

Welcome and Introduction –
30 minutes
(9:00 to 9:30)

“Welcome to the StrengthsQuest program! We are delighted you have chosen to take a strengths approach to your life, and today we’ll share with you some insights and tools to get you started on your path. First off, let’s get to know each other a bit.”

Welcome to the
StrengthsQuest™
Program!

INTRODUCE yourself and share your top 5 themes.



#1

ASK each participant to introduce him/herself, sharing where he or she works and his or her top 5 themes.



#1

OR

“As mentioned in the pre-work instructions, here are the things you have completed to be in class today:

- Taken the StrengthsFinder online profile.
- Printed your Top 5 Report and brought it with you.
- Brought your StrengthsQuest book with you.
- Read through page 94.
- Affirmed your Signature Themes by finding the pages for your top 5 and considering the ideas presented.”

StrengthsQuest™

As pre-work, you have:

- ✓ Taken StrengthsFinder®
- ✓ Brought your Top 5 Report
- ✓ Brought your StrengthsQuest book
- ✓ Read through page 94
- ✓ Affirmed your Signature Themes



#2

StrengthsQuest™

Agenda

- ✓ Strengths Philosophy
- ✓ Video segments
- ✓ Signature Themes
- ✓ Resources
- ✓ Insight and Action

first tech : think forward

firsttechcu.com

#3

REVIEW the day's agenda.



#1

DISTRIBUTE a Handout Packet to each learner.

REFER TO the printed SQ Community report and **EXPLAIN** that those who accepted the email invitation to the Community are represented on the report. If you haven't yet joined, it's not too late! We'll look at the actual online community later.



#2

REFER TO the StrengthsFinder Reflection Sheet in the packet. **ASK** them to consider and answer the questions.

(3 minutes)

StrengthsQuest™

Complete the StrengthsFinder® Reflection Sheet

Share your insights with your partner



first tech : think forward

firsttechcu.com

#4

ASK:

"How did that go?"

"Why was it a struggle?"

STRESS: "In class we'll be taking several opportunities to have you discuss your strengths and talents. The goal is to increase your comfort level with doing that."



(10 minutes)

PAIR UP each learner with a partner. **ASK** them to discuss their reflections and insights with each other.



RECONVENE the large group and **ASK** for volunteers to share their reflections and reactions.

ASK: "What did you learn about your own strengths as you shared them with others?"

THANK the learners for doing that sharing.

StrengthsQuest Philosophy
10 minutes
(9:30 to 9:40)

StrengthsQuest™

- ✓ 40 years of Gallup research
- ✓ Focus on strengths = productivity
↑ 40%
- ✓ Talents are enduring and unique
- ✓ Most growth in areas of strength

first tech : think forward

firsttechcu.com

#5

SHARE that the StrengthsQuest philosophy is based on 40 years of research by the Gallup Organization. At the heart of this research are millions of interviews to discover what the world's best workers had in common.

- From this research, the most significant finding was that most organizations are built on two flawed assumptions about people: that they can learn to be competent in almost anything, and that their greatest room for growth is in their areas of greatest weaknesses.
- Gallup worked with the Corporate Leadership Council to identify key drivers that impact performance. The research indicates that when we focus on strengths, productivity can increase by up to 40%. That is serious bottom-line impact.
- The StrengthsQuest approach is based on the assumptions that each person's talents are enduring and unique, and that each person's greatest room for growth is in the areas of his or her greatest strength. This is quite a different way to look at things.

So, what is a strength? According to Gallup and the authors of the book:

- A strength is the ability to provide consistent, near perfect performance in a specific given activity.
- A strength is an activity that leaves you feeling strong.
- A strength is produced when a talent is refined with knowledge and skill.

STRESS: “The title of the assessment you took, StrengthsFinder, is actually a bit misleading. The report you received indicated your top 5 Signature **Themes** of strength – they are not necessarily your strengths...yet. They are the areas in which you display natural talent. This is an important distinction to remember.”



“When you partner your talent with an investment of practice and development, your talent serves as a multiplier that leads to the resulting strength.”

#6 - 8



page 235

READ the Mark Twain story on page 235 of the book and make the link to the power of developing talents into strengths.

ASK: “What does that story mean to you?”

StrengthsQuest™

Trombone Player Wanted



first tech : think forward

firsttechcu.com

#9

INTRODUCE video. "During this class, we'll watch a six-part video called "Trombone Player Wanted," in which Marcus Buckingham will speak to us about the quest for our strengths. Marcus spent 17 years working for the Gallup organization interviewing thousands of employees at every career stage and is widely considered one of the world's leading authorities on employee productivity and the practices of leading and managing. The first chapter of the video is called, 'So, What's Stopping You?' I won't ask you to take notes – just listen and absorb the message."

