

Creating a “Strengths-Based” Career

Section VI

**Job Choice
Career Strategy Matrix®**



It is a leader's responsibility to take care of the future.

Joel Barker

Job Choice (Deciding which offer to accept)

You've submitted your resume, completed online screening tests, and gone through a couple rounds of interviews. And you've succeeded – you're looking at three different offers. There are obvious factors to consider: location, salary, benefits, work-life issues. But isn't the biggest question, simply, how does this opportunity fit with my desire to make the greatest use of my strengths every single day? Or, which of these positions will allow me to say that "I'm doing what I do best." And what about the weaknesses you identified? You can't avoid parts of a job that may involve things that make you feel weak – that's reality. As Marcus Buckingham says, "That's why they call it work." But the research shows that most people are spending most of their time doing things that make them weaker. Shouldn't you be making a job choice based on a job that not only plays to your strengths – but minimizes the time spent on things that make you feel weak – or gives you the best opportunities to work at "STOP-ing" the weaknesses?

To accomplish this, we need to turn to an additional tool – one that allows you to more objectively measure how each opportunity allows you to maintain your strengths and eliminate your weaknesses. Futurist Joel Barker has developed a Strategic Exploration Tool, the Strategy Matrix®, which has a special Career Edition that fits the Strengths movement perfectly.


The Strategy Matrix® allows an individual to identify Strategic Objectives and Key Characteristics, then measure the extent to which a trend, innovation, initiative, policy change, or event makes it easier or harder to achieve the objectives and maintain the Key Characteristics. From the Strengths perspective, the Strategic Objectives represent the individual career goals, both short and long term. A Key Characteristic is a personal attribute that is essential to defining your personality or character. ***"If the attribute were removed from your makeup, would you change substantially?"*** A Key Characteristic can be positive or negative.

A Case Study

Idris Odunewu is a sophomore in the College of Business Administration at Marquette University. He is an outstanding student, already possessing a track record of career-related accomplishments. But he's facing a dilemma – whether or not to remain in a rewarding intern position for another year or to seek a new internship position with different responsibilities for his junior year. By entering his career goals and key characteristics into the Strategy Matrix® – Career Edition, Idris was able to see which option better supported his goals and key characteristics. While the decision was still one for Idris to make, the Strategy Matrix® indicated a slight preference for seeking a new internship position as the option better supporting his long term goals. Idris' Strategy Matrix® is shown as Exhibit 4.



Team Members: Idris Dr. Schreier

 ST: 2 Years LT: 7 Years Significance Factor:	A - To graduate in May, 2009 with major in International Business and Marketing.	B - To graduate in May, 2009 graduation, with a large consulting firm.	C - To secure a position upon strategic planning consulting.	D - To return to Nigeria with seven years.	E - To start and operate small entertainment/hospitality businesses in the administration through.	F - To become immediately involved in public policy - public administration through.	G - To be appointed to a position representing Nigeria by 2020.	H - To secure a career-related intern position for the 2008-2009 academic year.	I - Well-Connected to Public Policy in Nigeria	J - High Level of Confidence - Presence of Command	K - Passionate	L - Limited Language Capability - Two Languages	Key Characteristic Subtotals	Row Totals			
	+1	+1	+1	+1	+1	+1	+1	+1	+1	+1	+1	+1	-1				
1 - [Initiative] To continue working at the Blood Center of Wisconsin as an intern for a	0 0	-1 -1	+5 +5	0 0	+1 +1	+3 +3	0 0	+3 +3	-1 +12	0 0	+5 +5	+3 +3	0 0	0 +8	+8 +20	-1 +20	-1 +20
2 - [Initiative] To seek a new internship with different responsibilities for junior year,	+1 +1	+5 +5	+5 +5	0 0	+1 +1	0 0	0 0	+5 +5	+17 +17	0 0	+5 +5	+3 +3	+3 +3	0 +11	+11 +28	0 +28	0 +28
Column Totals	+1 0 +1	+5 -1 +5	+10 0 +10	0 0 0	+2 0 +2	+3 0 +3	0 0 0	+8 0 +8		0 0 0	+10 0 +10	+6 0 +6	+3 0 +3		+ST -ST	-LT +LT	

The Strengths Connection

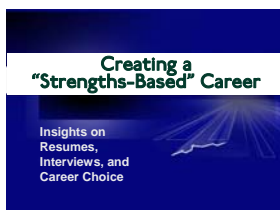
From a Strengths perspective, you can easily translate the Key Characteristics, positive or negative, into Strengths and Weaknesses, then more objectively assess whether this particular career opportunity, whether it's an internship, a summer job, or a job offer upon graduation contributes to "FREE-ing" your Strengths and "STOP-ing" your Weaknesses. In the Strategy Matrix® terms, this is worded as "maintaining" the strength or "eliminating" the weakness.

