
APPENDIX 15.1: An Overview of How Signature Strengths Can Enhance Your Life

Your signature strengths are the qualities that make you unique and help you thrive. They are the things you are naturally good at and enjoy doing. When you use your signature strengths, you feel energized and fulfilled. You are also more likely to be successful in your personal and professional life.

There are many ways to use your signature strengths to enhance your life. One way is to identify your top five strengths and then find ways to use them every day. You can do this by

- Reflecting on your past experiences. Think about the times when you felt most alive, engaged, and successful. What were you doing during those times? What were your strengths?
- Talking to friends and family. Ask them to describe your strengths and how you use them.
- Taking a strengths assessment. There are many free online assessments that can help you identify your strengths.

Once you know your strengths, you can start using them in new and creative ways. Here are a few ideas:

- Volunteer your time to a cause you care about. This is a great way to use your strengths to help others.
- Take on a new challenge at work or school. This will help you grow and develop your strengths.
- Start a new hobby or project. This is a fun way to explore your strengths and find new ways to use them.
- Spend time with people who appreciate your strengths. This will help you feel good about yourself and your abilities.

Using your signature strengths is a great way to live a happy and fulfilling life. So, take some time to identify your strengths and then find ways to use them every day. You'll be glad you did!

APPENDIX 15.2: Signature Strengths Handout

Instructions: As we discussed in class, character strengths (or signature strengths) are personal characteristics that contribute to a person's happiness without diminishing the happiness of others. For this activity, you should find out what your own top five signature strengths are by completing the VIA Signature Strengths questionnaire on the VIA website (<https://www.viacharacter.org/survey/surveys/takesurvey>). Please note that you will need to create a (free) account on this website in order to complete the questionnaire. The VIA Character Strengths website collects data for validation and research purposes, but you will not receive any unwanted emails. The questionnaire takes about 15 to 20 minutes to complete, so please plan accordingly. After completing the VIA Signature Strengths questionnaire and reading over your results, please briefly answer each of the following questions (and then be prepared to discuss your answers in class):

1. What are your top five strengths?
2. What top signature strengths resonated with you the most and why?
3. Were you surprised by any of your top strengths, and if yes, why?

4. Describe an example of a recent time in your life when you utilized one of your top five strengths—Which strength did you use, and how did you use it? How did you feel during this experience? What effect (if any) do you think this experience had on you and/or on people around you?

5. Research indicates that there are well-being benefits to using your strengths regularly. What activities (at work, at school, with your friends or family, or in your spare time) do you think you could do to practice using your strengths?

6. What careers do you think match your strengths?