

Developing Your Strength

Belief

The genius of your Belief talent starts with the fact that you have some very deeply-held beliefs about what is true, what is unchanging, and what can be, and always will be, dependable. These beliefs go very deep. They provide personal power to stand strong no matter what. This is central to your character. But the genius of your Belief strength is what results from those beliefs. From your beliefs, you generate meaning, purpose and direction for your life and all you do. This meaning, purpose and direction translate into a tremendous amount of power, drive and motivation within you. So long as you revolve your life around your deepest values and beliefs, you will experience motivation, drive, and determination to make monumental impacts in the lives of individuals as well as groups and organizations.

Adapted from "The Genius and Beauty found within The Clifton StrengthsFinder Themes of Talent," by Edward C. Anderson

Applying Belief Talents in Careers

- Spend time thinking about your "calling." Once you have articulated this mission, seek more information at the career center about careers that can help you fulfill it.
- A mentoring relationship can provide a valuable way for you to gain insight into the fit between who you are and what you were meant to do with your life. Mentoring and being mentored increases the chances for your behaviors, decisions, and beliefs to remain congruent.
- Environments that are a good fit with your own mission and beliefs will bring out your best. Seek employment in companies and organizations that exhibit a strong sense of mission — that is, a commitment to positively affecting the quality of people's lives.
- Research opportunities in helping professions such as medicine, law enforcement, social work, refugee relocation, teaching, ministry, and search-and-rescue. Talk with people who provide services to individuals in need. Interview those who supervise them.
- Environments that are people-oriented, that provide service to others, or that reward personal growth are likely to allow your Belief talents to flourish.
- Workplaces that respect your commitment to your family and allow for a balance between work and family demands will enable you to thrive.

Adapted from StrengthsQuest website: www.strengthsquest.com

Career Plan of Action:

Applying Belief Talents in Academics

General Academic Life

- Write an academic mission statement for yourself. Integrate your core values, such as leaving the world better than you found it, curing AIDS, ending violence, or affirming the dignity of each human being.
- Discover ways to weave your core values into routine classroom assignments. Write and speak about topics directly related to your beliefs.
- Read about individuals who stood up for their convictions in the face of resistance. Determine who inspired these people to dedicate their lives to great and noble causes.

Study Techniques

- List your top three to five beliefs on a piece of paper you can use as a bookmark. Filter whatever you are reading and hearing through the lenses of these core values.
- Assess whether you are allocating enough time to classes, projects, and assignments that add meaning to your life.
- Suggest alternative topics for reading and research to your professors. Match your preferred assignments to one or more of your core values.
- Form a study group of individuals with whom you share one or more important belief. Ask each member to describe how these core values contribute to his or her success as a student.

Relationships

- Tell your classmates and professors about the ideas, causes, and projects about which you are most passionate.
- Encourage others to tell you when your intensity inspires them and when it overwhelms them. Maintain an ongoing dialogue to ensure that they understand you.
- State what you believe is right and wrong. Help others grasp what you value and why you value it.
- Notice instances when you willingly inconvenienced yourself to come to the aid of a specific person or group. Ask, "Which of my core values drove this behavior?"

Class Selection

- Enroll in ethics classes. Learn to evaluate the rightness of decisions in fields such as science, medicine, business, government, religion, and environmental protection.
- Risk advocating your beliefs in class discussions as well as conversations with classmates and instructors.
- Choose courses taught by professors known for their strong beliefs, even when their values clash with yours. Realize that considering the values of others can help you refine your own.
- Select classes that challenge you to clarify, reinforce, defend, and live out the guiding principles of your life.

Extracurricular Activities

- Figure out ways to spend quality time with your family. Make a point of calling to show you are thinking of them on birthdays and special holidays.
- Consider running for a campus office. Build your campaign platform on values-oriented issues that matter greatly to you. Inform potential voters about what you stand for and why.
- Practice speaking a foreign language by helping a refugee family adapt to their new country and its customs.
- Serve meals at a local homeless shelter. Deliver Meals on Wheels®. Take time to visit with each shut-in.

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Academic Plan of Action:
