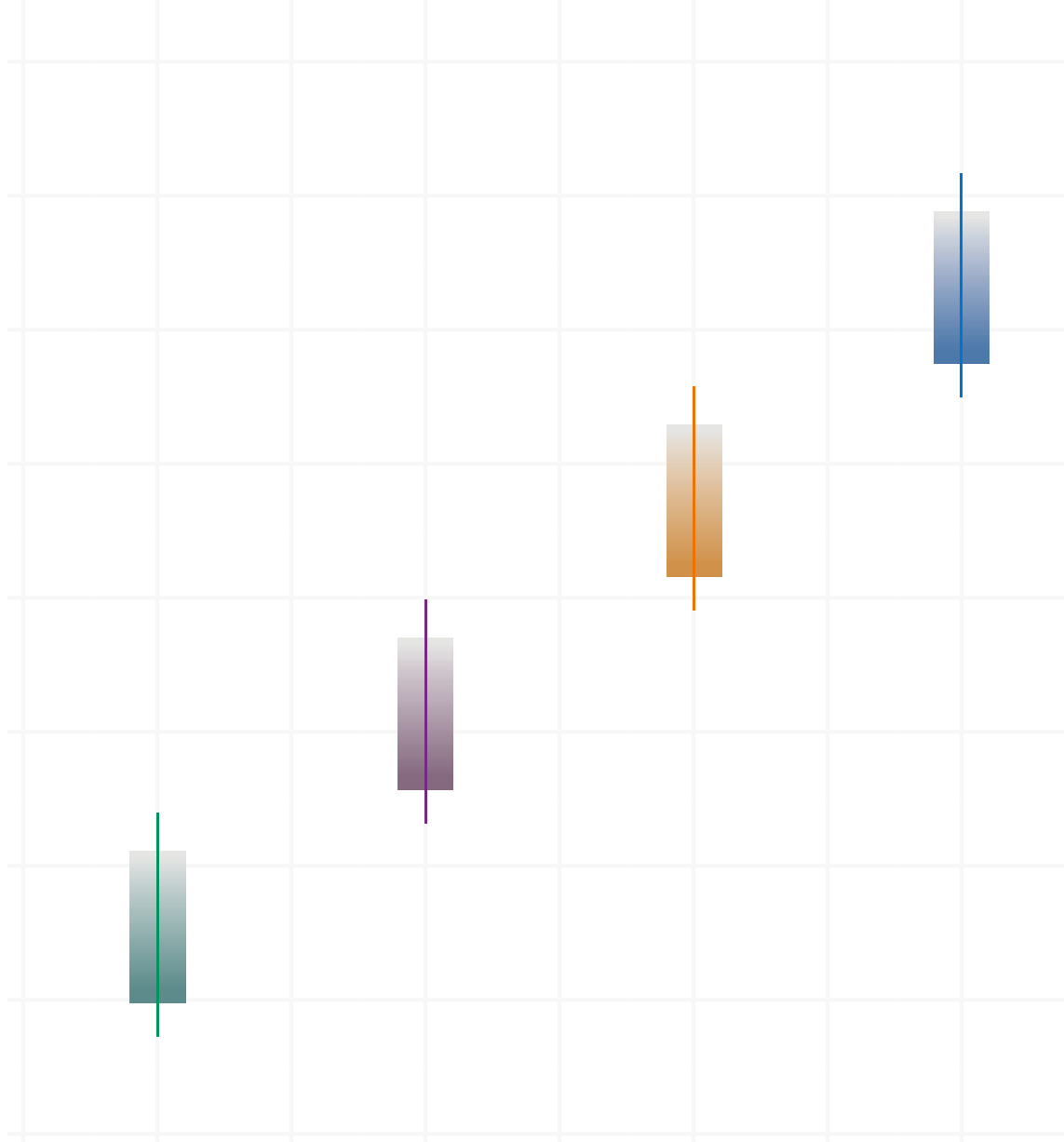


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# CliftonStrengths<sup>®</sup> for Managers

A practical guide to becoming a more effective manager.

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# Your Natural Advantage as a Manager

## Your Top 10 Themes

1. Significance.
2. Futuristic.
3. Individualization.
4. Focus.
5. Maximizer.
6. Strategic.
7. Learner.
8. Achiever.
9. Responsibility.
10. Belief.

**THE WAY YOU MANAGE IS NOT ACCIDENTAL.** It is the product of how you naturally think, what you instinctively notice, and what you are compelled to pursue. Your strengths are not personality traits to be admired in the abstract. They are the forces that shape every conversation you have with your team, every expectation you set, and every moment where someone either grows under your leadership or quietly stops trying. Understanding them with precision is not a self-improvement exercise. It is the foundation of your effectiveness as a manager.

You are wired to pursue significance, which means the work you do and the team you lead are not just responsibilities to you. They are a reflection of what you stand for. That orientation is powerful, because it means you bring genuine investment to the people around you. Your Futuristic strength means your team rarely operates without a sense of direction. You paint pictures of where things are going, and those pictures give your people something to aim at.

Your Individualization is the quiet force that makes your team feel genuinely seen. You do not coach everyone the same way, because you naturally read people well enough to know that the same approach does not work for everyone. That instinct, when applied deliberately, turns your weekly conversations with team members from status updates into real development moments. People do not leave managers who notice them. They leave managers who treat them like interchangeable parts.

Your Focus and Maximizer work together in a way that sharpens your team's attention on what actually matters. You are not interested in mediocrity, and that standard, when communicated clearly and tied to each person's strengths, becomes a motivating force rather than a pressure. Your Strategic strength means you are rarely caught flat-footed when circumstances shift.

Accountability in your hands is not punitive. It is a natural extension of your Responsibility and Belief. You hold people to commitments because you genuinely believe those commitments matter. That kind of accountability, rooted in values rather than compliance, is one of the most powerful things a manager can model.

**You don't need to become a different kind of manager. You need to aim what you naturally do best.**

# Your Strengths Defined

1. **Significance:** People who are especially talented in the Significance theme want to be very important in the eyes of others. They are independent and want to be recognized.
2. **Futuristic:** People who are especially talented in the Futuristic theme are inspired by the future and what could be. They inspire others with their visions of the future.
3. **Individualization:** People who are especially talented in the Individualization theme are intrigued with the unique qualities of each person. They have a gift for figuring out how people who are different can work together productively.
4. **Focus:** People who are especially talented in the Focus theme can take a direction, follow through, and make the corrections necessary to stay on track. They prioritize, then act.
5. **Maximizer:** People who are especially talented in the Maximizer theme focus on strengths as a way to stimulate personal and group excellence. They seek to transform something strong into something superb.
6. **Strategic:** People who are especially talented in the Strategic theme create alternative ways to proceed. Faced with any given scenario, they can quickly spot the relevant patterns and issues.
7. **Learner:** People who are especially talented in the Learner theme have a great desire to learn and want to continuously improve. In particular, the process of learning, rather than the outcome, excites them.
8. **Achiever:** People who are especially talented in the Achiever theme have a great deal of stamina and work hard. They take great satisfaction from being busy and productive.
9. **Responsibility:** People who are especially talented in the Responsibility theme take psychological ownership of what they say they will do. They are committed to stable values such as honesty and loyalty.
10. **Belief:** People who are especially talented in the Belief theme have certain core values that are unchanging. Out of these values emerges a defined purpose for their life.

## EACH THEME FITS INTO A LEADERSHIP DOMAIN.

■ **EXECUTING** themes help you make things happen.

■ **INFLUENCING** themes help you take charge, speak up and make sure others are heard.

■ **RELATIONSHIP BUILDING** themes help you build strong relationships that hold a team together.

