



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

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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.



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.

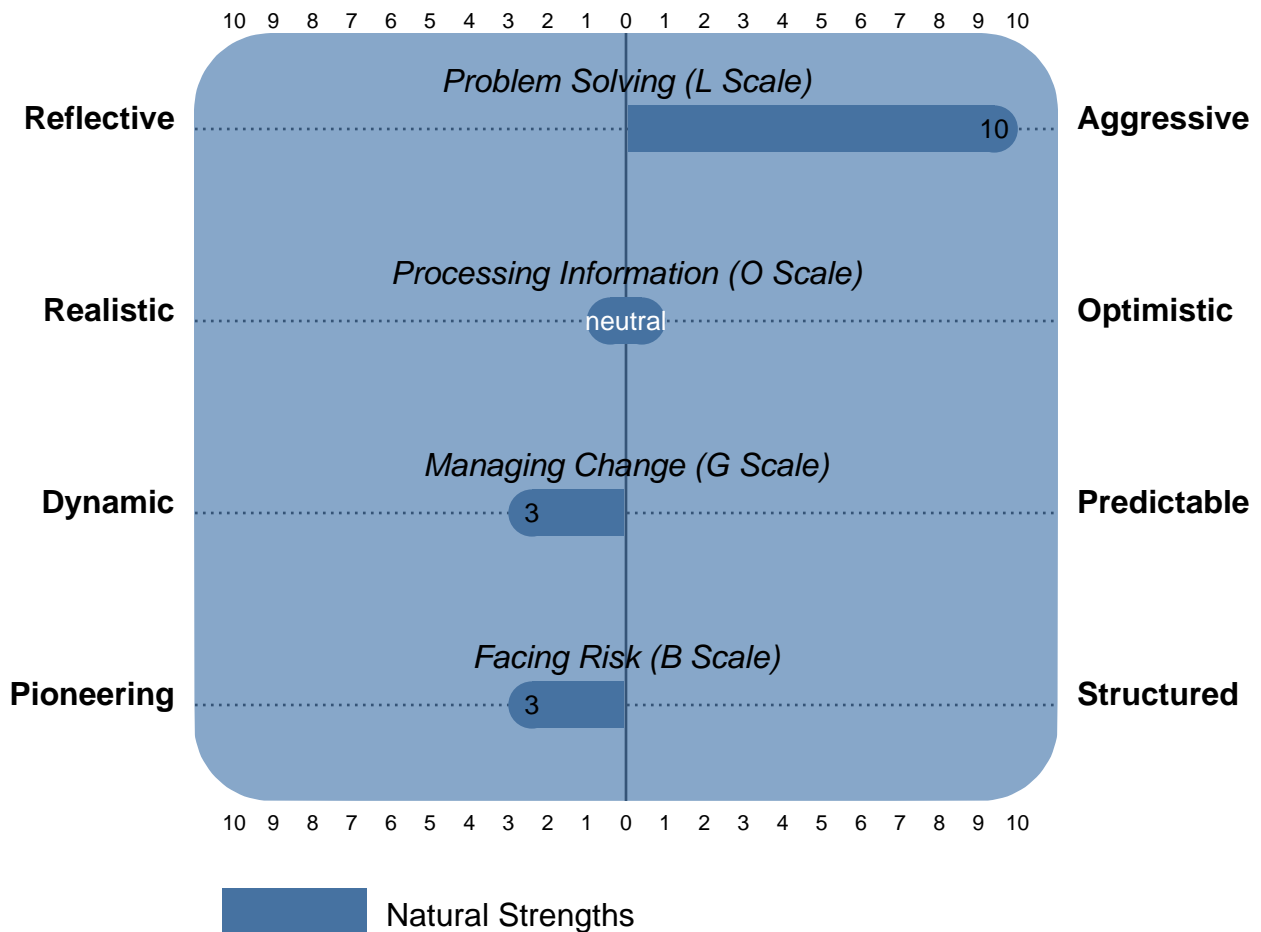
In any relationship – from the team you work with, to your closest friendships, to your marriage, or even your relationship with your children – you'll find that understanding your natural strengths and those of others in these predictable measures is crucial to building trust, closeness, commitment 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 James' 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 James' "Natural" strengths.