Chapter 1 – *So, What's Stopping You?*

(15 minutes)



(9:40 to 10:05)

Debrief (10 minutes)



SHOW video.

ASK: "Do you find yourself dwelling on your weaknesses a lot?"

"How does it make you feel? Why do you do it?"

"Are there activities at which you constantly excel? How did you get so good?"

Key Points:

- Your dreams and circumstances may change, but the core of who you are remains constant.
- Think back to when you were a child – didn't you instinctively know what motivated you?
- We lose touch with our strengths to fit in, be responsible, do what our parents/teachers/bosses want us to do.
- Don't expect dramatic changes.
- If you can find a role in which you play to your strengths most of the time, everybody wins.
- We become trapped by myths.

Maybe your beliefs hold you back; if you could explode these myths and replace them with truths, maybe you can take back some control.

ASK: "What did you recognize in the three myths?"

StrengthsQuest™

Explode the Myths!

"As you grow, you change."

Truth:

As you grow you become more of who you already are.

first tech : think forward

firsttechcu.com

#10

StrengthsQuest™

Explode the Myths!

"You will grow the most in your areas of greatest weakness."

Truth:

You will grow the most in your areas of greatest strength.

first tech : think forward

firsttechcu.com

#11

StrengthsQuest™

Explode the Myths!

"A good team member does whatever it takes to help the team."

Truth: *A good team member deliberately volunteers his strengths to the team.*

first tech : think forward

firsttechcu.com

#12


Chapter 2 – *Do You Know What Your Strengths Are?*
(15 minutes)

(10:05 to 10:35)



Debrief (15 minutes)

StrengthsQuest™



Don Clifton – Father of the Strengths Revolution

- ✓ Creator of StrengthsFinder®
- ✓ Conducted 50 years of research

first tech : think forward
firsttechco.com

#13

INTRODUCE video. “Chapter 2 of the video is called *Do You Know What Your Strengths Are?* Since you’ve all taken the StrengthsFinder assessment, you are well on your way to answering this question. Let’s hear Marcus’ thoughts on this topic.”

SHOW video.

Don Clifton spent his life studying what was right with people and created a new way of viewing the world. Instead of thinking in terms of weaknesses, he supported a focus on identifying and developing strengths while managing the weaknesses. For instance:

- Instead of zeroing in on what your child or your associates don’t do well, the emphasis would be on helping them do more of what they are good at and managing their weak areas.

This one simple reversal of thought triggered more than fifty years of continuing research into the thoughts and behavior of successful people

StrengthsQuest™

Scan Your Life for:

- ✓ Yearnings
- ✓ Satisfaction
- ✓ Rapid Learning
- ✓ Glimpses of Excellence
- ✓ Total Performance

first tech : think forward

firsttechcu.com

#14

When shaping and building your own personal future, unearthing your own strengths is one of the most valuable discoveries you can make. The following suggestions help you scan your life and make some decisions:

- Listen for Yearnings: Yearnings are part of the wisdom of the body. They can be characterized as the pull or attraction to one activity over another.
- Watch for Satisfaction: Satisfactions are those experiences where the emotional and psychic rewards are great; typically they are the activities we get “a kick out of doing.”
- Watch for Rapid Learning: A strength is characterized by initial rapid learning, learning that continues throughout one’s lifetime.
- Glimpses of Excellence: Study success. You can spot a strength by glimpsing a moment of excellence within a performance. We’re talking about a simple finite activity: the singing of a song, the presenting of a speech, or the expert servicing of a member. Use this special insight to learn all you can about success and to applaud those strengths in others, as often as possible.
- Total Performance of Excellence: Total performance of excellence is a flow of behavior, when there are no conscious steps in the mind of the performer. Total performance of excellence is the ultimate indication of strength. The satisfaction gained through total performance will cause a person to want to repeat it, but with repetition must come improvement.



Break –

15 minutes (10:35 to 10:50)

StrengthsQuest™

Trombone Player Wanted



first tech : think forward

firsttechcu.com

#15

INTRODUCE video. "Our next chapter of Trombone Player Wanted is called *How Can You Make the Most of Them?* – and I would bet that question may be on your mind. As you listen to Marcus, jot down any points that speak to you or that you would like to discuss after the video."

Chapter 3 – *How Can You Make the Most of Them?*



#3

DISTRIBUTE the notes pages handout.

(13 minutes)

(10:50 to 11:10)

Debrief (7 minutes)



SHOW video.

ASK: "What key messages did you take from that video?"

