



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

Kristin Miller
Operations Director
Discovery Christian Church
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Understanding Strengths and Blending Differences

Insights International, Inc.
8679 E Preserve Way
Scottsdale, AZ 85266
480-951-9888 -- Fax 801-640-2478
www.insightsinternational.com or information@insightsinternational.com



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 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.



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.



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.

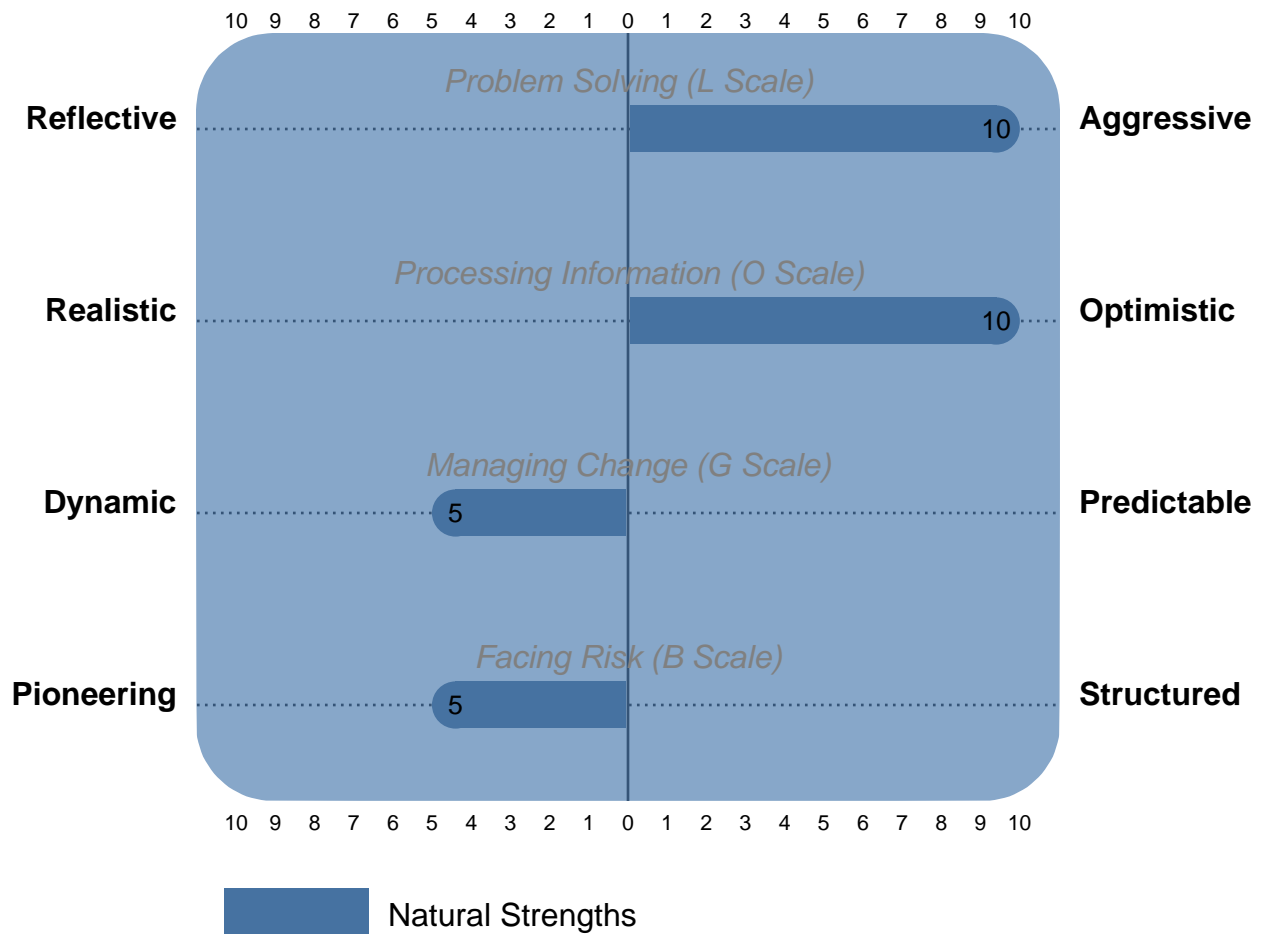
In any relationship – from the team you work with, to your closest friendships, to your marriage, or even your relationship with your children – you'll find that understanding your natural strengths and those of others in these predictable measures is crucial to building trust, closeness, commitment 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 Kristin's responses, the report has selected general statements to provide a broad understanding of her strengths. These statements identify the "Natural" strengths that she brings to the position or relationship. That is, if left on her own, these statements identify how she would choose to carry out her work and relate to others. Use the general characteristics to gain a better understanding of Kristin's "Natural" strengths.

