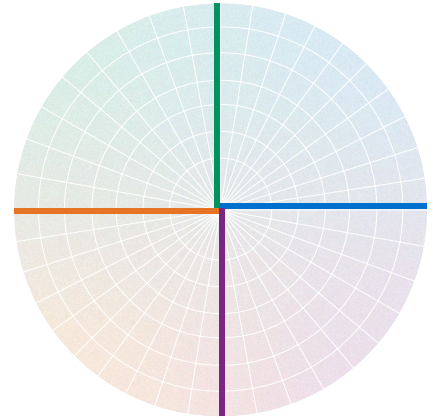CliftonStrengths®

Team Grid Activity: How to Succeed With Our Strengths

Remarkable things happen when team members apply what they naturally do best to the team's goals. Strengths develop and multiply when people are part of a team. But simply being on a team is not sufficient to unlock the potential of strengths.

Teams are most effective when they understand what their talents look like, how to purposefully use them and how to work around areas where they may be lacking.

Successfully aligning talents with goals only happens when team members can answer the following questions:

- What are my talents and strengths?

- What unique contribution do I make to the team?

- How do we best work together using our strengths?

After a team understands how to use each person's strengths, team members quickly find new ways to work together and improve performance. Exceptional teams benefit from regular discussions about each person's strengths in the context of the team and its current goals.

The following pages contain an outline for using the CliftonStrengths Team Grid to help teams explore their unique combination of talents and strengths. You can also use the Your Unique Contribution to the Team activity to lead a conversation about the team's collective talents and strengths.

Team Grid Session: Exploring a Team's Strengths

This session helps team members know and appreciate their collective talents and strengths.

Before This Session

- Build a CliftonStrengths Team Grid.

- Use the completed CliftonStrengths Team Grid to organize observations you want to share with the team and guide your discussion.

- If possible, lead a one-on-one coaching conversation with each team member to help them make sense of their dominant CliftonStrengths themes within the context of the team.

Materials and Resources for This Session

- Print a copy of the CliftonStrengths Team Grid for each team member.

- Print copies of any additional tools or materials you will use or introduce during the team conversation, such as:

    - each team member's CliftonStrengths report

    - the Your Unique Contribution to the Team activity

Opening This Session

- Describe the focus of the team conversation: "Today, we will each take an assessment to discover our unique strengths. Then, I will share our CliftonStrengths Team Grid with you. We will learn everyone's most dominant CliftonStrengths themes and discuss the team's individual and collective talents."

- The goal is for each person to see how their individual talents uniquely contribute to the team.

- Emphasize that this should be a transparent conversation guided by five principles:

    1) Themes are neutral. No themes are better or worse than others.

    2) Themes describe potential, not rigid definitions or stereotypes.

    3) Lead with positive intent.

    4) Differences are advantages.

    5) People need one another.

Four Domains of Team Strength

- While each CliftonStrengths theme has its own power and edge, four distinct theme categories have emerged from Gallup's research on high-performing teams: Executing, Influencing, Relationship Building and Strategic Thinking.

- These domains provide a framework to help individuals explore their important contributions to the team's success. They can also help us think about how team members approach working together and getting work done.

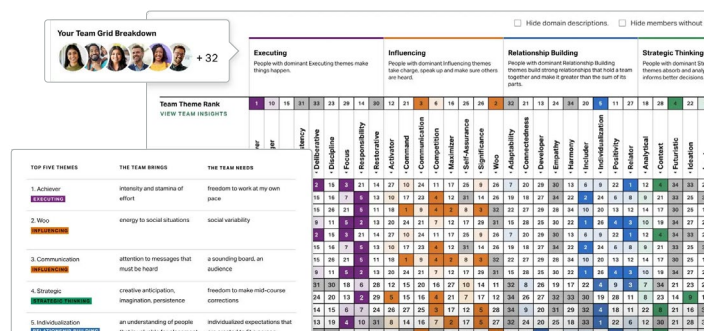| Executing	Influencing	Relationship Building	Strategic Thinking
People with dominant Executing themes know how to make things happen.	People with dominant Influencing themes know how to take charge, speak up and make sure the team is heard.	People with dominant Relationship Building themes have the ability to build strong relationships that can hold a team together and make the team greater than the sum of its parts.	People with dominant Strategic Thinking themes help teams absorb and analyze information that can inform better decisions.