Key Points:



- Critical Step: you need to **seek out** situations that call out your strengths.
- The real challenge of life is to free up and focus the forces within you.
- Honoring your strengths is one of the most important things you can do for yourself.

Chapter 4 –How Do You
Cut Out Your
Weaknesses?
(15 minutes)



(11:10 to 11:35)

Debrief (10 minutes)



INTRODUCE video. "In *How Do You Cut Out Your Weaknesses*, listen for key points that may strike you as controversial so we can discuss them afterwards."

SHOW video.

ASK: "What key messages did you take from that video?"

Key Points:

- Marcus suggests we find out what you don't like doing and stop doing it. **Remember, that does not mean you can just stop things you don't like.** However, over time, you can veer away from those things that weaken you, either by finding the right partner ("Boring is in the eye of the beholder") or by changing your role.
- If that isn't possible, change your perspective and look at the activity through the lens of a strength. (Use the example of the admin who didn't like doing expense reports, reframed in context of her competition strength.)

Strengths and Relationships

(15 minutes)

(11:35 to 11:50)



pages 73 - 94



INTRODUCE reading done as pre-work: *Relationships from the Strengths Perspective*.

"Part of your pre-work for this course was to read the section on relationships starting on page 73."

ASK:

"What did you highlight?"

"Why did that speak to you?"

Key Points:

- "Strengths-Colored Glasses" – seeing others in light of their talents and the impact that can have on relationships
 - Our lenses determine how we emotionally respond to an event.
- "Cleaning Your Glasses with the 5 Sees" – tips for seeing things from a different perspective to deepen your relationships.
 - Connect, Communicate, Collaborate, Control, and Commit to Cultivate
- The Chinese character for 'listen' described on page 83.
 - Reflects the cultural view that listening is a whole-body experience.
 - Combination of the characters for ears, eyes, heart, and undivided attention.



page 83

StrengthsQuest™



Listen with:
Ears
Eyes
Heart

Undivided attention

first tech : think forward

firsttechu.com

#16

Strengths Development
(45 minutes)
(11:50 to 12:35)



pages 97-101

StrengthsQuest™

Know Your Talents
Complete worksheet

With table group:

- ✓ Share one theme and talent
- ✓ Determine dominant theme
- ✓ Tally number of themes

first tech : think forward

firsttechcu.com

#17

OR



#3



Page 98



#4

INTRODUCE *Insights into Strengths Development* – “This section outlines important considerations for developing your talents into strengths.”

- There is a direct connection between your personal fulfillment and your talents.
- Talents are like muscles – if you use them, they’ll help you achieve. If you develop them, they’ll become stronger.

The section also shares seven principles for maximizing your strengths. The first one is to ‘Know Your Talents.’

- “On page 98, there’s a simple exercise to help you clarify your talents. Find the *Know Your Talents* worksheet in your packet.
 - Write down each of your Signature Themes.
 - Next, write down at least one talent you believe you possess within each of those themes.
 - Finally, write down an example of a time when you used each of these talents.” (7 minutes)



INSTRUCT learners to share with their table group one of their themes and the talent(s) they associated with that theme. Then compare the themes of all group members and determine if there is one dominant theme at their table. Also tally how many different themes have represented in their group. (8 minutes)



DEBRIEF – ASK if any table group is willing to share any examples. (5 minutes)



RECORD the number of themes on a chart.



CONTINUE the review of the section.

Page 98

- You must value your talents and assume personal responsibility for developing them into strengths. Ponder your proudest moment, the time when you were at your best, doing what you do best. Identify a talent that was at work in that situation then imagine if you did not have this talent – what would have happened?
- Talents best develop into strengths when inspired by a personal mission. What is the big “why” of your life? What are you ultimately trying to get done? What mission, purpose, or ultimate objective do you want to accomplish during your life? The answers to these questions will help you formulate your mission.

INSTRUCT learners to mark page 98 and to work on their mission statement on their own.



Page 99

- Healthy, caring relationships facilitate the development of strengths. Take a minute to read through the characteristics and events listed. Highlight those that speak to you. (3 minutes for this personal work – no sharing requested.)



Page 100

- Reliving your successes helps develop your talents into strengths. To consider the roles your talents have played in your successes, try either talking or writing about them. You can experience powerful insights as you try to capture in words the interplay between your talents and your successes.
- Practice your talents. As with anything, practice leads to strength.
- Teaching leads to learning. To gain further insight into your talents and strengths, teach others about them. Take the challenge noted in the book to identify a specific area of your life where you want to achieve excellence then identify a talent you believe can most help you attain it, and set a goal for developing that talent by using it at least twice as often as you do now.



