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## How I am Shaped

In this series of exercises, we are going to look at how you are shaped. There are many facets we could include, but we are going to focus on four:

- Abilities
- Personality
- Experiences
- Spiritual Gifts (For Christians)

### Insight #5: Personal Abilities and Strengths

#### Why Understanding Your Strengths Is Important

1. People are most effective when they know and use their strengths.
2. Many, if not most, people do not know their strengths.
3. Because of misunderstanding Scripture, some Christians have one or the other theological misunderstandings on strengths.

We have an interesting paradox in the Christian community because we have two streams that impact this skill.

#### "Total Weakness versus Total Strength"

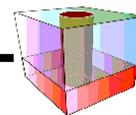
The "holiness" stream emphasized the depravity of man to the degree that many people came to see any acknowledgement of personal strength as pride, i.e. sin. Some people in this stream seem to advocate a philosophy of "Total Weakness".

- They emphasize that we can do nothing in ourselves.
- Their favorite verse is "Don't think more highly of yourself..."
- They seem to do everything they can to build a negative self-image.

The other stream seems to advocate a philosophy of "Total Strength"

- Their favorite verse is "I can do all things...!" sometimes to the extreme of forgetting "...through Christ."
- They emphasize "We are children of the King" and "We can do anything".





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In this session we will focus on abilities and strengths. We will use four exercises and then a summary sheet

Exercise #1 – Abilities Profile

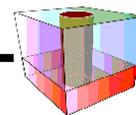
Exercise #2 – 26 Specialized Abilities

Exercise #3 – Personal Abilities and Strengths

Exercise #4 – Reflective Questions

Summary sheet

Bonus Worksheet for seeing the abilities and strengths in others

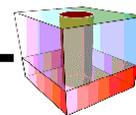


## Abilities Profile

*Check all columns that are true.*

	Things I do well and enjoy doing	Things I would like to do or understand better	Abilities others see in me
Analyze/Evaluate			
Build/Develop			
Control/Schedule			
Convince/Persuade			
Create/Shape			
Design/Draw			
Do/Execute			
Formulate/Strategize			
Innovate/Improvise			
Learn/Study			
Make Friends/Build Relationships			
Nurture/Care			
Observe/Comprehend			
Operate/Run			
Organize			
Perform/Entertain			
Plan			
Practice/Perfect			
Research/Experiment			
Synthesize/Harmonize			
Teach/Train			
Write/Communicate			
Other strengths			
Other strengths			
Other strengths			

Write down all that are checked in three columns,



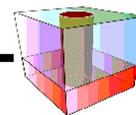
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Now we will look at 26 specialized abilities. Please circle any you think you might have.

## 26 Specialized Abilities

Entertaining ability:	to perform, act, dance, speak, magic
Recruiting ability:	to enlist and motivate people to get involved
Interviewing ability:	to discover what others are really like
Researching ability:	to read, gather information, collect data
Artistic ability:	to conceptualize, picture, draw, paint, photograph, or make renderings
Graphics ability:	to lay out, design, create visual displays or banners
Evaluating ability:	to analyze data and draw conclusions
Planning ability:	to strategize, design and organize programs and events
Managing ability:	to supervise people to accomplish a task or event and coordinate the details involved
Counseling ability:	to listen, encourage and guide with sensitivity
Teaching ability:	to explain, train, demonstrate, tutor
Writing ability:	to write articles, letters, books
Editing ability:	to proofread or rewrite
Promoting ability:	to advertise or promote events and activities
Repairing ability:	to fix, restore, maintain
Feeding ability:	to create meals for large or small groups
Recall ability:	to remember or recall names and faces
Mechanical operating ability:	to operate equipment, tools or machinery
Resourceful ability:	to search out and find inexpensive materials or resources needed
Counting ability:	to work with numbers, data or money
Classifying ability:	to systematize and file books, data, records
Public Relations ability:	to handle complaints and unhappy customers with care and courtesy
Welcoming ability:	to convey warmth, develop rapport, making others feel comfortable
Composing ability:	to write music or lyrics
Landscaping ability:	to do gardening and work with plants
Decorating ability:	to beautify a setting for a special event

Write down those you circled.