■ **STRATEGIC THINKING** themes help you absorb and analyze information that informs better decisions.

# What Makes You a Distinct Manager

- **YOUR TEAM ALWAYS KNOWS THE DESTINATION, EVEN WHEN THE PATH IS NOT FULLY CLEAR.** You naturally frame work in terms of where it is heading and why it matters. This gives your people a sense of momentum and purpose that purely task-focused managers cannot provide. When the team understands the bigger picture, individual contributions carry more weight.
- **YOU HOLD AN UNUSUALLY HIGH STANDARD, AND YOUR TEAM KNOWS IT.** You are not interested in good enough, and that standard communicates something important: you believe your team is capable of more. When that belief is made explicit and connected to what each person does well, it becomes the fuel for genuine development rather than a source of pressure.
- **YOU COACH PEOPLE DIFFERENTLY BECAUSE YOU SEE THEM DIFFERENTLY.** You pick up on what motivates each person, what frustrates them, and where they have untapped potential. Your weekly conversations reflect that awareness, and your team members feel it. Being managed by someone who actually sees you is one of the most powerful drivers of engagement.
- **UNDER PRESSURE, YOU NARROW YOUR FOCUS RATHER THAN SCATTER YOUR ATTENTION.** When circumstances get complicated, you cut through the noise and concentrate on what matters most. Your team reads this as steadiness and competence. That calm, targeted response to adversity keeps people grounded when uncertainty would otherwise create anxiety.
- **YOUR ACCOUNTABILITY IS VALUES-DRIVEN, NOT FEAR-DRIVEN.** When you hold someone to a commitment, it is because you genuinely believe follow-through matters, not because you are monitoring performance for its own sake. People can feel the difference, and a team that understands the why behind expectations is far more likely to own them.
- **YOU BRING STRATEGIC THINKING TO PROBLEMS BEFORE MOST PEOPLE HAVE EVEN NAMED THEM.** You see patterns, anticipate obstacles, and identify paths forward quickly. This keeps your team from spinning on issues that do not require extended deliberation. Your directional clarity frees up energy that other teams waste on confusion.
- **YOUR INVESTMENT IN LEARNING ELEVATES THE PEOPLE AROUND YOU.** You do not stop at your own development. Your curiosity about what works, what is changing, and what is possible creates a team environment where growth is expected and normalized. People who work for managers like you tend to develop faster, not because they are told to, but because the culture demands it.



# Significance

YOU SET THE BAR HIGH BECAUSE YOU BELIEVE THE WORK MATTERS

## What Makes This Strength Powerful for You

- **YOU CREATE A SENSE OF IMPORTANCE AROUND THE WORK ITSELF.** Your team does not just complete tasks. Under your leadership, they understand that what they do carries weight and reflects on something larger. That framing turns routine work into meaningful contribution, and people who feel their work matters are more engaged than people who simply feel employed.
- **YOU MODEL WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE TO CARE ABOUT YOUR REPUTATION THROUGH YOUR ACTIONS.** You do not tolerate mediocrity in yourself, and your team learns that standard by watching you. The manager who holds themselves accountable first gives the team a model to follow, not just a rule to obey.
- **YOU PUSH FOR VISIBILITY ON BEHALF OF YOUR TEAM'S ACCOMPLISHMENTS.** Because you understand the power of recognition and impact, you naturally advocate for your team's work to be seen at higher levels. When people know their manager is putting their results in front of the right people, they invest more fully in producing those results.
- **YOU TAKE FEEDBACK PERSONALLY IN THE BEST SENSE OF THE WORD.** When your team underperforms, it registers for you as something that needs to be corrected, not ignored. That urgency translates into honest conversations that other managers avoid. Your Responsibility strength reinforces this, because you own the outcome of your team's development as genuinely yours to carry.
- **YOUR STANDARD OF EXCELLENCE RAISES EXPECTATIONS ACROSS THE TEAM.** When you articulate what exceptional looks like, clearly and specifically, your team recalibrates upward. People perform closer to their ceiling when they know what the ceiling looks like and believe their manager thinks they can reach it.
- **YOU ARE ENERGIZED BY HIGH-STAKES SITUATIONS, AND YOUR TEAM BENEFITS FROM THAT ENERGY.** When the pressure is highest, you are often at your sharpest. That orientation toward significance means you invest the most when the outcome matters the most. Teams that see their manager rise to a challenge are more likely to do the same.
- **YOU CREATE AN ENVIRONMENT WHERE THE WORK IS TAKEN SERIOUSLY.** Not in a rigid or punishing way, but in the sense that what happens on your team is treated as genuinely important. That seriousness of purpose is one of the most underrated drivers of team culture and long-term engagement.

## What You Need to Watch Out For

- **YOUR NEED FOR THE WORK TO MATTER CAN MAKE LOW-STAKES TASKS FEEL BENEATH THE TEAM.** Not everything your team does will be high-profile or impactful, and if they sense your disengagement on routine work, their own investment drops. Development conversations are a good place to help people find meaning in the ordinary, not just the exceptional.
- **YOUR PERSONAL INVESTMENT IN REPUTATION CAN READ AS EGO IF THE CONTEXT IS MISSING.** When your team does not understand why recognition matters to you, your drive for impact can look like self-promotion rather than advocacy. Making your reasoning transparent helps people see you as fighting for the team, not for yourself.
- **YOU MAY INADVERTENTLY CREATE PRESSURE FOR PEOPLE WHO ARE NOT MOTIVATED BY SIGNIFICANCE.** Not every team member is driven by impact or legacy. Some people are motivated by stability, relationships, or craft. Coaching everyone through a significance lens misses what actually moves the individuals who are wired differently.
- **YOU CAN OVERLOOK QUIET, STEADY CONTRIBUTORS WHO DO NOT NATURALLY SEEK VISIBILITY.** Your attention often gravitates toward the big outcomes and the people producing them. The team member who is reliably excellent without ever seeking the spotlight deserves the same investment as the one driving results loudly. Consistent recognition of that quiet excellence keeps your full roster engaged.

## How to Apply Significance as a Manager

- **IN YOUR NEXT TEAM MEETING, EXPLICITLY CONNECT A CURRENT PROJECT TO THE BROADER ORGANIZATIONAL GOAL IT SERVES.** Name the impact out loud. Do not assume your team is making that connection on their own.
- **BEFORE YOUR NEXT 1:1 WITH EACH TEAM MEMBER, IDENTIFY ONE SPECIFIC CONTRIBUTION THEY MADE IN THE PAST TWO WEEKS THAT DESERVES TO BE RECOGNIZED.** Name it precisely, not generically. “You did a great job” lands differently than “The way you handled that client conversation on Tuesday is exactly what we need more of.”
- **WHEN SETTING GOALS THIS CYCLE, TIE EACH PERSON’S TARGETS TO SOMETHING THEY PERSONALLY CARE ABOUT, NOT JUST WHAT THE ORGANIZATION NEEDS.** Ask them directly: what would make this goal feel worth the effort to you?
- **THE NEXT TIME A TEAM MEMBER’S WORK DESERVES VISIBILITY AT A HIGHER LEVEL, TAKE IT THERE.** Tell your team member you did it. That act of advocacy communicates more about your investment in them than almost anything else you can do.