ASK for questions or comments.



Lunch –

60 minutes (12:35 to
1:35)



WELCOME the learners back from lunch.

ASK if they have any questions to ask or insights to share from the morning's discussions.



Individual Report debrief – (10 minutes): “I know you’ve read through your Top 5 Report already and would like us to revisit it now. Not everything stated in the report will apply to everyone.”

INSTRUCT learners to reread their five strengths and highlight words or parts of sentences that relate to them.



DEBRIEF – ASK:


- “What was right on the money?”
- “Did anyone struggle to find anything that applies?”

Developing Talents into Strengths
(70 minutes)
(1:35 to 2:45)

StrengthsQuest™

Exploring My Signature Themes
Complete worksheet
With table group:

- ✓ Share reflection and insights
- ✓ List 3 things learned so far



first tech : think forward
firsttechcu.com

EXPLAIN: “You’ve re-read your Top 5 Report and analyzed it for words and phrases that applied to you. Now, we’re going to take that analysis a bit further.”

REFER TO the *Exploring My Signature Themes* handout in the packet.

#18

OR



#4



#5

(10 minutes)

INSTRUCT the learners to take the words and phrases they highlighted and translate them into a definition of each theme in their own words.



(15 minutes)

INSTRUCT the learners to discuss with their table group members their reflections and what insights those reflections provide.

Then **INSTRUCT** each group to make a list of three things they have learned so far – about people in general, about strengths, about this discovery process, etc.



(8 minutes)

RECONVENE the large group and **ASK** each group's spokesperson to share a learning their group listed.



RECORD the learnings and **POST** the chart. Celebrate the learnings that have occurred so far!

StrengthsQuest™

Using Your Talents as the Foundation of Strengths

- ✓ Pages 104 – 137
- ✓ Find the pages for your Top 5
- ✓ Read and check action items

INTRODUCE the *Using Your Talents as the Foundation of Strengths* section (15 minutes) – “In this section you’ll find a set of strategies that offer insights and action ideas for developing your strengths.”

first tech : think forward

firsttechco.com

#19



Pages 104-137

INSTRUCT learners to find the pages that pertain to their top 5 – read through the action items for each theme and check those that they'd like to try.



DEBRIEF – ASK: “Is anyone willing to share one thing you checked off? Tell us what theme it supports.”

StrengthsQuest™

Trombone Player Wanted



first tech : think forward

firsttechcu.com

#20

INTRODUCE video. "In Chapter 5, called 'Why is it So Hard to Talk about This?' Marcus provides us some valuable insights. As before, please listen carefully for key messages to discuss afterwards."

Chapter 5 – *Why is it So Hard to Talk about This?*
(11 minutes)



SHOW video.

Debrief (9 minutes)



ASK: What key messages did you take from that video?

Key Points:

- Teams function best when the members know what they can rely on each other for – have conversations about your strengths and ask for support around activities that weaken you. Share and be vulnerable.
- There is power in awareness.



Break –
15 minutes
(2:45 to 3:00)

During break, **DISTRIBUTE** a blank 11" x 17" sheet to each participant. Ensure that markers, stickers, etc. are on the tables.

WELCOME the learners back. "Now, let's give you a chance to spread your creative wings!"

Individual Strengths Posters and debrief –
35 minutes
(3:00 to 3:35)

INSTRUCT each person to create their poster showing what their five strengths are – using creativity!
(15 minutes)

StrengthsQuest™

Your Strengths Poster!

- ✓ Create poster representing your Top 5
- ✓ Unleash your creativity!
- ✓ Post it on the wall or a cabinet door
- ✓ Appreciate the posters of others



first tech : think forward
firsttechcu.com

#21



INSTRUCT the learners to wander around and look at each other's charts. (10 minutes)

DEBRIEF – ASK:

"What did you observe about the design of the posters?"
Tie into the themes.

"What was the purpose of having you do this exercise?"
(Additional opportunity to communicate your strengths.)

CHALLENGE the group to take their posters when they leave and use them as the catalyst for sharing their strengths with someone they trust and who cares about them.

StrengthsQuest™

Trombone Player Wanted



first tech : think forward

firsttechcu.com

#22

INTRODUCE video. "Let's take a look at our final chapter in the *Trombone Player Wanted* series. It's called 'Why Can't This Last Forever?' and will leave you with some interesting points to consider."

Chapter 6 – *Why Can't This Last Forever?*

(11 minutes)

(3:35 to 4:00)

Debrief (14 minutes)



SHOW video.



ASK: "What key messages did you take from that video?"