The Strategy Matrix® provides a second opportunity to clearly support the Strengths approach. "Becoming one of the 2 out of 10" could be viewed as an Initiative or a new Strategic Objective. "Using the "Strong Week Plan" from "GO Put Your Strengths to Work" could be another initiative. Measuring the extent to which these initiatives would contribute to your Career Goals is likely to provide some pretty strong support for this approach.

At least that's what more than twenty college sophomores discovered when they included these initiatives (and their Strengths and Weaknesses) in the Strategy Matrix® – Career Edition assignments. The Strengths based approach turned out to be one the most consistently powerful way to support the achievement of their career goals.

There are three sample of the Strategy Matrix® – Career Edition, using Strengths and Weaknesses as a modification of the Key Characteristics and "Becoming one of the 2 out of 10" and "Using a 'Strong Week Plan'" as Initiatives, in Appendix II.

A comprehensive "Scouting Report" on using Joel Barker's Strategy Matrix – Career Edition, including over twenty detailed examples and a statistical analysis can be obtained by contacting the Institute for Strategic Exploration, js@i4se.com



Creating a “Strengths-Based” Career



































Appendix II

Strategy Matrix[®] Examples























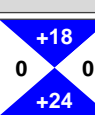
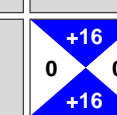
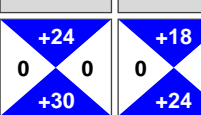

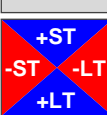
“Please disregard the enclosed resume – it is terribly out of date.”

From a Letter






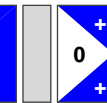
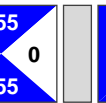


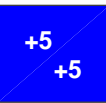
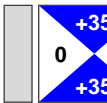

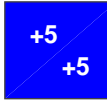
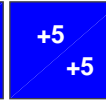
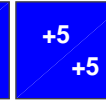
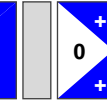
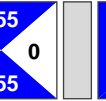
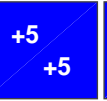


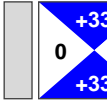
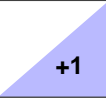

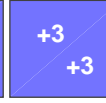

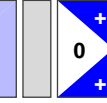
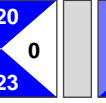
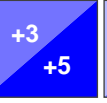
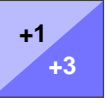

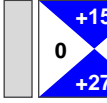
Team Members: Brian Finnie

Joel Barker's  ST: 2 years LT: 5 years Significance Factor:	A - To graduate with a bachelors degree in economics and finance +3	B - To graduate with a economics +3	C - To maintain with PhD in status +3	D - To earn an internship with Wells Fargo the summer and senior between my junior and senior +2	E - To work for a finance or banking corporation in North Carolina or Georgia +2	F - I feel Strong when I analyze data to make decisions Strategic Objective Subtotals +2	G - I feel Strong when I contribute to the success of my team's mission +3	H - I feel Weak when I am forced to separate multiple things at attention to multiple things at +2 Key Characteristic Subtotals -2	Row Totals		
1 - [Initiative] Becoming one of the 2 out of 10 (meaning that you would be spending most of your time)											
2 - [Initiative] "Using a 'Strong Week Plan' each week" to focus on your strengths and stop on your											
Column Totals											

Team Members: James Garhart

Joel Barker's  ST: 1 LT: 5 Significance Factor:	A - To graduate with a degree in Operations and Supply Chain Management in chain management after graduation. +3	B - To be hired for a supply Milwaukee area. +2	C - To remain living in the self-directed investor within the stock market. +1	D - Become a more Strategic Objective Subtotals +3	E - I feel strong when I am Off when the task finally is Strategic Objective Subtotals +2	F - I feel strong when I can be a Devil's Advocate to a situation, and help provide a Key Characteristic Subtotals +3	G - I feel weak when I am overwhelmed with uncertainty on decisions that I Row Totals -3	Row Totals	
1 - [Initiative] Becoming one of the 2 out of 10 that actually enjoy the tasks that I accomplish.									
2 - [Initiative] Using a 'Strong Week Plan' each week to focus on strengths and stop weaknesses									
Column Totals									

Strengths-Based Career Strategy Matrix

Joel Barker's  ST: LT: Significance Factor:	A - To graduate with a degree in Human Resources Management and Marketing +3	B - To maintain standards of academic excellence for the rest of my academic career. +3	C - To use resources available to me as much as possible in order to gain as +3	D - To apply to and get into graduate school at Marquette or an institution of equal or +2	Strategic Objective Subtotals E - I feel strong when I am open to new ideas +3	F - I feel strong when I am complemented on my moral structure +3	G - I feel weak when I am stubborn +3	Key Characteristic Subtotals -1	Row Totals	
1 - Becoming one of the 2 out of 10										
2 - Using a Strong Week Plan each week to focus on my strengths and stop my weaknesses										
3 - [Innovation] Introduction of programs such as "Trombone Player Wanted"										
Column Totals	