# Futuristic

YOU LEAD PEOPLE TOWARD A FUTURE THEY CAN ACTUALLY SEE

## What Makes This Strength Powerful for You

- **YOU GIVE YOUR TEAM SOMETHING TO AIM AT BEFORE THE PATH IS FULLY BUILT.** Most managers manage the present. You inhabit the future and bring your team with you. That forward-oriented framing turns today's effort into a meaningful step rather than just another task, and people who can see where they are going work with far more intention.
- **YOUR VISION CREATES A NATURAL CONTEXT FOR DEVELOPMENT CONVERSATIONS.** When you describe where the team is heading, you automatically create space to ask what each person needs to develop to get there. Development is not an add-on in your conversations. It is embedded in the picture you are already painting.
- **YOU ENERGIZE YOUR TEAM DURING TRANSITIONS AND UNCERTAINTY.** When organizational change disrupts the present, your ability to describe a compelling future gives people a place to put their energy. Managers who can hold the future steady when the present is unstable are invaluable. Your team draws confidence from the clarity of your forward vision even when the current moment is ambiguous.
- **YOU MAKE LONG-TERM GOALS FEEL REAL RATHER THAN ABSTRACT.** You do not just talk about the future in vague, inspirational terms. Your Individualization means you translate that future into what it means for each specific person, which is what makes it believable and motivating.
- **YOU NATURALLY THINK IN TIMELINES, WHICH HELPS YOUR TEAM PLAN RATHER THAN REACT.** Your forward orientation means you are often thinking six months or a year ahead while others are focused on the next deadline. That longer view helps you structure development conversations around where people need to be, not just where they are.
- **YOU BUILD LOYALTY BY INVESTING IN WHAT IS POSSIBLE FOR PEOPLE, NOT JUST WHAT THEY ARE CURRENTLY DELIVERING.** When someone feels their manager sees a future for them, they develop a different kind of commitment. The team member who knows you believe in where they can go is not thinking about leaving.
- **YOU MAKE STRATEGIC DISCUSSIONS MORE CONCRETE.** Your ability to paint a detailed picture of the future makes planning conversations more productive. You are not speculating. You are describing. And that level of specificity gives your team something they can actually work toward.

# What You Need to Watch Out For

- **YOUR FUTURE FOCUS CAN LEAVE PRESENT-TENSE PROBLEMS UNADDRESSED LONG ENOUGH TO BECOME SERIOUS.** When you are always oriented toward what is coming, you can minimize what is happening right now. A team member who is struggling today needs attention today, not a conversation about where things will be in a year.
- **NOT EVERYONE ON YOUR TEAM SHARES YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH THE FUTURE.** Some people are genuinely motivated by the present, by what is in front of them right now, and a manager who is always pointing at the horizon can feel disconnected from their daily reality. Grounding your future vision in near-term milestones keeps those team members with you.
- **YOUR VISION CAN OUTPACE YOUR TEAM'S CURRENT CAPACITY, CREATING ANXIETY RATHER THAN MOTIVATION.** When the gap between where things are and where you are describing them going is too large, people can feel overwhelmed rather than inspired. Calibrating the vision to where your team is developmentally matters as much as the vision itself.
- **YOU MAY UNDERINVEST IN REINFORCING CURRENT WINS BECAUSE YOU ARE ALREADY FOCUSED ON THE NEXT HORIZON.** Your team needs to feel the satisfaction of what they have already accomplished. A manager who is always moving the target forward, without pausing to acknowledge progress, can exhaust even highly motivated people.

# How to Apply Futuristic as a Manager

- **IN YOUR NEXT 1:1, ASK EACH TEAM MEMBER WHERE THEY WANT TO BE IN THEIR ROLE TWO YEARS FROM NOW.** Not as an HR exercise, but as a genuine starting point for building a development conversation around what they need to be doing differently now to close that gap.
- **BEFORE YOUR NEXT TEAM MEETING, SPEND FIVE MINUTES DESCRIBING SPECIFICALLY WHERE THE TEAM'S WORK IS HEADING OVER THE NEXT QUARTER AND WHAT IT CONNECTS TO ORGANIZATIONALLY.** Give people the context that makes today's work feel worth doing.
- **WHEN A TEAM MEMBER IS STUCK OR DISCOURAGED, USE YOUR NATURAL ABILITY TO DESCRIBE A CREDIBLE FUTURE PATH.** Walk them through what is possible from where they currently are. Make it specific enough to be believable, not just encouraging.
- **THE NEXT TIME YOU SET A LONG-TERM TEAM GOAL, BUILD IN EXPLICIT CHECKPOINTS SO YOUR TEAM CAN FEEL PROGRESS ALONG THE WAY.** Momentum is a powerful engagement driver, and momentum requires milestones your team can actually see themselves crossing.



# Individualization

YOU COACH PEOPLE, NOT POSITIONS

## What Makes This Strength Powerful for You

- **YOU READ PEOPLE WITH A LEVEL OF ACCURACY THAT MOST MANAGERS NEVER DEVELOP.** You notice what motivates each person, what conditions help them perform, and what kinds of feedback actually land. That insight is not just useful. It is the foundation of effective coaching, because you cannot develop someone you have not first genuinely understood.
- **YOUR TEAM MEMBERS FEEL SEEN RATHER THAN MANAGED.** When a person senses their manager notices what makes them specifically different, and then acts on that knowledge, the relationship changes. The quality of your weekly conversations reflects this. You are not running the same conversation with every person on your team. You are having distinct, tailored exchanges that people actually look forward to.
- **YOU BUILD TEAMS BY UNDERSTANDING HOW DIFFERENT PEOPLE COMPLEMENT EACH OTHER.** You instinctively notice what each person brings and how those contributions fit together. That awareness helps you position people well and structure collaboration in ways that make the whole team more effective, not just the individuals within it.
- **YOU RECOGNIZE STRENGTHS IN PEOPLE BEFORE THEY HAVE FULLY NAMED THEM.** Your Maximizer amplifies this. Where other managers see performance outcomes, you see the underlying talent behind those outcomes. Naming someone's strength to them, before they have articulated it themselves, is one of the most powerful things a manager can do for a person's engagement and confidence.
- **YOU MAKE ACCOUNTABILITY PERSONAL RATHER THAN PROCEDURAL.** When expectations are set in the context of what someone specifically brings and what they specifically need, accountability becomes more about living up to their own potential than about following a policy. That kind of accountability sticks.
- **YOU PREVENT FAVORITISM BY DOING THE OPPOSITE OF WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE.** Paradoxically, treating people differently based on what they need is more equitable than treating everyone the same. When your team understands that your approach is personalized because you are meeting each person where they are, the perception shifts from inconsistency to genuine investment.
- **YOU RETAIN PEOPLE WHO MIGHT OTHERWISE BE OVERLOOKED.** The team member who does not fit the obvious mold, who has a particular kind of intelligence or contribution that does not show up loudly in standard metrics, tends to be seen by you. That visibility is often what keeps exceptional but unconventional performers from quietly disengaging.

## What You Need to Watch Out For

- **YOUR PERSONALIZED APPROACH CAN CREATE AMBIGUITY ABOUT TEAM-WIDE EXPECTATIONS.** When coaching conversations feel highly individualized, team members can become uncertain about what is expected of everyone consistently. Pairing your tailored coaching with clear, shared team standards prevents that confusion.
- **YOU MAY KNOW SIGNIFICANTLY MORE ABOUT YOUR TEAM MEMBERS THAN THEY KNOW ABOUT YOUR EXPECTATIONS.** Your natural attention flows toward understanding others, which can leave your own priorities and needs underarticulated. Your team needs to understand what you need from them just as much as you understand what they need from you.
- **YOU CAN OVER-INVEST IN THE PEOPLE WHOSE STRENGTHS ARE MOST VISIBLE TO YOU.** The team members whose profiles are richest and most interesting to you may receive more of your attention than those who are quieter or harder to read. Development investment needs to be distributed intentionally, not just toward those who are easiest to coach.
- **INDIVIDUALIZED TREATMENT WITHOUT EXPLANATION CAN READ AS INCONSISTENCY.** When two people are being managed differently without understanding why, it can create tension. Being transparent about your coaching philosophy, explaining that you tailor your approach to what each person needs, turns a potential source of confusion into a source of trust.

