:

- Be disorganized.
- Speculate wildly, or offer guarantees and assurances where there is a risk in meeting them.
- Ramble on, or waste his time.
- Use inappropriate buzz words.
- Forget or lose things, be disorganized or messy, confuse or distract his mind from important tasks.
- Touch him when talking.
- Leave things open to interpretation.
- Use high speed, intense inputs.
- Let disagreement reflect on him personally.
- Ask rhetorical questions, or useless ones.
- Direct or order.
- Pretend to be an expert, if you are not.



## IDEAL ENVIRONMENT

*This section identifies the ideal environment based on John's God-given strengths or "Natural" Style. Use this section to identify specific duties and responsibilities that John enjoys and also those that may create frustration.*

- Projects that produce tangible results.
- An innovative and futuristic-oriented environment.
- Private place to work.
- Evaluation based on results, not the process.
- Data to analyze.
- Forum to express ideas and viewpoints.
- Environment where he can be a part of the team, but removed from politics or high emotions.



## KEYS TO MOTIVATING

*Understanding what motivates a person is often found by understanding what it is he wants or values. This section of the report can help understand John's wants and desires. Those statements that ring true, but aren't a current part of his ministry, can become goals to reach.*

John wants:

- A wide scope of activities.
- New challenges and problems to solve.
- Control of his own future.
- Prestige, position and titles so he can control the future of others.
- To be seen as a leader.
- Outside activities so there is never a dull moment.
- More time in the day.
- Opportunity to verbalize his ideas and demonstrate his skills.



## KEYS TO LEADING

*In this section are some needs which must be met in order for John to perform at an optimum level. Some needs can be met by himself, while leadership must provide for others. It is difficult for a person to enter a motivational environment when that person's basic needs have not been fulfilled. Review the list with John and identify 3 or 4 statements that are most important to him. This allows John to participate in forming his own personal growth plan.*

John needs:

- Logical answers in logical order.
- The opportunity to ask questions to clarify or determine why.
- To negotiate commitment face-to-face.
- To understand his impact on other people.
- To display empathy for people who approach life differently than he does.
- To understand his role on the team--either a team player or the leader.
- Sincere feedback from others.
- To soften the edge and not be so blunt.
- Sincerity from people with whom he works.
- Skills to come across warm and close, when appropriate.
- To know results expected and to be evaluated on the results.



## AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

*This section lists possible "Natural" limitations or tendencies for John. It does not consider life and work experiences or formal education and training that he may have received to overcome these obstacles. Review with John and cross out those limitations that do not apply. Highlight one to three statements that are hindering his performance and develop an action plan to eliminate or reduce these tendencies.*

John has a tendency to:

- Be argumentative--argues the opposite position to no end--wears down the opposition.
- Have trouble delegating--can't wait, so does it himself.
- Push and pull rather than motivate in directing people--motivates as if everyone has the same strengths that he has.
- Blame, deny and defend his position--even if it is not needed.
- Make "off the cuff" remarks that are often seen as personal prods.
- Lack tact and diplomacy as long as he gets the results he wants.
- Set standards for himself and others so high that impossibility of the situation is common place.



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

## "See Yourself As Others See You"

### SELF-PERCEPTION

John usually sees himself as being:

Pioneering	Assertive
Competitive	Confident
Positive	Winner

### OTHERS' PERCEPTION

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

Demanding	Nervy
Egotistical	Aggressive

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

Abrasive	Controlling
Arbitrary	Opinionated



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.