James is driven toward goals completion and wants to be in a position to set policy that will allow him to meet those goals. Some would see James as an initiator. He is a dominant, forceful and direct person who wants to be seen as an individualist. He likes to be forceful and direct when dealing with others. His desire for results is readily apparent to the people with whom he works. He can be aggressive and direct, but still be considerate of people. Other people realize that directness is one of his great strengths. James is often considered daring, bold and gutsy. He is a risk taker who likes to be seen as an individualist. He needs to learn to relax and pace himself. He may expend too much energy trying to control himself and others. He enjoys authority, independence and the freedom that goes with his aggressive approach to problem solving. He is aggressive and confident. Many people see him as a self-starter dedicated to achieving results. He may have difficulty dealing with others who are slower in thought and action.

James is a good problem solver and troubleshooter, always seeking new ways to solve old problems. He will work long hours until a tough problem is solved. After it is solved, James may become bored with any routine work that follows. When faced with a tough decision, he will try to sell you on his ideas. He should realize that at times he needs



GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS

to think a project through, beginning to end, before starting the project. James has the unique ability of tackling tough problems and following them through to a satisfactory conclusion. He is decisive and prefers to work for a decisive leader. He can experience stress if his leader does not possess similar traits. He prefers authority equal to his responsibility. He likes to make decisions quickly.

James may lack the patience to listen and communicate with slower acting people. He likes people who present their case effectively. When they do, he can then make a quicker assessment or decision. He 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. His creative and active mind may hinder his ability to communicate to others effectively. He may present the information in a form that cannot be easily understood by some people. James 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! He may sometimes mask his feelings in friendly terms. If pressured, James' true feelings may emerge. He should exhibit more patience and ask questions to make sure that others have understood what he has said. He tends to influence people by being direct, friendly and results-oriented.



VALUE TO THE TEAM

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

- Challenges the status quo.
- Thinks big.
- Creative in his approach to solving problems.
- Usually makes decisions with the bottom line in mind.
- Initiates activity.
- Change agent--looks for faster and better ways.
- Innovative.



CHECKLIST FOR COMMUNICATING

Many people find this section to be extremely accurate and important for enhancing communication with James. 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 James. Review each statement with James 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 James frequently.

Do:

- Present the facts logically; plan your presentation efficiently.
- Provide questions, alternatives and choices for making his own decisions.
- Clarify any parameters in writing.
- Provide facts and figures about probability of success, or effectiveness of options.
- Speak at a rapid pace.
- When he receives a "no" answer, expect him to return for more discussion on another day.
- Be brief--be bright--don't dawdle.
- Support the results, not the person, if you agree.
- Be clear, specific, brief and to the point.
- Use a motivating approach, when appropriate.
- Appeal to the benefits he will receive.



DON'TS ON COMMUNICATING

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

- Ask rhetorical questions, or useless ones.
- Ramble on, or waste his time.
- Try to convince by "personal" means.
- Let him overpower you with verbiage.
- Come with a ready-made decision, or make it for him.
- Take credit for his accomplishments.
- Be redundant.
- Direct or order.
- Let disagreement reflect on him personally.
- Muffle or overcontrol.
- Forget or lose things, be disorganized or messy, confuse or distract his mind from important tasks.



IDEAL ENVIRONMENT

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

- Needs difficult assignments.
- Freedom to try new approaches.
- Evaluation based on results, not the process.
- An innovative and futuristic-oriented environment.
- Work with a tolerant leader.
- Nonroutine work with challenge and opportunity.
- Work with a results-oriented team.
- Forum to express ideas and viewpoints.



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 James' wants and desires. Those statements that ring true, but aren't a current part of his ministry, can become goals to reach.

James wants:

- Freedom from routine work.
- Prestige, position and titles so he can control the future of others.
- Power and authority to take the risks to achieve results.
- Big picture approaches.
- Support system to help with details and follow through.
- Control of his own future.
- Changing environments in which to work/play.
- Opportunity for rapid advancement.
- Travel or changing work stations.
- A wide scope of activities.
- A variety of work activities.
- More time in the day.



