THE STRENGTHS FINDER: DISCOVER THE SKILLS THAT DIFFERENTIATE YOU FROM THE CROWD

Use the questions in this guide as a starting point to find the 2-3 areas where you're in the top 25% relative to your peers.

Then to build you own remarkable career, ask yourself:

- How might I creatively combine these strengths to create value?
- How might I actively seek out more opportunities where I can apply these strengths?

WHAT ARE YOUR TECHNICAL STRENGTHS?

When thinking about technical skills, expand the focus area beyond just writing code. Think about everything that goes into shipping a product.

- What is your area of product and engineering expertise?
- Can you handle large amounts of code, system, product, or organizational complexity?
- Do you deal well with ambiguous technical requirements, able to hone in on the essence of what's needed?
- Do you excel at planning and figuring out what needs to get done to make something happen?
- Do you enjoy ideating and brainstorming new ways of doing things?
- Are you a fast prototyper, able to quickly assess the feasibility of an idea?
- Are you great at debugging tricky issues, able to intuitively and methodically discover what's wrong?
- Are you most effective at building new features and systems from scratch, at incrementally improving an existing system over time, or at maintaining and operating an area at scale?
- Are you fearless when jumping into new code and able to understand new concepts quickly?
- Can you critically dissect data and ask the right questions to dig deeper into what you see?

WHAT ARE YOUR NON-TECHNICAL STRENGTHS?

The quiz that accompanies Tom Rath's StrengthsFinder 2.0 can be a great resource for discovering your strengths.

- Are you able to perform well and stay focused under intense deadlines?
- Do you constantly feel a need and a drive for achievement?
- Do you set up routines and timelines for yourself to set up a structure where you can get things done?
- Do you respond well to fluctuating demands?
- Are you comfortable with confrontation and having the difficult conversations necessary to make forward progress?
- Do you communicate well, able to clearly convey the most important parts of an idea?
- Do you take the time to listen and understand what's important behind people's decisions?
- Are you able to strategically assess an initiative and foresee potential obstacles?
- Are you good at smoothing out conflicts?
- Are you able to efficiently organize tasks, people, and projects?
- Are you great at gathering input and data, or at generating new ideas?
- Are you more strongly motivated by visions of what's possible in the future?
- Are you able to see everyone's unique and individual strengths?
- Do you enjoying developing others and helping them grow?

WHAT ARE YOUR ADJACENT DISCIPLINES?

Adjacent disciplines are those disciplines immediately to the left or right of your own that you interact with on a daily basis to get things done. Steven Sinofsky, the former head of Microsoft's Windows division, introduced the term when discussing career progression toward becoming a general manager, but it's a term that's equally relevant for engineers or for people in any other field.

- Product engineers: Would you most benefit from learning about visual design, interaction design, user research, server development, scalability, or something else?
- Infrastructure engineers: Would you benefit from increased mastery of database internals, basic web development, or machine learning?
- User growth engineers: What's possible if you improved your skills in data science, marketing, behavioral psychology, or writing?
- Tech leads: What if you had better product management or people management skills?
- Product managers: What if you developed stronger skills in data analysis, user interface prototyping, or customer relationship management?
- Designers: What if you learned more coding skills?