Kristin prefers an environment with variety and change. She is at her best when many projects are underway at once. She likes to be forceful and direct when dealing with others. Her desire for results is readily apparent to the people with whom she works. She may lose interest in a project once the challenge ceases. She may then be ready for another challenging project. She wants to be seen as an individual who is totally keyed to results. She wants to get things done in a manner that is consistent with her perception of the "right way" of doing things. Under pressure, Kristin has a tendency to actively seek opportunities which test and develop her abilities to accomplish results. She prefers being a team player, and wants each player to contribute along with her. She is aggressive and confident. Many people see her as a self-starter dedicated to achieving results. Kristin is a goal-oriented individual who believes in pulling in others to help her achieve her goals. She needs people with other strengths on her team. She wants to be seen as successful and has an inherent dislike for losing or failing. She tends to work hard and long to be successful.

Kristin likes to make decisions quickly. She will work long hours until a tough problem is solved. After it is solved, Kristin may become bored with any routine work that follows.



GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS

She should realize that at times she needs to think a project through, beginning to end, before starting the project. Sometimes she may be so opinionated about a particular problem that she has difficulty letting others participate in the process. Many people see her decisions as high-risk decisions. However, after the decision is made, she tends to work hard for a successful outcome. She is decisive and prefers to work for a decisive leader. She can experience stress if her leader does not possess similar traits. She finds it easy to share her opinions on solving work-related problems. She is a good problem solver and troubleshooter, always seeking new ways to solve old problems.

Kristin challenges people who volunteer their opinions. She may lose interest in what others are saying if they ramble or don't speak to the point. Her active mind is already moving ahead. She should exhibit more patience and ask questions to make sure that others have understood what she has said. She tends to influence people by being direct, friendly and results-oriented. Kristin may sometimes mask her feelings in friendly terms. If pressured, Kristin's true feelings may emerge. She likes people who present their case effectively. When they do, she can then make a quicker assessment or decision. She may lack the patience to listen and communicate with slower acting people. Her creative and active mind may hinder her ability to communicate to others effectively. She may present the information in a form that cannot be easily understood by some people.



VALUE TO THE TEAM

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

- Challenges the status quo.
- Competitive.
- Usually makes decisions with the bottom line in mind.
- Initiates activity.
- Challenge-oriented.
- Forward-looking and future-oriented.
- Motivates others towards goals.
- Positive sense of humor.
- Often joins organizations or clubs to represent the ministry.



CHECKLIST FOR COMMUNICATING

Many people find this section to be extremely accurate and important for enhancing communication with Kristin. 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 Kristin. Review each statement with Kristin to identify the statements which are most important to her. We recommend highlighting the most important "DO's" and provide this list to those who communicate with Kristin frequently.