## How to Apply Individualization as a Manager

- **BEFORE YOUR NEXT ROUND OF 1:1S, WRITE DOWN ONE SPECIFIC STRENGTH YOU HAVE OBSERVED IN EACH TEAM MEMBER THAT YOU HAVE NOT YET NAMED EXPLICITLY TO THEM.** Name it in the conversation. Be specific about where you have seen it show up and why it matters to the team.
- **WHEN ONBOARDING A NEW TEAM MEMBER, SPEND THE FIRST FEW WEEKS IN OBSERVATION MODE BEFORE MAKING MAJOR COACHING INTERVENTIONS.** Ask more than you direct. The data you collect in that listening phase will make every conversation after it more precise.
- **IN YOUR NEXT TEAM MEETING, CREATE A BRIEF MOMENT WHERE PEOPLE SHARE WHAT KIND OF SUPPORT HELPS THEM MOST WHEN THEY ARE WORKING THROUGH A CHALLENGE.** This normalizes the conversation about individual differences and models the philosophy you already operate by.
- **THE NEXT TIME YOU GIVE FEEDBACK, TAILOR BOTH THE CONTENT AND THE DELIVERY TO WHAT YOU KNOW ABOUT THAT SPECIFIC PERSON.** How they receive feedback matters as much as what you say. A person who needs directness and a person who needs context first require different approaches to the same message.



# Focus

YOU CUT THROUGH THE NOISE SO YOUR TEAM CAN DO THE SAME

## What Makes This Strength Powerful for You

- **YOU PROTECT YOUR TEAM'S ATTENTION IN A WORLD DESIGNED TO FRAGMENT IT.** Your natural orientation toward priorities helps your team understand not just what to work on, but what to stop working on. In environments where everything feels urgent, the manager who can draw a clear line around what matters is one of the most valuable resources on the team.
- **YOU SET EXPECTATIONS WITH UNUSUAL CLARITY.** Your Focus strength means you do not allow goals to stay vague. You push toward specificity in a way that makes accountability straightforward. A team member who knows exactly what success looks like is a team member who can pursue it with confidence.
- **YOU COURSE-CORRECT EARLY BECAUSE DRIFT REGISTERS IMMEDIATELY FOR YOU.** When the team begins moving away from a stated priority, you notice quickly. That sensitivity to misalignment means small problems rarely become large ones under your watch, because you redirect before the gap becomes significant.
- **YOU RUN MEETINGS THAT ACTUALLY ACCOMPLISH SOMETHING.** Your intolerance for tangents and your natural drive toward conclusions makes your meetings different from most. People leave knowing what was decided, what comes next, and who owns it. That kind of meeting is rarer than it should be, and your team benefits from it every week.
- **YOU CREATE A RHYTHM OF FOLLOW-THROUGH THAT YOUR TEAM INTERNALIZES.** When the manager consistently demonstrates that what was said will be tracked, the team builds the same habit. Your accountability is not external pressure. It is a model your people learn by watching you operate.
- **YOU HELP PEOPLE RECOVER FROM DISTRACTION WITHOUT SHAMING THEM FOR IT.** Your Focus is not punitive. It is redirectional. When a team member has lost the thread, you are equipped to reconnect them to the priority quickly and practically, which is far more useful than a performance conversation after the fact.
- **YOUR STRATEGIC CLARITY AMPLIFIES YOUR TEAM'S CAPACITY.** Your Strategic strength, combined with Focus, means you are not just pointing at a priority. You are pointing at the right priority, having already considered the alternatives. That combination of direction and discernment gives your team confidence that following your lead will actually take them somewhere worth going.

## What You Need to Watch Out For

- **YOUR FOCUS CAN NARROW SO SHARPLY THAT LEGITIMATE SHIFTS IN PRIORITY FEEL LIKE INTERRUPTIONS.** Organizations change, and sometimes what was the right goal last month is not the right goal today. Building a regular habit of checking external conditions against your current priorities prevents misalignment from accumulating quietly.
- **YOU MAY APPEAR EMOTIONALLY DISTANT WHEN YOU ARE SIMPLY CONCENTRATED.** A team member who approaches you mid-task and receives minimal engagement may interpret that as indifference rather than concentration. Being explicit about what deep focus looks like for you, and creating clear windows for availability, manages that perception before it becomes a trust issue.
- **YOU CAN LOSE PATIENCE WITH PROCESS AND DELIBERATION IN WAYS THAT SHUT PEOPLE DOWN.** When someone is thinking out loud or working through a problem more slowly than feels necessary to you, your drive toward efficiency can compress the conversation before the person has actually gotten what they need from it. Slowing down for the relationship matters even when the answer is obvious.
- **TEAM MEMBERS WHO NEED TO EXPLORE BEFORE THEY COMMIT CAN FEEL STEAMROLLED.** Not everyone moves at the same pace from ambiguity to decision. Some people need to voice uncertainty before they can commit to a direction. Making space for that process, even briefly, increases buy-in and reduces the quiet resistance that follows when people feel they were moved rather than led.

## How to Apply Focus as a Manager

- **AT THE START OF EACH WEEK, IDENTIFY THE ONE OR TWO THINGS THAT, IF YOUR TEAM DOES THEM WELL, WILL DEFINE THE WEEK AS SUCCESSFUL.** Share this with your team explicitly. Not as a to-do list, but as a shared sense of what matters most right now.
- **IN YOUR NEXT 1:1 WITH EACH TEAM MEMBER, ASK THEM TO NAME THEIR TOP PRIORITY FOR THE COMING WEEK AND WHY THEY RANKED IT FIRST.** If their answer does not align with your assessment, that misalignment is the most important thing to address in that conversation.
- **WHEN A TEAM MEMBER BRINGS YOU A PROBLEM OR IDEA THAT FEELS OFF-PRIORITY, RESIST REDIRECTING IMMEDIATELY.** Ask one clarifying question first. That pause ensures you are not cutting off something that actually belongs in the conversation before you have heard enough to know.
- **DURING YOUR NEXT GOAL-SETTING CONVERSATION, BUILD IN EXPLICIT LANGUAGE ABOUT WHAT THE TEAM WILL NOT PURSUE DURING THIS CYCLE.** The boundary around the goal matters as much as the goal itself, and naming it out loud prevents the scope creep that quietly undermines focus.



