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What Am I Good At?

BY KATE AURIGEMMA ON MAY 23, 2012 · [LEAVE A COMMENT](#) · IN [PERSONAL BRANDING](#), [SKILLS AND LEARNING](#)

Maybe you just graduated college with one of those ever-versatile liberal arts degrees and don't know where to begin with your job search. Or you have been working for a few years and have been struggling to advance in your role. Perhaps you've been feeling unfulfilled in your current industry and are considering a new line of work altogether.

Whatever the circumstance or career stage, taking stock of your personal and professional strengths can be an invaluable exercise in helping you focus your career goals, [find meaningful work](#), and know your worth. As [Elizabeth Venturini advises](#), finding a job that's the right fit involves matching your strengths with the role. So what are your strengths?



Identifying what you do well is not as straightforward as you might think—[our best qualities are often invisible to us](#) and when we are constantly working we rarely take time to step back to reflect. If you haven't been in the habit of introspection, now is the time to start. Taking inventory of your strengths and weaknesses should be a regular exercise in your career development to ensure consistent growth. Here are some exercises to get you started in identifying what you do well and what you have to offer:

- **Identify past successes**

[Think about all your past jobs](#) , volunteer work, and extracurricular activities. Your professional strengths do not exist in an office vacuum, so be creative in thinking about where you've excelled. What have been your greatest achievements? Which type of tasks or projects have you done well? Where have you added value to your company, organization, or team? After creating a list of successes, figure out what key skill you used in each. Do you see any patterns?

- **Think about when you feel most confident**

Reflecting again on your past and current roles, when have you felt the best? Which projects or tasks have you completed while thinking that you were unstoppable? Doing things well gives us confidence—identifying when you feel confident and on top of your game can reveal where your strengths might lie.

- **Ask people who know you**

Sometimes we have trouble seeing ourselves objectively. Ultimately nobody knows who you are better than you do (pardon the cliché), but soliciting the opinions and perspectives of others can be extremely valuable. They may notice things about you that you've overlooked. [Ask your friends and family members](#) what they think your strongest qualities are (keeping in mind of course that your family may be especially biased). If you have a friendly rapport with your coworkers, ask them where they think you excel and what they like about working with you.

- **Take online assessments**

Not all online assessments are created equal—and you probably should never pay to take a test to tell you what you are good at—but if you are really stuck, they can be a good option. Even if you don't agree with standardized personality assessments, just thinking about the questions might spark some ideas and your reaction to the results may reveal what you actually think about yourself. The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) assessment is one of the hallmark personality tests and some companies will try to suss out your type during interviews. [HumanMetrics](#) has a free version of the test that you can take.

After going through these exercises, boil your results down to key underlying qualities. Where do your strengths lie—problem solving, analysis, organization, leadership, communication? Maybe you have examples of success in each of these areas. If that's the case, which strengths are you happiest using? As [Ruth Zive writes](#) in [The Daily Muse](#), focus on what you do well but also what you *enjoy*. In explaining how to identify strengths and talents, [Tom Kelley cites](#) a quote of Francis Ford Coppola, "Do what you love. You'll be better at it." Don't just do what you are good at if you don't like it—find that sweet spot between where your passions and talents lie.

Do you have any tips for assessing your strengths? Share them below!