Do:

- Present the facts logically; plan your presentation efficiently.
- Come prepared with all requirements, objectives and support material in a well-organized "package."
- Support and maintain an environment where she can be efficient.
- Provide a warm and friendly environment.
- Be clear, specific, brief and to the point.
- Provide questions, alternatives and choices for making her own decisions.
- Deal with details in writing, have her commit to modes of action.
- Provide facts and figures about probability of success, or effectiveness of options.
- Motivate and persuade by referring to objectives and results.
- Plan interaction that supports her dreams and intentions.
- Provide ideas for implementing action.



DON'TS ON COMMUNICATING

This section of the report is a list of things NOT to do while communicating with Kristin. Review each statement with Kristin 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:

- Try to convince by "personal" means.
- Direct or order.
- "Dream" with her or you'll lose time.
- Try to build personal relationships.
- Forget or lose things, be disorganized or messy, confuse or distract her mind from important tasks.
- Be curt, cold or tight-lipped.
- Ask rhetorical questions, or useless ones.
- Be dictatorial.
- Let disagreement reflect on her personally.
- Reinforce agreement with "I'm with you."
- Legislate or muffle--don't overcontrol the conversation.
- Talk down to her.
- Leave decisions hanging in the air.



IDEAL ENVIRONMENT

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

- Tasks involving motivated groups and establishing a network of contacts.
- Democratic supervisor with whom she can associate.
- An innovative and futuristic-oriented environment.
- Forum to express ideas and viewpoints.
- Freedom of movement.
- Tasks at home or work that change from time to time.
- Assignments with a high degree of people contacts.
- Evaluation based on results, not the process.
- Freedom from controls, supervision and details.



KEYS TO MOTIVATING

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

Kristin wants:

- A forum to ventilate her emotions.
- Freedom from control and detail.
- Freedom to talk and participate on the team.
- To be measured by results.
- A leader who practices participative management.
- No close supervision.
- Participation in meetings on future planning.
- No restrictions to hamper results.
- Exposure to those who appreciate her results.
- Group activities outside the work environment and ministry.
- To be trusted.
- A friendly work environment.
- Public recognition of her ideas and results.



KEYS TO LEADING

In this section are some needs which must be met in order for Kristin to perform at an optimum level. Some needs can be met by herself, 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 Kristin and identify 3 or 4 statements that are most important to her. This allows Kristin to participate in forming her own personal growth plan.

Kristin needs:

- More control of body language.
- Help on controlling time and setting priorities.
- To adjust her intensity to match the situation.
- A program for pacing work and relaxing.
- To negotiate commitment face-to-face.
- To display empathy for people who approach life differently than she does.
- More logical presentations--less emotional.
- Objectivity when dealing with people because of her high trust level.
- Better organization of record keeping.
- A rational approach to decision making--analyze the facts.
- To handle routine paperwork only once.
- An awareness of the parameters or rules in writing.



AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

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

Kristin has a tendency to:

- Be inconsistent because of many stops, starts and ever-changing direction.
- Have no concept of the problems that slower-moving people may have with her style.
- Take on too much, too soon, too fast.
- Keep too many balls in the air, and if her support is weak she will have a tendency to drop some of those balls.
- Resist participation as part of the team, unless seen as a leader.
- Have difficulty finding balance between family and work.
- Overstep authority and prerogatives--will override others.
- Be explosive by nature and lack the patience to negotiate.



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

"See Yourself As Others See You"

SELF-PERCEPTION

Kristin usually sees herself as being:

Pioneering	Assertive
Competitive	Confident
Positive	Winner

OTHERS' PERCEPTION

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

Demanding	Nervy
Egotistical	Aggressive

And, under extreme pressure, stress or fatigue, others may see her 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.

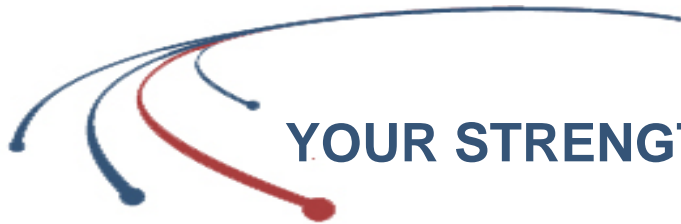
The Strengths Movement Chart provides a picture of how much you feel you need to "change" or "adapt" your natural strengths to match the needs or requirements of your current environment. You will see the same strength indicators from your natural strengths chart, but an additional indicator is overlaid 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.

