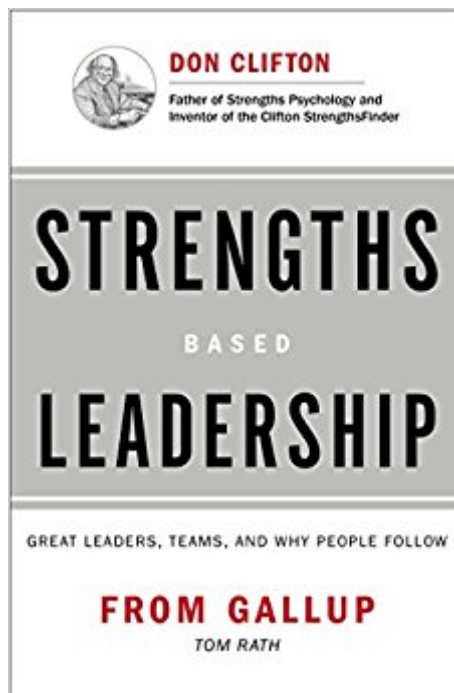




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# Strengths Based Leadership: Great Leaders, Teams, And Why People Follow



## Synopsis

From the author of the long-running #1 bestseller *StrengthsFinder 2.0* comes a landmark study of great leaders, teams and the reasons why people follow. Nearly a decade ago, Gallup unveiled the results of a landmark 30-year research project that ignited a global conversation on the topic of strengths. More than 3 million people have since taken Gallup's *StrengthsFinder* assessment, which forms the core of several books on this topic, including the #1 international bestseller *StrengthsFinder 2.0*. In recent years, while continuing to learn more about strengths, Gallup scientists have also been examining decades of data on the topic of leadership. They studied more than 1 million work teams, conducted more than 20,000 in-depth interviews with leaders and even interviewed more than 10,000 followers around the world to ask exactly why they followed the most important leader in their life. In *Strengths Based Leadership*, #1 New York Times bestselling author Tom Rath and renowned leadership consultant Barry Conchie reveal the results of this research. Based on their discoveries, the book identifies three keys to being a more effective leader: knowing your strengths and investing in others' strengths, getting people with the right strengths on your team, and understanding and meeting the four basic needs of those who look to you for leadership. As you read *Strengths Based Leadership*, you'll hear firsthand accounts from some of the most successful organizational leaders in recent history, from the founder of Teach For America to the president of The Ritz-Carlton, as they discuss how their unique strengths have driven their success. Filled with novel research and actionable ideas, *Strengths Based Leadership* will give you a new road map for leading people toward a better future. A unique access code allows you to take a new leadership version of Gallup's *StrengthsFinder* program. The new version of this program provides you with specific strategies for leading with your top five strengths and enables you to plot the strengths of your team based on the four domains of leadership strength revealed in the book.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

A unique access code (enclosed in the back of this book) allows you to take a new leadership version of Gallup's StrengthsFinder program. The new version of this program provides you with specific strategies for leading with your top five strengths and enables you to plot the strengths of your team based on the four domains of leadership strength revealed in the book. Key findings from Strengths Based Leadership: \* The most effective leaders are always investing in strengths. In the workplace, when an organization's leadership fails to focus on individuals' strengths, the odds of an employee being engaged are a dismal 1 in 11 (9%). But when an organization's leadership focuses on the strengths of its employees, the odds soar to almost 3 in 4 (73%). When leaders focus on and invest in their employees' strengths, the odds of each person being engaged goes up eightfold. \* The most effective leaders surround themselves with the right people and then maximize their team. While the best leaders are not well-rounded, the best teams are. Strong, cohesive teams have a representation of strengths in each of these four domains: executing, influencing, relationship building, and strategic thinking. \* The most effective leaders understand their followers' needs. People follow leaders for very specific reasons. When we asked thousands of followers, they were able to describe exactly what they need from a leader with remarkable clarity: trust, compassion, stability, and hope.

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others—strengths, getting people with the right strengths on your team, and understanding and meeting the four basic needs of those who look to you for leadership. As you read *Strengths Based Leadership*, you'll hear firsthand accounts from some of the most successful organizational leaders in recent history, from the founder of Teach For America to the president of The Ritz-Carlton, as they discuss how their unique strengths have driven their success. Filled with novel research and actionable ideas, *Strengths Based Leadership* will give you a new road map for leading people toward a better future. A unique access code allows you to take a new leadership version of Gallup's StrengthsFinder program. The new version of this program provides you with specific strategies for leading with your top five strengths and enables you to plot the strengths of your team based on the four domains of leadership strength revealed in the book.