# Maximizer

YOU TURN GOOD INTO GREAT BECAUSE YOU CANNOT STOP SEEING THE POTENTIAL

## What Makes This Strength Powerful for You

- **YOU ARE DRAWN TO THE BEST IN PEOPLE BEFORE THEY HAVE FULLY ARRIVED THERE.** Your coaching instinct is not corrective. It is elevating. You look at a team member and see not just where they are but the gap between where they are and what they could be, and you are genuinely motivated to close it. That orientation turns your development conversations into something people actually want to have.
- **YOU RECOGNIZE THAT BUILDING ON STRENGTH PRODUCES FASTER GROWTH THAN FIXING WEAKNESS.** Most performance systems default to remediation. You default to amplification. That distinction is significant, because people develop faster when they are working in their areas of greatest natural talent than when they are grinding against their deficits.
- **YOU MAKE EXCELLENCE FEEL LIKE THE NATURAL EXPECTATION RATHER THAN AN EXCEPTIONAL DEMAND.** When your standard is consistent, your team recalibrates upward. Excellence stops feeling like pressure and starts feeling like the definition of normal. That cultural shift is one of the most lasting things a manager can create.
- **YOUR LEARNER STRENGTH DEEPENS YOUR COACHING BECAUSE YOU ARE CONSTANTLY UPDATING YOUR UNDERSTANDING.** You are not coaching from a fixed playbook. You are integrating new knowledge about people, context, and craft into how you develop your team. That combination of curiosity and precision makes your coaching unusually effective over time.
- **YOU GIVE FEEDBACK THAT IS SPECIFIC ENOUGH TO ACTUALLY BE USED.** Maximizer-driven feedback is not vague encouragement. It is precise identification of what is working and exactly how to do more of it. That specificity is what separates development from praise, and your team can feel the difference.
- **YOU MAKE YOUR TEAM'S WINS FEEL MEANINGFUL RATHER THAN INCIDENTAL.** When someone does something exceptional, you notice it with a level of specificity that communicates genuine observation. That recognition is not a morale tactic. It is an accurate reflection of what you actually saw, and people know the difference.
- **YOU CREATE HIGH STANDARDS WITHOUT CREATING A CULTURE OF INADEQUACY.** The risk of a Maximizer-led environment is that nothing ever feels good enough. The strength of it is that the ceiling is always clear and always within reach. When you balance high standards with genuine acknowledgment of progress, your team experiences the best version of what this strength can produce.

## What You Need to Watch Out For

- **YOUR DRIVE TOWARD EXCELLENT CAN MAKE ADEQUATE FEEL LIKE FAILURE.** Not every project, week, or deliverable warrants the full force of your optimization instinct. When you apply maximum standards to minimum-stakes work, your team experiences exhaustion rather than elevation. Calibrating your expectations to the situation is its own form of excellence.
- **YOU CAN UNDER-INVEST IN TEAM MEMBERS YOU HAVE ALREADY CATEGORIZED AS LOWER-POTENTIAL.** Your attention naturally gravitates toward the people with the most to develop or the most to offer. The team member who is steady, reliable, and not obviously exceptional still deserves your investment. They are often the backbone the rest of the team depends on.
- **YOUR STANDARD CAN MAKE PEOPLE HESITANT TO BRING YOU IMPERFECT WORK.** If your team learns that early drafts are met with intensive critique, they may stop sharing work early enough in the process for your input to actually help. Creating explicit safety for rough iterations protects the trust that makes your coaching useful.
- **YOU MAY DELAY DECISIONS OR CONCLUSIONS IN PURSUIT OF A BETTER ANSWER.** Your Maximizer instinct can keep you in the optimization loop past the point where a good decision, made now, outperforms a great decision made too late. Recognizing when the improvement curve is flattening and calling the work done is a skill worth developing.

## How to Apply Maximizer as a Manager

- **IN YOUR NEXT DEVELOPMENT CONVERSATION, IDENTIFY THE ONE STRENGTH EACH TEAM MEMBER IS CURRENTLY UNDERUSING.** Name it specifically, describe where you have seen it, and propose one concrete way they could deploy it more fully in their current role.
- **BEFORE YOUR NEXT PERFORMANCE REVIEW CYCLE, REFRAME THE CONVERSATION WITH YOUR TEAM.** Instead of asking what they need to improve, ask what they are already doing well enough that investing in it more fully would produce exceptional results. Build the development plan from that answer.
- **WHEN A TEAM MEMBER COMPLETES SOMETHING GENUINELY EXCELLENT, DO NOT JUST MOVE TO THE NEXT THING.** Pause long enough to name precisely what made it excellent. That specific acknowledgment teaches the team what to repeat.
- **IN YOUR NEXT TEAM MEETING, SHARE ONE EXAMPLE OF A TEAM MEMBER'S STRENGTH IN ACTION FROM THE PAST WEEK.** Connect it explicitly to the team's goals. This normalizes the practice of strength-based recognition and models the coaching philosophy you want embedded in your team culture.



# Strategic

YOU SEE THE PATH BEFORE THE MAP EXISTS

## What Makes This Strength Powerful for You

- **YOU MAKE DECISIONS WITH A LEVEL OF FORESIGHT THAT GIVES YOUR TEAM A RELIABLE FOUNDATION.** You are not guessing about direction. You have already run the scenarios, identified the obstacles, and selected the path most likely to succeed. Your team may not always see your reasoning in the moment, but they feel the steadiness that comes from a manager who has already thought ahead.
- **YOU PROTECT YOUR TEAM FROM DEAD ENDS BEFORE THEY WASTE TIME IN THEM.** Your pattern recognition means you can often see where an approach will break down before the team has invested heavily in it. That early course correction saves significant time and prevents the discouragement that comes from a team realizing they built something in the wrong direction.
- **YOU BRING CLARITY TO COMPLEX SITUATIONS WITHOUT OVERSIMPLIFYING THEM.** You do not reduce everything to a slogan. You identify the relevant factors, filter out the noise, and describe a path that actually accounts for the complexity at hand. That combination of rigor and decisiveness makes you unusually effective in the moments that require both.
- **YOU HELP YOUR TEAM MAKE BETTER DECISIONS BY NARRATING YOUR THINKING.** When you share the reasoning behind a direction, not just the direction itself, your team develops the same strategic muscle over time. Managers who explain how they see things develop smarter teams. Your Learner strength reinforces this, because sharing your thinking process feels natural to you.
- **YOU ANTICIPATE RESISTANCE AND PLAN FOR IT.** In change management situations, the manager who has already thought through the objections and prepared responses is far more effective than the one who is surprised by pushback. Your team experiences this as preparation and confidence, which gives them permission to follow rather than hesitate.
- **YOU GIVE YOUR TEAM PERMISSION TO MOVE DECISIVELY.** When people know their manager has considered the options and committed to a direction thoughtfully, they do not second-guess the work. That permission to execute without constant uncertainty is one of the most freeing things you can offer your team.
- **YOU CREATE A COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE FOR YOUR TEAM IN ORGANIZATIONAL CONTEXTS.** Teams led by managers with Strategic strength tend to navigate organizational complexity better. You understand where the leverage points are, which relationships matter, and how to position your team's work for maximum impact. That systemic awareness benefits everyone under your leadership.

## What You Need to Watch Out For

- **YOUR SPEED OF STRATEGIC THINKING CAN LEAVE YOUR TEAM BEHIND.** You arrive at a conclusion quickly, and the path that got you there is not always visible to the people you are asking to follow you. Slowing down to narrate your reasoning, even briefly, is not inefficiency. It is the investment that makes your strategy executable.
- **YOUR PATTERN RECOGNITION CAN LOOK LIKE CRITICISM OF THE CURRENT STATE.** When you identify what is wrong with an existing approach, your intent is improvement. But if the person who built that approach hears it as dismissal, the relationship suffers. Acknowledging what is working before naming what needs to change protects both the conversation and the person.
- **YOU MAY GENERATE MORE STRATEGIC OPTIONS THAN YOUR TEAM CAN REALISTICALLY PURSUE.** Your ability to see multiple paths forward is a genuine advantage, but presenting too many options without a clear recommendation can paralyze rather than enable. When your team needs direction, your role is to reduce options, not multiply them.
- **YOU CAN GROW IMPATIENT WITH TEAMS OR ORGANIZATIONS THAT MOVE MORE SLOWLY THAN YOUR THINKING.** The gap between where you can see the situation going and where the group currently is can be frustrating. That frustration, when visible, signals to your team that they are the obstacle, which undermines the trust that makes strategy executable.