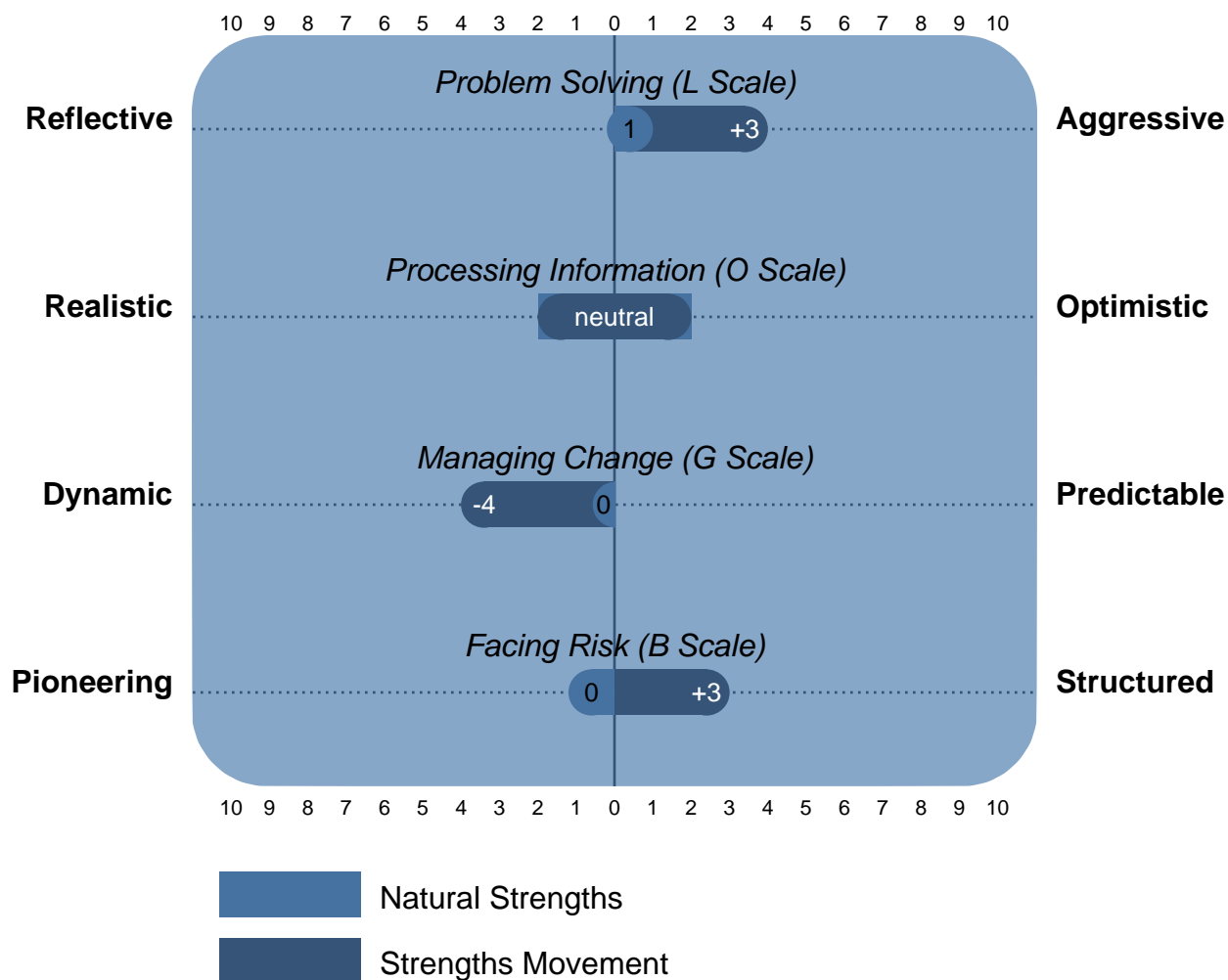
Changes in your current environment can dramatically impact the movement in your strengths. Therefore, it is our recommendation that you retake this assessment on an annual basis, or sooner, if there are significant changes in your current environment. This will provide an objective point of reference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