KEYS TO LEADING

In this section are some needs which must be met in order for James 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 James and identify 3 or 4 statements that are most important to him. This allows James to participate in forming his own personal growth plan.

James needs:

- To know results expected and to be evaluated on the results.
- Documentation of expected results.
- To be confronted when in disagreement, or when he breaks the rules.
- Support in doing excessive detail work.
- To evaluate his drive to be seen as his "own person" and how it affects his role on the team.
- A work environment with many activities.
- 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.
- Authority equal to responsibility.
- A program for pacing work and relaxing.
- To negotiate commitment face-to-face.
- A tolerant leader.



AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

This section lists possible “Natural” limitations or tendencies for James. It does not consider life and work experiences or formal education and training that he may have received to overcome these obstacles. Review with James 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.

James has a tendency to:

- Be inconsistent because of many stops, starts and ever-changing direction.
- Dislike routine work or routine people--unless he sees the need to further his goals.
- Have no concept of the problems that slower-moving people may have with his style.
- Be so concerned with big picture; he forgets to see the little pieces.
- Have difficulty finding balance between family and work.
- Be crisis-oriented.
- Blame, deny and defend his position--even if it is not needed.
- Be disruptive because of his innate restlessness and dislike for sameness.



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

"See Yourself As Others See You"

SELF-PERCEPTION

James 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.

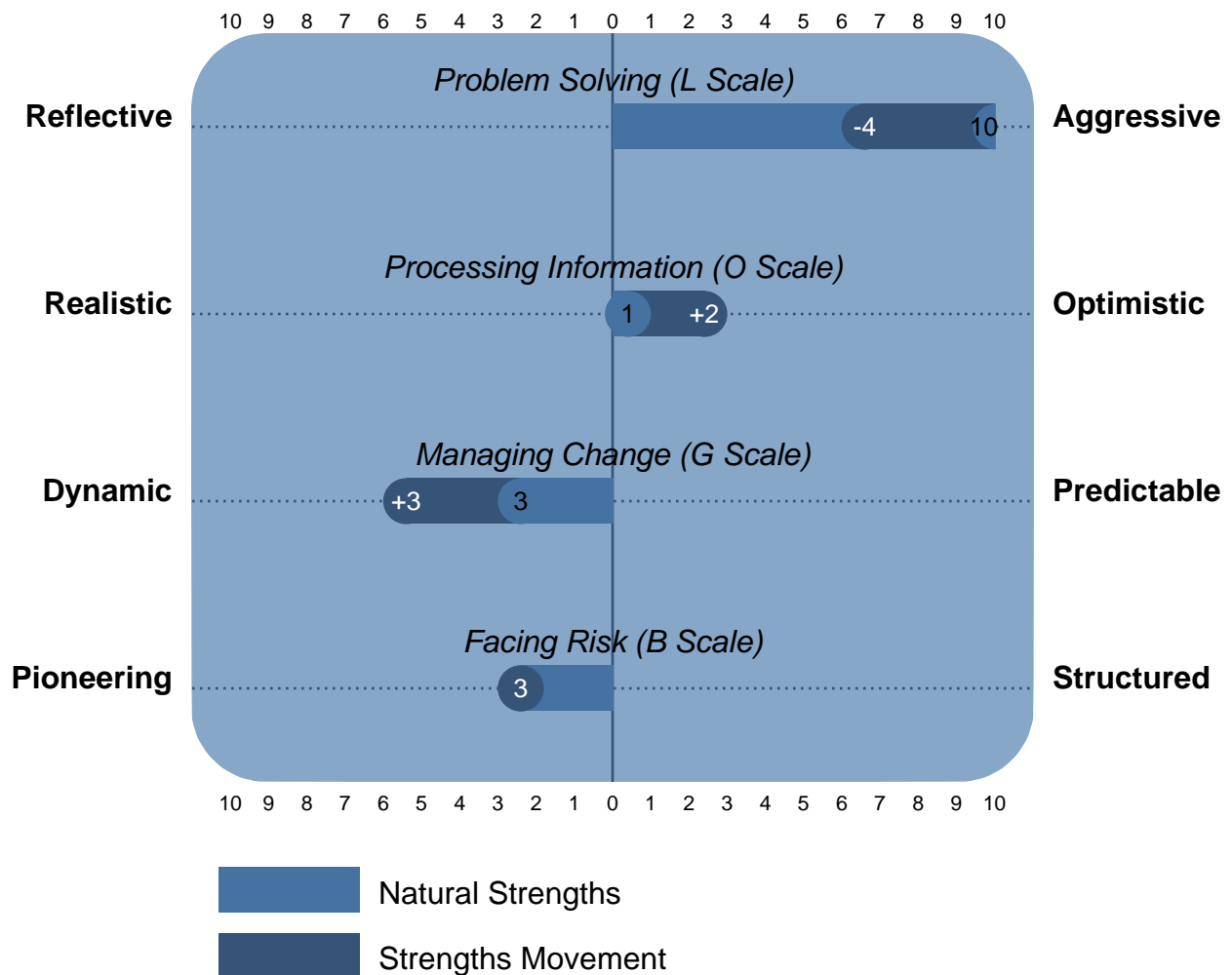
Changes in your current environment can dramatically impact the movement in your strengths. Therefore, it is our recommendation that you retake this assessment on an annual basis, or sooner, if there are significant changes in your current environment. This will provide an objective point of reference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