## How to Apply Strategic as a Manager

- **THE NEXT TIME YOU NEED TO COMMUNICATE A SIGNIFICANT DIRECTION CHANGE, TAKE FIVE MINUTES TO WRITE DOWN THE TWO OR THREE KEY REASONS FOR THE DECISION BEFORE THE MEETING.** Share that reasoning out loud. Your team will implement more effectively when they understand not just the what but the why behind the path.
- **BEFORE YOUR NEXT PLANNING CYCLE, IDENTIFY THE TWO OR THREE STRATEGIC RISKS MOST LIKELY TO AFFECT YOUR TEAM'S WORK IN THE COMING QUARTER.** Bring those observations to your team and invite their input on how to navigate them. This develops their strategic thinking while making your assessment more complete.
- **WHEN A TEAM MEMBER BRINGS YOU A PLAN THAT HAS A SIGNIFICANT FLAW, ACKNOWLEDGE WHAT IS RIGHT ABOUT IT FIRST, THEN ASK A QUESTION THAT LEADS THEM TOWARD SEEING THE GAP THEMSELVES RATHER THAN POINTING IT OUT DIRECTLY.** This preserves their ownership of the solution.
- **IN YOUR NEXT 1:1, ASK EACH TEAM MEMBER WHAT THEY SEE AS THE BIGGEST OBSTACLE TO THEIR OWN SUCCESS IN THEIR CURRENT ROLE.** Compare their answer to your own assessment. The gap between those two perspectives is the most valuable information in the conversation.



# Learner

YOU MODEL THE STANDARD YOU WANT YOUR TEAM TO LIVE BY

## What Makes This Strength Powerful for You

- **YOU SIGNAL TO YOUR TEAM THAT GROWTH IS NOT JUST EXPECTED, IT IS PRACTICED.** When a manager visibly invests in their own learning, it reframes development from a performance requirement into a professional identity. Your team learns that learning is what serious people do, not something assigned to those who are struggling.
- **YOU STAY CURRENT IN WAYS THAT GIVE YOUR TEAM A GENUINE ADVANTAGE.** You are not operating from a fixed playbook developed years ago. You are integrating new information regularly, which means your coaching, your strategy, and your perspective are all more relevant than those of managers who stopped learning when they got promoted.
- **YOU ARE COMFORTABLE WITH NOT KNOWING, WHICH MAKES YOU A SAFER MANAGER TO BRING PROBLEMS TO.** A manager who has to project certainty closes down the conversations that most need to happen. Your relationship with ambiguity and inquiry signals to your team that questions are welcome and that figuring things out together is a legitimate form of leadership.
- **YOU CREATE DEVELOPMENT CONVERSATIONS THAT FEEL LIKE EXPLORATION RATHER THAN EVALUATION.** When the frame is learning rather than performance, people engage differently. They take more risks. They share more honestly. They invest in the process rather than managing the optics of it. Your Learner strength creates that environment naturally.
- **YOU HELP YOUR TEAM SEE THE DEVELOPMENTAL ARC OF DIFFICULT ASSIGNMENTS.** When someone is struggling with something new, your instinct is to name the learning that is happening inside the difficulty, not just to solve the problem. That reframe is one of the most powerful coaching moves available, and it comes naturally to you.
- **YOU BRING FRESH THINKING TO OLD PROBLEMS.** Because you are always consuming new information and perspectives, you rarely approach recurring challenges the same way twice. That intellectual agility benefits your team in every problem-solving conversation you enter.
- **YOUR CURIOSITY MAKES YOUR 1:1 CONVERSATIONS RICHER THAN MOST.** You ask questions you are genuinely interested in rather than questions you are required to ask. People can feel the difference between a manager who is going through a checklist and one who actually wants to understand. Your team feels understood, and that feeling is directly tied to engagement.

## What You Need to Watch Out For

- **YOUR INVESTMENT IN LEARNING CAN PULL YOUR ATTENTION TOWARD YOUR OWN DEVELOPMENT AT THE EXPENSE OF YOUR TEAM'S.** The time and energy you pour into acquiring new knowledge is valuable, but it needs to be balanced with the time you invest in translating that knowledge into better coaching for the people you lead.
- **YOU MAY UNCONSCIOUSLY DEVALUE TEAM MEMBERS WHO ARE NOT VISIBLY MOTIVATED BY LEARNING.** Not everyone is energized by the process of acquiring new knowledge. Some people are motivated by stability, relationships, or execution. Coaching through a learning lens alone misses what actually drives those individuals.
- **THE PROCESS OF LEARNING CAN BECOME ITS OWN DESTINATION.** There is a version of Learner overuse where the acquisition of knowledge is pursued so thoroughly that the application of it gets delayed. Your team needs your insights translated into action, not perpetually refined in preparation for action.
- **YOU CAN USE LEARNING AS A BUFFER AGAINST DIFFICULT DECISIONS.** If there is always more to understand before a conclusion can be drawn, Learner becomes a way of avoiding the discomfort of deciding under uncertainty. Recognizing when you have enough information to move is a discipline worth cultivating alongside the discipline of inquiry.

## How to Apply Learner as a Manager

- **THE NEXT TIME YOU ENCOUNTER A MEANINGFUL ARTICLE, FRAMEWORK, OR IDEA RELEVANT TO YOUR TEAM'S WORK, BRING IT INTO YOUR NEXT TEAM MEETING AS A BRIEF DISCUSSION PROMPT RATHER THAN PRESENTING IT AS A DIRECTIVE.** "I came across something I want to think through with you" is one of the most engaging things a manager can say to a team.
- **IN YOUR NEXT 1:1 CYCLE, ASK EACH TEAM MEMBER WHAT THEY ARE TRYING TO GET BETTER AT RIGHT NOW, SEPARATE FROM ANY FORMAL DEVELOPMENT GOAL.** Then ask what you can do to support it. The conversation that follows is often more development-relevant than any performance process you will run.
- **WHEN YOUR TEAM ENCOUNTERS A FAILURE OR A MISSED TARGET, RESIST THE IMPULSE TO MOVE TO SOLUTIONS IMMEDIATELY.** Spend five minutes explicitly naming what the situation taught the team. That debrief converts a loss into an asset.
- **SHARE ONE THING YOU LEARNED THIS MONTH WITH YOUR FULL TEAM.** Make it something that genuinely changed how you think about the work. Visible learning by the manager is one of the most underused tools in building a development culture.



# Achiever

YOU BRING THE ENERGY THAT SETS THE TEMPO FOR THE WHOLE TEAM

## What Makes This Strength Powerful for You

- **YOUR WORK ETHIC IS VISIBLE, AND IT SETS A STANDARD WITHOUT YOU HAVING TO SAY A WORD.** Teams take cues from their manager's behavior before they take cues from their manager's words. When your team sees you investing fully, completing what you start, and moving with purpose, that tempo becomes the ambient standard for the whole group.
- **YOU FINISH THINGS, AND YOUR TEAM BENEFITS FROM THAT RELIABILITY.** In environments where initiatives stall and projects get half-done, a manager who completes what they commit to is genuinely unusual. Your Achiever instinct means your team rarely wonders whether their manager will follow through. That consistency builds trust over time.
- **YOU BRING ENERGY TO THE WORK ITSELF, NOT JUST TO THE OUTCOMES.** You do not disengage between milestones. You invest in the process, which means your coaching conversations are characterized by real engagement rather than obligatory check-ins. People can feel the difference between a manager who is present because they want to be and one who is present because the calendar says so.
- **YOU CREATE A CULTURE OF COMPLETION.** When accountability for follow-through is modeled consistently at the top, it cascades. Teams led by Achievers tend to develop stronger norms around commitment and closure. Your Responsibility strength reinforces this, because the standard is not just about productivity. It is about integrity.
- **YOU ARE USEFUL IN HIGH-DEMAND PERIODS BECAUSE YOUR CAPACITY DOES NOT OBVIOUSLY COLLAPSE UNDER PRESSURE.** When the team is under load, a manager who gets visibly overwhelmed creates anxiety. A manager who digs in creates confidence. Your stamina and drive to keep moving communicates to your team that the pressure is manageable.
- **YOU GIVE YOUR TEAM PERMISSION TO TAKE THEIR WORK SERIOUSLY.** Not everyone has had a manager who treats productivity and accomplishment as genuinely satisfying rather than just obligatory. Your investment in getting things done signals that the work matters, and that signal is a quiet but powerful source of team engagement.
- **YOU MAKE PROGRESS TANGIBLE.** Because you are tracking toward completion naturally, you are also in a position to show your team how far they have come. Regular acknowledgment of what has been accomplished, not just what remains, is one of the simplest and most effective engagement practices available to you.

