At My Best

A Dynamic Approach to Stimulating Strengths-based Conversations

At my best™

The headlines
An overview

- There's value in helping people develop a narrative around their strengths
- Popular strengths 'assessments' may not always be the most effective way to do this
- The At my best™ strengths cards are an alternative way to facilitate awareness of strengths and stimulate better conversations
- Early users have responded very positively

The background
Strengths are worth cultivating

Strengths use is associated with many positive outcomes: increased wellbeing, goal attainment, work engagement, self-efficacy and more.

Individuals and organizations that want to realize these benefits need to find effective ways to recognize and develop strengths. Online strengths assessments are popular tools for this.

The challenge
People often don't find it easy to talk about strengths

In our work as business psychologists we have been struck by how often people struggle to answer questions around what they do best.

We have found many people have a richer language for their weaknesses than their strengths, making it harder to create a strong positive narrative.

The limitations
Strengths 'assessment' isn't always the most helpful approach

Strengths assessments can be hugely valuable but have their challenges:

- Many users are wary of psychometric tools
- Others read more into the results of the 'test' than is appropriate
- Idiosyncratic language of some tools empowers the consultant more than the end user

The aim
Develop an alternative that facilitates awareness and discussion of strengths

We wanted to create a simple and accessible tool that can help people to better connect with, and articulate, the story of their strengths.

Our intention was to produce something that could be used in many different ways and that would have an engaging and positive impact on users.

The solution
The At my best™ strengths cards

Drawing on a range of personality and strengths frameworks, we identified a comprehensive list of strengths, before narrowing to 48 single words. Each was carefully matched with a subtly related photograph on the reverse of the card.

Users are given a range of exercise 'ideas' which facilitate conversation in 1-1, team or group contexts. Using the single words and images, users define the strengths in their own terms.

The impact
Initial indications are very positive

Early users of the cards have included:

* Coaches * Trainers * Counsellors
* Managers * Teachers

Initial feedback has been incredibly positive.

In our own experience the cards have the greatest impact when used as a stimulus for discussion with others. Particularly when people share the strengths they see in each other.

The next step
Taking the format online

Although the tactile nature of the cards aids the user experience, their physical form is also a limitation. We are now testing whether the format can be effectively reproduced in an online environment.

We are also looking to assess the impact of the cards empirically.

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