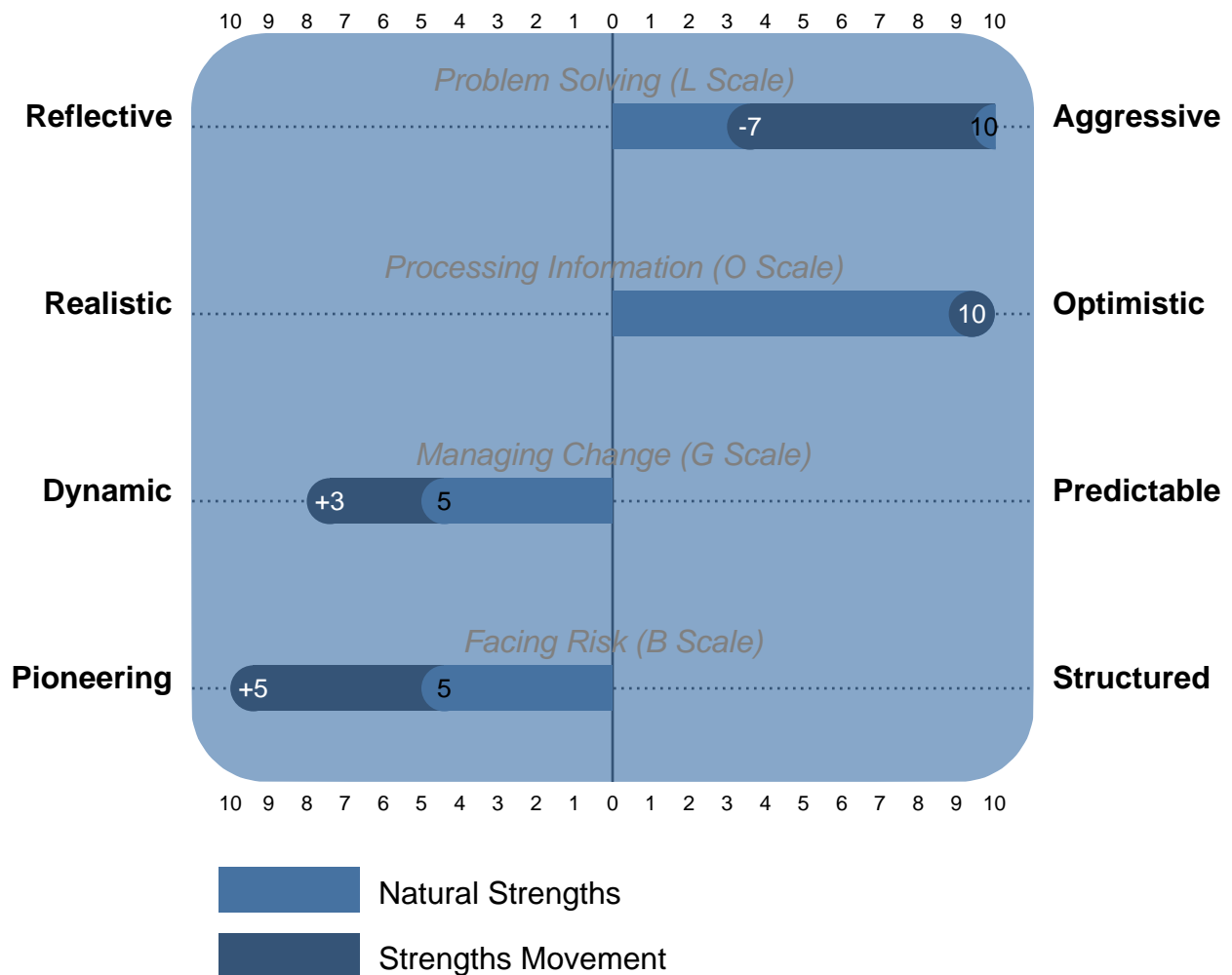
Changes in your current environment can dramatically impact the movement in your strengths. Therefore, it is our recommendation that you retake this assessment on an annual basis, or sooner, if there are significant changes in your current environment. This will provide an objective point of reference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