## What You Need to Watch Out For

- **YOUR PACE CAN EXHAUST TEAM MEMBERS WHO ARE NOT WIRED THE SAME WAY.** Not everyone is energized by volume and velocity. If your standard for what a full day looks like leaves your team chronically behind where you are, the gap creates discouragement rather than drive. Understanding what sustainable effort looks like for each person is part of managing, not compromising.
- **YOU CAN TAKE ON TOO MUCH BECAUSE TURNING THINGS DOWN FEELS LIKE UNDERPERFORMING.** Your drive to accomplish and your Responsibility strength together can make overcommitment feel virtuous. It is not. A manager who is stretched past capacity has less to give every person on their team, which is a worse outcome than saying no to something.
- **YOU MAY MOVE PAST WINS TOO QUICKLY FOR YOUR TEAM TO FEEL THE SATISFACTION OF THEM.** You are already thinking about what is next before the current accomplishment has registered. Pausing to acknowledge what was completed, before moving to what is coming, is not a delay. It is recognition, and recognition is one of the most powerful things you can offer your team.
- **YOU CAN MISTAKE ACTIVITY FOR PROGRESS.** Your drive to stay productive can occasionally produce motion without direction. Building a regular habit of checking that what you are achieving is connected to the most important priorities prevents the experience of working hard toward the wrong things.

## How to Apply Achiever as a Manager

- **AT THE END OF EACH WEEK, SEND YOUR TEAM A BRIEF NOTE NAMING TWO OR THREE SPECIFIC THINGS THE TEAM ACCOMPLISHED.** Not a status report. A recognition of completion. The act of naming what was finished is one of the most underused retention and engagement practices available.
- **BEFORE YOUR NEXT 1:1 WITH EACH TEAM MEMBER, IDENTIFY ONE COMMITMENT YOU MADE TO THEM IN THE PREVIOUS CONVERSATION AND CONFIRM YOU HAVE FOLLOWED THROUGH ON IT.** If you have not, address it directly before you move to the new agenda. Follow-through from the manager is the most credible form of accountability modeling available.
- **WHEN SETTING COMMITMENTS WITH YOUR TEAM, BUILD EXPLICIT COMPLETION CRITERIA INTO THE GOAL.** “We will know this is done when...” prevents the ambiguity that allows accountability to erode. Your Focus on completion pairs powerfully with this practice.
- **THE NEXT TIME A TEAM MEMBER FINISHES SOMETHING SIGNIFICANT, DO NOT MOVE DIRECTLY TO THE DEBRIEF OR THE NEXT ASSIGNMENT.** Spend two minutes naming what they completed and what it took to get there. That pause communicates investment and reinforces the value of completion in your team’s culture.



# Responsibility

YOUR WORD IS THE FOUNDATION YOUR TEAM BUILDS ON

## What Makes This Strength Powerful for You

- **YOU MODEL THE STANDARD YOU HOLD OTHERS TO, WHICH MAKES ACCOUNTABILITY LEGITIMATE.** Managers who hold their teams accountable without holding themselves to the same standard create resentment. Your Responsibility ensures that the commitments you make to your team are treated with the same seriousness you expect from them. That symmetry is the foundation of psychological safety.
- **YOUR TEAM KNOWS YOU WILL DO WHAT YOU SAID YOU WOULD DO.** That certainty is more valuable than it might seem. When team members can count on their manager's follow-through, they invest more fully in their own commitments. Trust is built in small repetitions, not grand gestures, and your reliability in the small things is what makes the large things possible.
- **YOU CREATE A CULTURE WHERE OWNING MISTAKES IS THE NORM.** Because you do not deflect responsibility yourself, your team learns that ownership is the expected response to difficulty. A team that can say "I dropped this, here is what I am doing about it" without fear of retribution is a team that recovers faster and learns more.
- **YOU TAKE DEVELOPMENT COMMITMENTS SERIOUSLY.** When you agree to support someone's growth, that agreement is not provisional. It is a commitment, and you treat it accordingly. Your team members know that what was discussed in a development conversation will actually be followed through on, which is what makes those conversations worth having.
- **YOU PROTECT YOUR TEAM BY OWNING UPWARD.** When things go wrong, the manager who absorbs accountability upward while giving credit downward builds fierce loyalty. Your instinct to own the outcome creates a buffer that your team feels, even when they cannot fully articulate it.
- **YOU REINFORCE TRUST ACROSS THE ORGANIZATION, NOT JUST WITHIN YOUR TEAM.** Peers, senior leaders, and cross-functional partners all operate with greater confidence when they know you will do what you say. That organizational reputation creates opportunities for your team that less reliable managers cannot access.
- **YOU HOLD EXPECTATIONS CLEARLY BECAUSE YOU BELIEVE THEY MATTER.** Your Belief and Responsibility working together mean that the standards you set are not arbitrary. They are tied to values. When your team understands that your expectations reflect something you genuinely stand behind rather than something compliance requires, they engage with them differently.

## What You Need to Watch Out For

- **YOU CAN TAKE ON COMMITMENTS THAT BELONG TO OTHER PEOPLE.** Your instinct to own things can sometimes extend to problems that are not yours to carry. When you solve for a team member's accountability gap by absorbing it yourself, you deprive them of the development that comes from owning their own outcomes.
- **YOUR STANDARD OF FOLLOW-THROUGH CAN BECOME A SOURCE OF GUILT RATHER THAN GROWTH.** When a team member misses a commitment, your response to that miss matters enormously. If the message they receive is that they have failed a personal standard, rather than that they missed a professional expectation with a path to recovery, Responsibility becomes pressure rather than culture.
- **YOU MAY OVERCOMMIT BECAUSE SAYING NO FEELS LIKE ABANDONING YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES.** The instinct to take on whatever is asked of you is genuine and admirable. But a manager who is stretched across too many commitments has less to give each person on their team. Learning to protect your capacity is itself a form of responsibility to the people who depend on you.
- **YOU CAN CARRY THE EMOTIONAL WEIGHT OF YOUR TEAM'S OUTCOMES HEAVIER THAN IS SUSTAINABLE.** When things do not go well, you feel the weight of it personally. That investment is part of what makes you trustworthy. But managers who absorb their team's struggles without processing them run the risk of burnout that ultimately reduces their effectiveness.

## How to Apply Responsibility as a Manager

- **AT THE START OF EACH 1:1, SPEND THIRTY SECONDS REVIEWING COMMITMENTS FROM THE PREVIOUS CONVERSATION, BOTH YOURS AND THEIRS.** Not as an accountability check, but as a signal that what was said matters to you. That habit, repeated consistently, transforms the quality of every subsequent conversation.
- **THE NEXT TIME A TEAM MEMBER FAILS TO FOLLOW THROUGH ON SOMETHING, RESIST ABSORBING THE CONSEQUENCE FOR THEM.** Instead, ask what got in the way and what they will do differently. The coaching happens in the conversation, not in the rescue.
- **WHEN YOU REALIZE YOU CANNOT KEEP A COMMITMENT YOU HAVE MADE, NAME IT TO THE PERSON DIRECTLY BEFORE THEY NOTICE.** "I said I would get you feedback by Thursday and I was not able to. Here is when you can expect it." That transparency maintains more trust than a missed deadline ever costs.
- **IN YOUR NEXT TEAM MEETING, SHARE ONE THING YOU ARE CURRENTLY WORKING TO GET BETTER AT IN YOUR OWN ROLE.** Modeling personal accountability for development builds permission for your team to do the same.