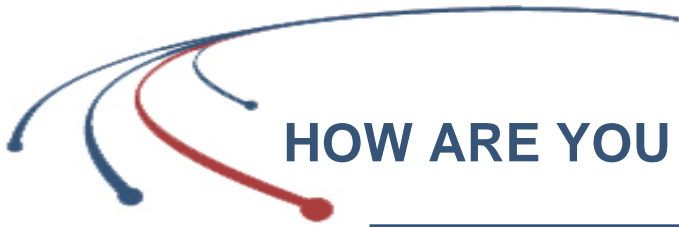
Following the Strengths Movement Chart are pages that interpret your strength movement mix into a word picture to help you explore this movement in your strengths. These subsequent text pages and the strengths movement chart can serve as an objective platform to facilitate discussion with others in your 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 John feels he may need to respond to the current environment to be accepted. If these statements DO NOT sound related, explore the reasons why as a key to understanding John's current situation and his need to "adapt" to be accepted.*

- Being sensitive to, but not necessarily controlled by, rules and procedures.
- Anticipating and solving problems.
- Meeting deadlines.
- Skillful use of vocabulary for persuasive situations.
- Quickly responding to crisis and change, with a strong desire for immediate results.
- Having the ability to see the "big picture" as well as the small pieces of the puzzle.
- Acting without precedent, and able to respond to change in daily work.
- Working without close supervision.
- Persistence in task completion.
- Handling a variety of activities.
- Moving quickly from one activity to another.



## NATURAL AND ADAPTED STYLE

John's "Natural" Style of dealing with problem solving (L), processing information (O), managing change (G) and facing risk (B) may not always fit what the environment needs. This section may provide valuable information related to the stress and pressure John may feel when he "Adapts" his style to the environment.

"Natural" Style	PROBLEMS - CHALLENGES	"Adapted" Style
<p>John is quite inquisitive and wants to be seen as an outwardly competitive person who is adventuresome by nature. He is results-oriented and likes to be innovative in his approach to problem solving. John is not necessarily confrontational by nature, but if a problem does exist he will not turn down the opportunity for confrontation.</p>	<p>John's response to the environment is to be strong-willed and ambitious in his problem-solving approach. He seeks to remove all obstacles.</p>	

"Natural" Style	PEOPLE - INFORMATION	"Adapted" Style
<p>John is factual and logical in his attempt to persuade others. He looks at things in a rather direct and straightforward manner. His approach can be analytical and objective when attempting to influence others.</p>	<p>John feels the environment calls for him to be sociable and optimistic. He will trust others and wants a positive environment in which to relate.</p>	



## NATURAL AND ADAPTED STYLE

"Natural" Style	PACE - CHANGE	"Adapted" Style
<p>John is deliberate and steady. He is willing to change, if the new direction is meaningful and consistent with the past. He will resist change for change's sake.</p>	<p>John wants an environment that is variety-oriented. He feels a great sense of urgency to get things completed quickly. He is eager to accept change and work on many activities.</p>	

"Natural" Style	RULES - RISK	"Adapted" Style
<p>John is somewhat open-minded, but aware and sensitive to the implications of not following the rules. He can display balanced judgment in reviewing procedures. Knowing he is doing things well is a key reinforcement for him.</p>	<p>John is displaying a natural concern for quality and procedures that acquire quality. He wants to know the rules so he can abide by them.</p>	



# THE STRENGTHS WHEEL

The Strengths Wheel is a powerful visual tool to help you see the natural strengths of a team or group of people. It can also help you understand how the team or group is moving their strengths collectively to meet the demands of their current environment. If you are part of a group or team who also took the assessment, it would be advantageous to use each person's Strengths Wheel to 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. Therefore if a team or group clusters in the top of the wheel we can predict the team will be task oriented and vice versa.