I'm glad Rath and Conchie wrote this book to build on the strengths movement and help us understand the connection between strengths and leadership. Before I go into specifics, you should know that the leadership strength themes are the same themes found in StrengthsFinder 2.0. This book also includes a passcode to take the same StrengthsFinder 2.0 test, but the results report is different. This new leadership version of the StrengthsFinder results report gives strategies for leading with your top five strengths, breaks your strengths down into three predominant strength categories, and it lets you plot the strengths of your team. If you buy the book, here's what you can expect to find inside:

**Part One: Investing in Your Strengths—Don't Lead by Imitation.** Different leaders have different strengths and talents. Learn about the one leader you know least about—yourself.

**Find Your Leadership Strengths.** Leaders are often unaware when it comes to something of critical importance to them—their personality.

**A Long-term Investment.** People who are aware of their strengths and build self-confidence early on will reap increasing advantage that continues to grow over a lifetime.

**Part Two: Maximizing Your Team—Successful leaders surround themselves with the right people and build on each individual's strengths.**

**What makes a great leadership team?** Based on Gallup research, four unique leadership strength areas emerged: Executing, Influencing, Relationship Building, and Strategic Thinking. Every individual on a leadership team needs to be well rounded in these areas.

**The four strength themes for leadership are introduced. They are: Executing, Influencing, Relationship Building, and Strategic Thinking.**

**What do strong teams have in common?** A strong focus on results, ability to consistently keep the bigger picture in view, a healthy work-life balance, embracing diversity, and thriving on intense competition.

**Part Three: Understanding Why People Follow—If you want to lead, it is critical to know what the people around you need and expect from you.**

**Why do people follow?** Followers' four

basic needs: trust, compassion, stability, and hope. Conclusion: Leadership That Lasts Beyond a Lifetime-Extraordinary leaders do not strive for personal success as success lies with those who follow. Additional Resources-Taking StrengthsFinder-Leading With Your Strengths: A Guide to the 34 Themes- The Research (Behind StrengthsFinder, Work Team Engagement, and Why People Follow) All in all a strong book that I recommend if you liked SF 2.0. If you are a leadership fan like I am, another outstanding book you should consider is *Leadership 2.0*.

This book was required for a course in my master's degree program. I was highly skeptical of a book focused solely on strengths without figuring out how to correct weaknesses, but this ended up being one of my favorite leadership books of all time. I enjoyed the case studies, the research, and the practical application and tips at the end of the book. The strengths assessment that comes with the text is pretty enlightening (but not unexpected, at least in my case) and the cost of the book is worth it for that alone. The one criticism I have is that the book doesn't tell you how to apply the use of your strengths until the very, very end, and even then it isn't part of the text itself-- it's like an appendix or epilogue. The whole book builds up to it so you're left wondering if you're going to learn anything useful to apply to your own life. This is a pretty typical formula for a self-help style book so I guess I can't criticize too much for that. Otherwise, this is a quick and worthwhile read and you will definitely learn a lot about yourself and others.

Using this with my student team at a university. Knowing their Strengths has professionalized them and helped them develop. We set goals each semester, one professional and one personal. We know each other's 5 Strengths and refer to them when projects are to be assigned or reviewed. Looking for more Strengths Based activities to use in monthly meetings.

Following in a long line of Strengths focused texts, Rath and Conchie's *Strengths Based Leadership* is a concise guide to how leaders and teams can best leverage their individual and combined strengths to effectively operate an organization. Based on the research of Donald O. Clifton, Ph.D., the text and its associated Strengths Finder poll code allow the purchaser to identify and consider personal and team strengths when making important decisions. These are further organized by larger domains that help teams understand balance and diversity of their perspective. As an educator, I have had the opportunity to work with the strengths framework both in the teaching and leadership contexts as well as to teach students that took the connected Strengths Explorer poll. As a result, I frequently find myself revisiting sections of the text as it reads well both

from an overview of strengths as well as a reference tool. In fact, the latter half of the text is largely devoted to tips on leading with strengths (complete with one of the 34 strengths). Published in 2009, a few of the introductory narratives about well known leaders and their strengths could use to be updated, but sections on how to maximize your team and understand why people follow leaders continue to be relevant and amongst this book's most valuable elements. In fact, the previously mentioned "leading with strengths" section is organized firstly by the strengths, but also by four broad criteria commonly identified for why people follow a leader. I would certainly recommend Strengths Based Leadership and continue to use it both when developing strong, cohesive teams, and as a valuable tool in framing not only my or my team's strengths when making decisions, but also in understanding how those with other strengths (particularly those not represented in the team's "top 5" might view decisions and how best to engage their strengths and talents to support the organization.

THIS is a great book, especially for teams. The analysis shows you where your team is strong or lacking, so that the team can take on the challenge of developing strengths were they didn't know they were lacking! GREAT GREAT tool!

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