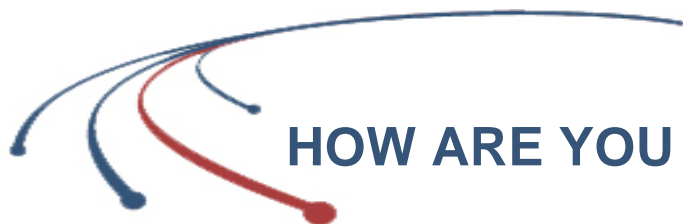
Following the Strengths Movement Chart are pages that interpret your strength movement mix into a word picture to help you explore this movement in your strengths. These subsequent text pages and the strengths movement chart can serve as an objective platform to facilitate discussion with others in your 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 Kristin feels she 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 Kristin's current situation and her need to "adapt" to be accepted.

- Positive, outgoing, friendly behavior.
- Obtaining results through people.
- Acting independently and without precedent.
- Firm commitment to accomplishments.
- Responding well to challenges: "You say I can't do it? Just watch me!"
- Being creative and unconventional in making a point.
- Preferring people involvement over task focus.
- Participative decision making.
- Dedicated to "going it alone" when necessary.
- Motivating people to take action by using persuasive skills.
- Contacting people using a variety of modes.
- Being independent and innovative.
- Maintaining an ever-changing, friendly, work environment.



NATURAL AND ADAPTED STYLE

Kristin'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 Kristin may feel when she "Adapts" her style to the environment.

"Natural" Style	PROBLEMS - CHALLENGES	"Adapted" Style
<p>Kristin tends to deal with problems and challenges in a demanding, driving and "I'm going to win" manner. She is individualistic in her approach and actively seeks goals. Kristin will attack problems and likes a position with authority and work that will constantly challenge her to perform up to her ability.</p>	<p>Kristin's response to the environment is to be strong-willed and ambitious in her problem-solving approach. She seeks to remove all obstacles.</p>	

"Natural" Style	PEOPLE - INFORMATION	"Adapted" Style
<p>Kristin's "Natural" style is to use persuasion and emotion to the extreme. She is positive and seeks to influence people by the virtues of her personality and verbal skills. She will convince you that what she is saying is not only right, but is exactly what is needed. She displays enthusiasm for almost any project.</p>	<p>Kristin sees no need to change her approach to influencing others to her way of thinking. She sees her "Natural" Style to be what the environment is calling for.</p>	



NATURAL AND ADAPTED STYLE

"Natural" Style	PACE - CHANGE	"Adapted" Style
<p>Kristin is variety-oriented and demonstrates a need to get from one activity to another as quickly as possible. She usually demonstrates a pronounced sense of urgency. She is eager to initiate change if for nothing else than for change's sake.</p>	<p>Kristin seeks a wide scope of activities in an environment that is constantly changing. Timetables, deadlines and schedules can be constantly shuffled without obvious consternation. Even electronic communication may not move fast enough for her.</p>	

"Natural" Style	RULES - RISK	"Adapted" Style
<p>Kristin is independent by nature and feels comfortable in situations where the constraints are few and far between. She will follow rules as long as she feels that the rules are hers. She has a tendency to rebel from rules set by others and wants input into any constraints.</p>	<p>Kristin seeks adventure and excitement. She wants to be seen as her own person and will break rules to display this desire for independence. She wants to be judged by the bottom-line results--not how those results were achieved.</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