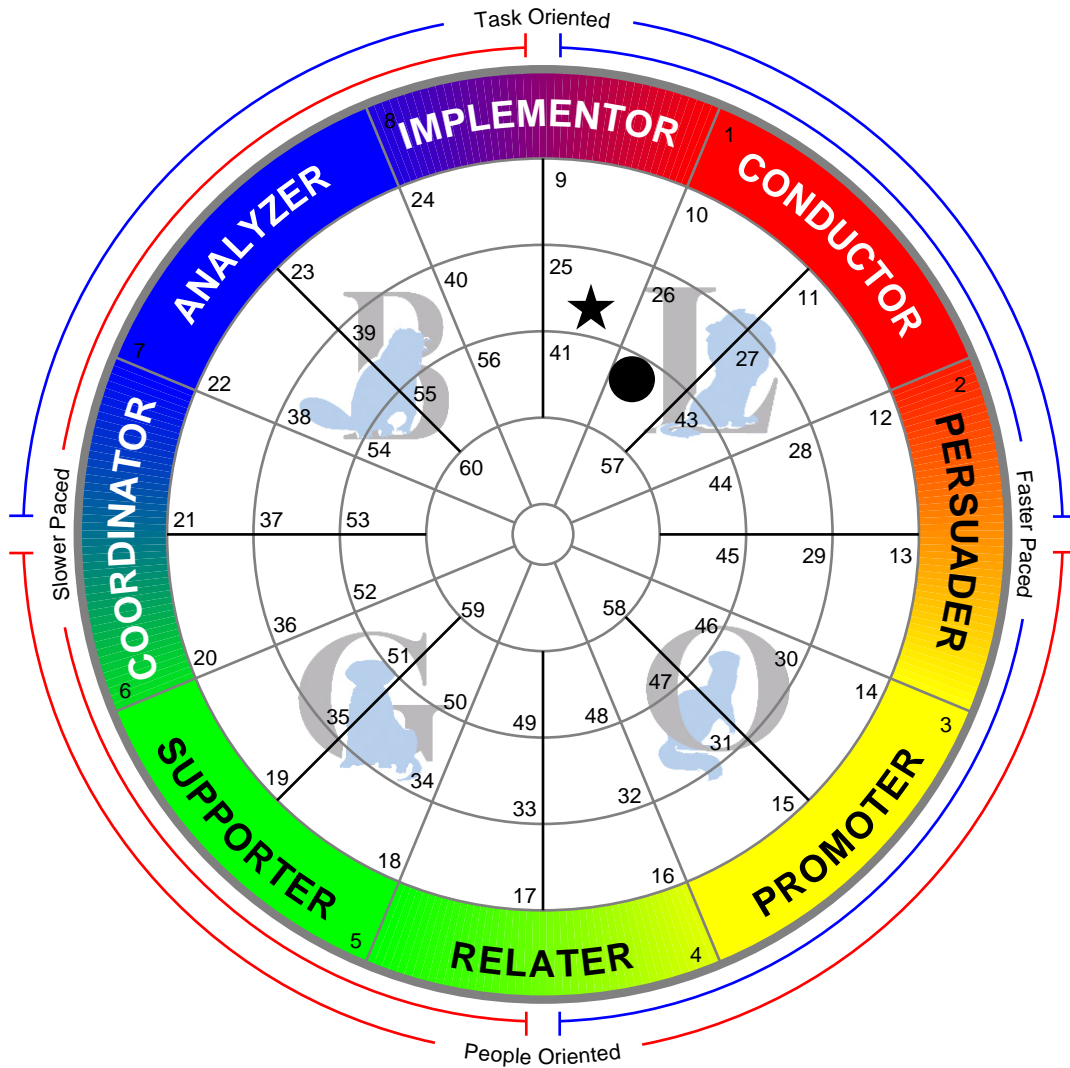
Taking another look at the wheel and you will see on the left side the B and G scales have something in common as well. They are slower paced. The opposite side of the wheel you will see that the L and O scales are faster paced. Therefore if the team or group plotted on the left side of the wheel we could predict a slower paced environment and so on.

Putting all the pieces together can give us a powerful picture of a team. It can drive objective discussion about what the natural strengths of the team are and how the team feels it needs to move, as a whole, to succeed in the current environment.



# THE STRENGTHS WHEEL

**John Doe**  
 ABC Organization  
 8-27-2009



"Adapted" Style: ★ (25) CONDUCTING IMPLEMENTOR

"Natural" Style: ● (42) IMPLEMENTING CONDUCTOR (ACROSS)