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Controversial New Report Shows that UK Workers Are Playing to Their Strengths

New research from The Strengths Partnership shows that around 85% of UK employees report that they are using their strengths productively in their current jobs. © Strengthscope, the revolutionary assessment tool used in the research, provided the data through a comprehensive measurement of 1,200 working adults' strengths and the extent to which these are productively applied at work.

A new positive perspective

Interestingly, the results from © Strengthscope differ significantly from research findings previously publicised by Gallup, which claim that less than 20% of people use their strengths at work. While the Gallup findings are valid, the results from © Strengthscope demonstrate that, in fact, the picture is more positive than Gallup suggest. The © Strengthscope findings also suggest that the real business benefits gained from adopting a strengths-focused human resources strategy do not simply come from helping employees maximise their strengths; what is in fact required is a more sophisticated approach where employees are made aware of their strengths and learn to use these in a balanced and versatile manner across different situations at work.

The © Strengthscope study was undertaken using the wealth of experience from The Strengths Partnership, coupled with insightful questioning techniques, to give this more accurate perspective on the use of strengths in the workplace.

Positive professionals

Health and social workers emerged as the professionals who are most confident that they are playing to their strengths; standout strengths amongst workers in those two sectors include empathy, developing others, and critical thinking.

The gender divide

The data also highlighted some gender differences, for example, while women are more flexible, they make less use of their self-confidence or ability to be strategic. Meanwhile men scored lower on strengths such as compassion and empathy.

Strengths across the generations

Age is also a significant factor with a higher number of older respondents reporting use of their strengths in the workplace. Older respondents more frequently report leading, courage and decisiveness strengths, while the data highlights higher levels of the 'detail orientation' strength amongst younger respondents.

The founders

James Brook and Paul Brewerton, joint founders of The Strengths Partnership, created © Strengthscope to provide individuals with a practical assessment of their strengths.

Reflecting on the findings, Brook commented, **"While the data shows that the majority of our respondents feel that they are using their strengths in the workplace, our work to date has highlighted that employees (and their employers) can benefit from a practical and accurate assessment of their strengths, ideally one that provides feedback from multiple-raters and not simply a self-assessment."**

Gail MacIndoe, learning and development manager at international financial services group, Aviva, commented, **"For Aviva, the © Strengthscope approach lies at the heart of enhancing performance excellence, growth and employee engagement. We believe we can achieve the greatest benefit by developing people's natural strengths, rather than focusing on weaknesses – from which people never excel."**

Comparing strengths across sectors

This comprehensive report broke down strengths across a selection of industry sectors, as follows:

- **Banking** : Common sense (53% reported having this strength), Resilience (53%), Detail orientation (49%), Efficiency (48%), Emotional control (48%)
- **Education** : Efficiency (53%), Developing others (45%), Compassion (45%), Results focus (45%), Critical thinking (45%)
- **Health and social work** : Empathy (67%), Developing others (57%), Critical thinking (48%)
- **Financial services** : Resilience (55%), Results focus (48%), Decisiveness (44%), Critical thinking (43%)
- **Retail** : Relationship building (49%), Creativity (46%), Results focus (46%), Detail orientation (46%)
- **Media and telecommunications** : Compassion (44%), Relationship building (42%), Empathy (39%), Resilience (39%)
- **Pharmaceuticals** : Resilience (66%), Results focus (53%), Detail orientation (41%).

ABOUT ©Strengthscope

©Strengthscope is a new psychometric tool, developed by James Brook and Paul Brewerton at The Strengths Partnership. The tool provides a comprehensive measurement of an employee's strengths and talents and the extent to which these are productively applied at work.

©Strengthscope is capable of collecting feedback from those close to the employee (such as their work colleagues, their boss and even their partner) on strengths they see the person demonstrate on a regular basis. ©Strengthscope also provides insight to individuals on the extent to which they are using their strengths in balance, that is, not under using or overusing strengths which can often lead to suboptimal performance.

The ©Strengthscope model was developed over an 18-month period and was constructed through exhaustive research into strengths, personality, preference, values, ability and positive psychology. From an initial pool of over 40 strengths, a final 22 were chosen for their reliability and validity as occupationally-relevant strengths.

Current users of ©Strengthscope include Aviva, Thermo Fisher Scientific, Institute for Employment Studies, Parsons Brinckerhoff, Siemens and Foster Wheeler.

For more information please visit www.strengthscope.com

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