Help Each Team Member Claim Their Unique Contribution

- Distribute copies of the Your Unique Contribution to the Team activity, **found at the end of this document**.

- Relate the purpose of this activity: "Every team is full of talent. The purpose of this activity is to help you start to understand and appreciate how your individual talents uniquely contribute to the team and complement your team members' talents."

- Ask team members to circle their top five CliftonStrengths themes and draw a box around themes six through 10 on the Your Unique Contribution to the Team worksheet, and then answer the questions that follow.

- Lead a team discussion using the questions on the worksheet as a guide.

  - In which domain do you have the most themes?

 - When have you been successful working within your most dominant domain?

  - In which domain do you have the least themes?

  - In which domain do you spend most of your time working?

  - In which domain do you wish you could spend more of your time working?

- Debrief your team after the activity.

  - Communicate the following to your team: "Every team has areas of strength and weakness. Each team has a unique distribution of talents among the four domains, which creates a specialized ability to perform with excellence. Our team is no different. The purpose of this activity is to help us understand how we can use our individual and collective strengths to best achieve our goals."

  - To maximize your efforts, each team member needs to be able to answer three questions:

    1) What are my talents and strengths?

    2) What unique contribution do I make to the team?

    3) How do we best work together using our strengths?

Help the Team Explore the Cliftonstrengths Team Grid

- Distribute copies of the CliftonStrengths Team Grid.

- Relate the purpose of this discussion: "The CliftonStrengths Team Grid is a snapshot view of the team's strengths profile. We can use it to explore and experiment with team members' individual and collective talents and strengths."

- Lead a team discussion about what the CliftonStrengths Team Grid reveals. What does the CliftonStrengths Team Grid say about the team? What are your initial thoughts or observations?

  - Which domain is the team's most dominant? What does this tell you about what you are really good at as a team? What do you see as your team's strengths?

  - What are your team's dominant talent themes? How do these themes contribute to your team's success?

  - Which domain is the team's least dominant?

  - What does the CliftonStrengths Team Grid say about your team's successes or potential blind spots or gaps?
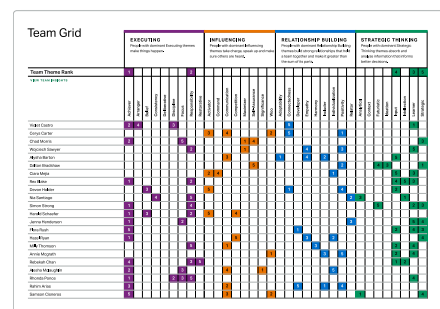
- Help the team explore what the CliftonStrengths Team Grid reveals about how team members:

Build Relationships — Establish connections with others to build trust, share ideas and accomplish work.

Communicate Clearly — Share information regularly and concisely.

Create Accountability — Identify the consequences of actions and hold yourself and others responsible for performance.

Develop People — Help others through strengths, expectations, encouragement and coaching.

Inspire Others — Encourage others through positivity, vision, confidence, challenge and recognition.

Lead Change — Recognize that change is essential, set goals, and lead adaptations that align with a stated vision.

Think Critically — Gather and evaluate information that leads to smart decisions.

Your Unique Contribution to the Team

Each CliftonStrengths theme has its own power and edge. Your talents and strengths help you and the team execute, influence others, build relationships and absorb and think about information.

In the table below, circle your top five CliftonStrengths themes, and draw a box around themes six through 10. Then answer the questions that follow.

EXECUTING	INFLUENCING	RELATIONSHIP BUILDING	STRATEGIC THINKING
Achiever	Activator	Adaptability	Analytical
Arranger	Command	Connectedness	Context
Belief	Communication	Developer	Futuristic
Consistency	Competition	Empathy	Ideation
Deliberative	Maximizer	Harmony	Input
Discipline	Self-Assurance	Includer	Intellection
Focus	Significance	Individualization	Learner
Responsibility	Woo	Positivity	Strategic
Restorative		Relator	

1) In which domain do you have the most themes?

2) When have you been successful working within your most dominant domain?

3) In which domain do you have the least themes?

4) In which domain do you spend most of your time working?

5) In which domain do you wish you could spend more of your time working?