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## Personal Abilities & Strengths

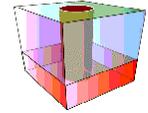
From the following list, check all the strengths that describe you.

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Active        | <input type="checkbox"/> Forceful         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Adaptable     | <input type="checkbox"/> Genuine          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Adept         | <input type="checkbox"/> Honest           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aggressive    | <input type="checkbox"/> Imaginative      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ambitious     | <input type="checkbox"/> Independent      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Analytical    | <input type="checkbox"/> Instructive      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Astute        | <input type="checkbox"/> Intuitive        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Broad minded  | <input type="checkbox"/> Inventive        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Compatible    | <input type="checkbox"/> Logical          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Competitive   | <input type="checkbox"/> Loyal            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conceptual    | <input type="checkbox"/> Methodical       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conscientious | <input type="checkbox"/> Objective        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Consistent    | <input type="checkbox"/> Observant        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Courteous     | <input type="checkbox"/> Perceptive       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Creative      | <input type="checkbox"/> Perfectionist    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Daring        | <input type="checkbox"/> Persistent       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Demanding     | <input type="checkbox"/> Persuasive       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dependable    | <input type="checkbox"/> Productive       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Detailed      | <input type="checkbox"/> Proficient       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Determined    | <input type="checkbox"/> Reliable         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Diligent      | <input type="checkbox"/> Resourceful      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Discerning    | <input type="checkbox"/> Self-reliant     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Disciplined   | <input type="checkbox"/> Shrewd           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Effective     | <input type="checkbox"/> Sincere          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Efficient     | <input type="checkbox"/> Straight forward |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Energetic     | <input type="checkbox"/> Strategic        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Enthusiastic  | <input type="checkbox"/> Systematic       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Exacting      | <input type="checkbox"/> Tactful          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fair          | <input type="checkbox"/> Talented         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Flexible      | <input type="checkbox"/> Thoughtful       |

From the strengths you checked, pick your top five.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_





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## Summary Sheet

Now look at your answer from the three exercises and complete these questions:

1. What are my strongest 4-6 strengths or abilities?

1)

2)

3)

4)

5)

6)

2. What are my top two strengths or abilities?

1)

2)

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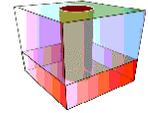
Bonus: On the last page is a form you can use to identify the abilities and strengths of those around you. It could be family members, co-workers, or anyone you interact with on a regular basis. This is a great tool for keeping perspective on those around you,

"You can do what I cannot do. I can do what you cannot do. Together we can do great things." --Mother Teresa

"Leadership is the ability to recognize the special abilities and limitations of others, combined with the capacity to fit each one into the job where he will do his best."

-- J. Oswald Sanders in his book "Spiritual Leadership"

You can't help a man uphill without getting closer to the top yourself.



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## Strength Profile On \_\_\_\_\_

Circle those strengths that describe the person you are assessing.

Analytical	Friendly	Persuades
Artistic	Fun	Plans
Cares	Gets things done	Practices
Clarity	Improvises	Prays
Comprehends	Innovates	Relational
Communicates	Insightful	Researches
Conceptualizes	Kind	Schedules
Confident	Leads	Shapes
Considerate	Listens	Speaks
Consistent	Loyal	Studies
Convinces	Manages	Synthesizes
Creative	Motivates others	Teaches
Develops	Musical	Theorizes
Directs	Nurtures	Trains
Entertains	Observes	Visionary
Evaluates	Optimistic	Worships
Experiments	Organizes	Writes
Evangelizes	Passionate	Zealous
Formulates	Performs	

1. What are four or five major abilities or strengths I see in them?
2. What do they really enjoy doing?
3. What do they see as their abilities or strengths?
4. What is the ability or strength they have that can be the greatest contribution?