Key Points:

- It only matters what YOU believe. You've always known what the best of you is – you must trust it.
- 'Imposter Syndrome' – worry that people will find out that you're not as good as they think you are.
- When you hear the imposter voice – STOP and remember 3 certainties:
 - You have wonderful and powerful strengths.
 - No one's strengths configuration is exactly the same as yours.
 - You will make the greatest contribution when you play to your strengths.

StrengthsQuest™

*"And the day came when the risk
it took to remain
tight in the bud
became greater than the risk
it took to blossom."*

Anais Nin



first tech : think forward

firsttechcu.com

- Risks are inevitable: "And the day came when the risk it took to remain tight in the bud became greater than the risk it took to blossom." – Anais Nin (modernist writer of short stories and novels.)

#23

OR



#5



#6

DISTRIBUTE laminated bookmarks and **ENCOURAGE** learners to use them as they work in the book.



Paired Sharing

(15 minutes)

(4:00 to 4:15)

REFER back to the earlier discussion about shaping your future by listening for yearnings and such.

PAIR UP each learner with a partner.

INSTRUCT the learners: "Think about when you were a child – your future possibilities were limitless! As we grow, we edit and constrain ourselves – "I couldn't do this or that." These constraints are fear-based."

StrengthsQuest™

Consider:

"What do you want to be when you grow up?"

versus

"What would you do if you weren't afraid?"

REVEAL chart or slide with Questions – "What do you want to be when you grow up?" vs. "What would you do if you weren't afraid?" These questions are different...or are they? Take 8 minutes to discuss with your partner what happens when you take the statement from your childhood and replace it with the adult version."

first tech : think forward

firsttechcu.com

#24

OR



#6



DEBRIEF – ASK: "Who is willing to share a thought from your discussion?" (7 minutes)

Resources
(15 minutes)
(4:15 to 4:30)

StrengthsQuest™

Resources

- ✓ Ch. 7 & 8 – academics
- ✓ Ch. 9 – learning
- ✓ Ch. 10 & 11 – career planning
- ✓ Ch. 12 – the strengths revolution
- ✓ Appendix – research data

first tech ; think forward

firsttechw.com

#25

OR



#7



PROVIDE a quick overview of the additional sections of the book:

- Chapters 7 & 8 are about strengths in academics (page 149).
- Chapter 9 (page 227) is about becoming your own best learner.
- Chapters 10 & 11 (page 235) are about strengths in career planning.
- Chapter 12 (page 291) is about the strengths revolution.
- The Appendix (page 297) contains some research and technical data about the Clifton StrengthsFinder, as well as some references.

INVITE the learners to delve into those chapters that hold interest for them.

SHOW the learners where to find the StrengthsQuest resources on the Techweb Training page.

NAVIGATE to the StrengthsQuest Forum and **EXPLAIN** how to use it to post questions and have threaded discussions about the various SQ topics.

NAVIGATE to the *Managing Strengths* sheets and **EXPLAIN** their use in giving managers insight on how best to work with your strengths: "Print the pages for your top 5 themes, highlight what applies to you on each page, and give the packet to your manager to use as a coaching tool."



LOG IN to the StrengthsQuest Website and **DEMONSTRATE** how to use the resources there.



REFER TO the reference cards in their packets.

#7



ASK what questions they have about the tools and resources available for them to use on the quest.

Insight and Action

(20 minutes)

(4:30 to 4:50)



#8

REFER TO the *Insights and Action* sheet in the packets.

StrengthsQuest™

Insight and Action Planning

- ✓ Reflect on insights
- ✓ Create action plan
- ✓ Care to share?



first tech : think forward
LEAD. ACT. GROW. firsttechcu.com

#26

INSTRUCT the learners to document their insights and create an action plan for their next steps.

OR



#8


Pages 104-137

REMIND them they can review the items they checked off in the *Using Your Talents as the Foundation of Strengths* section.



ASK for volunteers to share one action they have committed to completing.

Summary, Evaluations,
and Close

(10 minutes)

(4:50 – 5:00)

StrengthsQuest™

Join the Strengths Revolution!



first tech : think forward

firsttechcu.com

#27

LEAVE the learners with some parting thoughts from Don Clifton:

“Learning about your talents and developing them into strengths so that you reach your maximum potential isn’t just good for you; it’s good for everyone. Simply put, if we all focused our lives on making the most of our talents, the world would be a better place. And could there be an outcome more worthy than that?”

“You now have the tools to take your ‘diamonds in the rough’ and refine them to shine brilliantly. Join the strengths revolution!”



#9

REFER TO the course evaluations in the packets.

REQUEST the learners complete them and place them into the collection box.

THANK the learners for embarking on their StrengthsQuest.