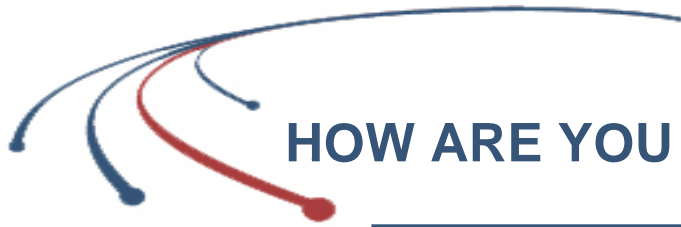
Following the Strengths Movement Chart are pages that interpret your strength movement mix into a word picture to help you explore this movement in your strengths. These subsequent text pages and the strengths movement chart can serve as an objective platform to facilitate discussion with others in your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

- Questioning the status quo, and seeking more effective ways of accomplishment.
- Persistence in task completion.
- Moving quickly from one activity to another.
- Handling a variety of activities.
- Working without close supervision.
- Skillful use of vocabulary for persuasive situations.
- Meeting deadlines.
- Acting without precedent, and able to respond to change in daily work.
- Anticipating and solving problems.
- Dealing with a wide variety of activities.
- Quickly responding to crisis and change, with a strong desire for immediate results.



NATURAL AND ADAPTED STYLE

James' "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 James may feel when he "Adapts" his style to the environment.

"Natural" Style	PROBLEMS - CHALLENGES	"Adapted" Style
James tends to deal with problems and challenges in a demanding, driving and "I'm going to win" manner. He is individualistic in his approach and actively seeks goals. James will attack problems and likes a position with authority and work that will constantly challenge him to perform up to his ability.		James' response to the environment is to be strong-willed and ambitious in his problem-solving approach. He seeks to remove all obstacles.
"Natural" Style	PEOPLE - INFORMATION	"Adapted" Style
James is sociable and optimistic. He is able to use an emotional appeal to convince others of a certain direction. He likes to be on a team and may be the spokesman for the team. He will trust others and likes a positive environment in which to relate.		James projects a positive and enthusiastic attitude toward influencing others. He sees the need to be trusting and wants to be trusted.
"Natural" Style	PACE - CHANGE	"Adapted" Style
James likes mobility and the absence of routine does not traumatize him. He feels comfortable juggling different projects and is able to move from one project to another fairly easily.		James 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 him.
"Natural" Style	RULES - RISK	"Adapted" Style
James is independent by nature and feels comfortable in situations where the constraints are few and far between. He will follow rules as long as he feels that the rules are his. He has a tendency to rebel from rules set by others and wants input into any constraints.		James shows little discomfort when comparing his "Natural" Style to his response to the environment "Adapted" Style. The difference is not significant and James sees little or no need to change his response to the environment.



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

