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Finding Your Unique Strengths: Book Review of *StrengthsFinder 2.0*

Saundra Shillingstad
University of Nebraska at Omaha, sshillingstad@unomaha.edu

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Finding Your Unique Strengths: Book Review of *StrengthsFinder* 2.0

By Sandra L. Shillingstad

Rath, Tom. (2007). *StrengthsFinder 2.0*. New York, NY: Gallup Inc.
175 pages. ISBN: 978-1-59562-015-6.

This article continues a series of occasional book or Web site reviews contributed by members of the Bulletin's 2010-2012 Editorial Board. The author provides a review of a book, linked to a Web site, that can help readers understand their own unique qualities in a diverse world.

Introduction

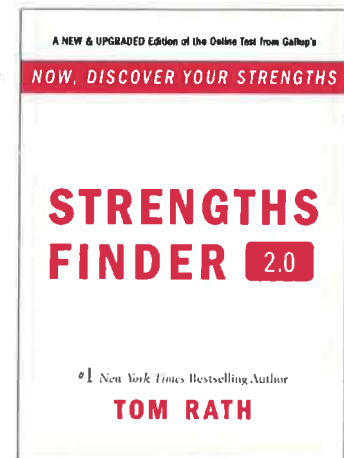
StrengthsFinder 2.0 is a book based on more than 40 years of research by Tom Rath and a team of scientists at Gallup, the renowned research-based, performance-management consulting company. In 1998 the researchers at Gallup created the first online Strengths Finder assessment. In 2001 Gallup included the first edition of Strengths Finder with the bestseller *Now, Discover Your Strengths* (Buckingham & Clifton). Building on the initial online assessment and language from *StrengthsFinder 1.0*, Rath and the Gallup organization released a new edition in 2007 of the assessment, program, and Web site that they titled *StrengthsFinder 2.0*. The intent of the book is to help people uncover their strengths and talents.

StrengthsFinder 2.0 – What's New in 2.0?

The book begins with a history of how the scientists at Gallup were interested in starting a conversation about *what's right with people* versus society's focus on *fixing our weaknesses*. Following the quick history, the book splits into two parts: Part I: Finding Your Strengths—An Introduction, and Part II: Applying Your Strengths.

StrengthsFinder 2.0 includes an extension and elaboration of what was discovered in *Now, Discover Your Strengths* (2001) The 2.0 version provides the reader with the latest discoveries of human strengths and talents and provides strategies for application in one's personal life or workplace.

The 1.0 version first introduced 34 themes of human strengths and talents. In the 2.0 version the themes have remained the same (e.g., *Achiever*, *Activator*, *Analytical*, *Belief*, and *Command* are a few examples of the 34 themes). Included with the *StrengthsFinder*



2.0 is a special one-time use only coupon code that allows the reader to take a detailed *Strengths Finder* assessment. The assessment takes about 30 minutes to complete. Having participated in the 1.0 online assessment, I readily noted that the 2.0 version of the online assessment was faster and the results yielded from the assessment provided a more in-depth analysis of my strengths.

Upon completion of the online assessment, the participant is provided with immediate results in the StrengthsFinder 2.0 Report. The respondent's top five themes are reported. The report is divided into three sections: Awareness, Application, and Achievement.

Upon completion of the online assessment, the participant is provided with immediate results in the *StrengthsFinder 2.0 Report*. The respondent's top five themes are reported. The report is divided into three sections: *Awareness*, *Application*, and *Achievement*. In the *Awareness* section, the participant's top five themes are described followed by personalized insights regarding the top five strengths. The second section focuses on the *Application* of the top five themes, followed by questions that assist the participant in applying these strengths. In the third section, the participant is provided with examples and quotations from people who share the same themes, followed by steps to help one utilize the discovered talents for *achievement*.

I completed the 2.0 online assessment, and my top five strengths included *Empathy*, *Discipline*, *Achiever*, *Connectedness*, and *Harmony*. The

StrengthsFinder 2.0 Report provides a shared-theme description for the top five strengths. My first strength, *Empathy*, was described as one who "can sense the feelings of other people by imagining themselves in others' lives or others' situations." My fifth strength was *Harmony*: "People who are especially talented in the Harmony theme look for consensus. They don't enjoy conflict; rather, they seek areas of agreement." Upon review of my top five strengths, I believe they were accurate descriptors. I am currently working on the *10 Ideas for Action* for each of my top five themes. Helpful tips and strategies are provided in the report that will assist me in applying my talents.



Saundra L. Shillingstad, EdD, is an associate professor in the College of Education at the University of Nebraska at Omaha. A member of Omega Chapter (NE), Dr. Shillingstad currently serves on the 2008-2012 DKG *Bulletin* editorial board. sshillingstad@unomaha.edu

StrengthFinder 2.0 helped me identify my strengths and talents. The most useful part of the book was the 18-page report, which provided me with strategies and ideas of how to utilize my strengths to be more successful in my personal and professional life. I recommend the book to anyone who is looking for insight to better understand his or her talents and how to maximize them.