# Belief

YOU LEAD FROM SOMETHING REAL, AND YOUR TEAM KNOWS IT

## What Makes This Strength Powerful for You

- **YOUR TEAM CAN FEEL THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A MANAGER WHO IS GOING THROUGH MOTIONS AND ONE WHO ACTUALLY STANDS FOR SOMETHING.** Your Belief means you bring a genuine value system to the work. That consistency, visible in how you make decisions and what you refuse to compromise on, gives your team a stable point of reference in a constantly shifting environment.
- **YOU CREATE A CULTURE WHERE VALUES ARE LIVED RATHER THAN POSTED.** The organizations that actually operate by their stated values are the ones where managers with Belief are in the room. You do not treat values as aspirational language. You treat them as operational constraints, and that distinction is felt by everyone who works for you.
- **YOU ATTRACT AND RETAIN PEOPLE WHO ARE SIMILARLY MOTIVATED BY PURPOSE.** People who care deeply about what their work stands for tend to seek out managers they can trust at that level. Your Belief creates a gravitational pull toward team members who want their work to be connected to something worth doing. That selective magnetism improves your team's culture over time.
- **YOUR SIGNIFICANCE AND BELIEF TOGETHER CREATE A PARTICULARLY POWERFUL LEADERSHIP SIGNAL.** You do not just want to do important work. You want to do important work for the right reasons. That combination is rarer than it sounds, and team members who have worked for both kinds of significance-driven managers know the difference immediately.
- **YOU BRING CONVICTION TO DIFFICULT DECISIONS THAT MIGHT OTHERWISE BE MADE THROUGH COMMITTEE.** When a decision requires someone to hold the line on what matters, you can do it without being arbitrary. Your values are your justification, and that clarity enables a kind of decisive leadership that ambiguous environments require.
- **YOUR CONSISTENCY MAKES YOU PREDICTABLE IN THE BEST WAY.** Your team does not have to guess what you will do when things get difficult. They already know your values, and those values predict your behavior. That predictability is a significant source of psychological safety, because safety comes from consistency, not from permissiveness.
- **YOU CONNECT THE WORK YOUR TEAM DOES TO SOMETHING WORTH CARING ABOUT.** When someone understands not just what they are building but why it matters in a larger sense, their investment in it deepens. Your Belief enables you to make that connection authentically rather than

rhetorically, and authenticity is the only version that actually holds.

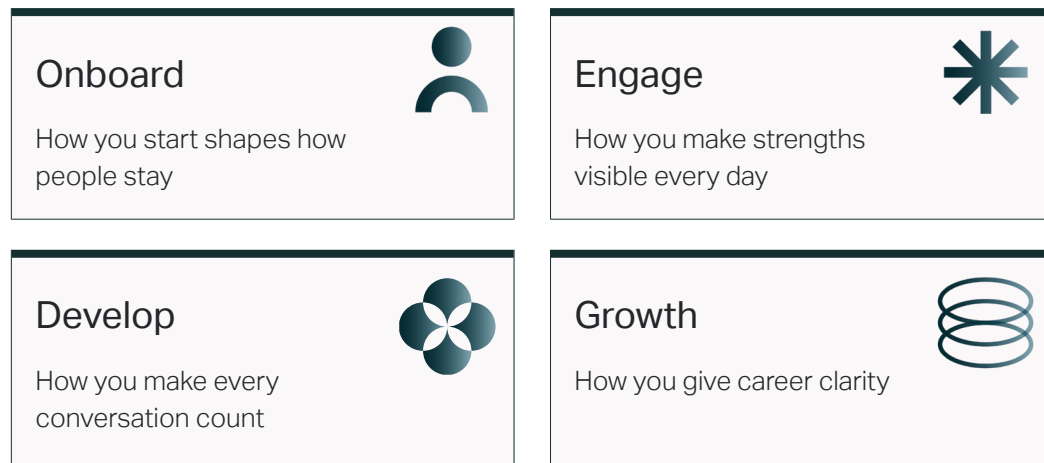
## What You Need to Watch Out For

- **YOUR CONVICTION CAN CLOSE DOWN CONVERSATIONS THAT NEED TO STAY OPEN.** When your values are strongly held and visibly present, team members can self-censor opinions or approaches that they sense will not align with yours. Building explicit space for disagreement and alternative perspectives protects the intellectual diversity your team needs to perform well.
- **YOU MAY JUDGE TEAM MEMBERS' MOTIVATION BY HOW WELL IT ALIGNS WITH YOUR OWN.** Not everyone is driven by purpose in the same way you are. Some people are motivated by mastery, relationships, or security. Coaching only toward the motivations you recognize can leave you unable to reach team members whose drivers are different from yours.
- **BELIEF CAN SLOW YOUR ABILITY TO PIVOT WHEN CIRCUMSTANCES REQUIRE IT.** Strong values are an asset. But when a direction needs to change based on new information, the manager who can hold their values and adjust their strategy simultaneously is more effective than the one who conflates the two. Your values do not need to change for your approach to change.
- **YOUR STANDARDS, ROOTED IN BELIEF RATHER THAN POLICY, CAN FEEL ABSOLUTE IN WAYS THAT CREATE RIGIDITY.** There is a version of this strength where the team experiences not a principled leader but an inflexible one. Distinguishing between the things you will not compromise on and the things you are simply attached to is a useful and continuing exercise.

## How to Apply Belief as a Manager

- **IN YOUR NEXT TEAM MEETING, TAKE FIVE MINUTES TO EXPLICITLY CONNECT WHAT THE TEAM IS CURRENTLY WORKING ON TO A BROADER VALUE OR PURPOSE.** Not the organizational mission statement. Your own articulation, in your own words, of why this work matters. That specificity is what makes it land.
- **WHEN YOU FACE A DIFFICULT DECISION THAT REQUIRES YOU TO HOLD A LINE, TELL YOUR TEAM WHICH VALUE YOU ARE ACTING FROM AND WHY.** This is not justifying yourself. It is modeling principled decision-making in a way your team can learn from and eventually replicate.
- **IN YOUR NEXT DEVELOPMENT CONVERSATION, ASK EACH TEAM MEMBER WHAT ABOUT THEIR WORK FEELS MOST MEANINGFUL TO THEM.** Do not lead them toward your answer. Listen for theirs. The connection between their values and their work is the most durable source of engagement you can help them build.
- **WHEN YOU NOTICE A TEAM MEMBER SHOWING PARTICULAR CARE ABOUT THE QUALITY OR INTEGRITY OF SOMETHING, NAME IT.** "I noticed you pushed back on taking the shortcut there. That is exactly the kind of judgment this team needs." Specific recognition of values-aligned behavior reinforces the culture you are building without a single policy being written.

# How You Drive Your Employees' Experience



Your management style does not distribute evenly across every stage of the employee experience. It concentrates in certain areas, shows up with particular texture in others, and is noticeably lighter in a few. That is not a flaw to be corrected. It is a pattern to be understood. The managers who are most effective over time are not those who are uniformly excellent across every dimension. They are those who know where their natural approach creates energy and where intention is required to fill the gaps.



## How You Onboard New Team Members

When someone joins your team, they encounter a manager who holds the work to a high standard from the beginning and who is genuinely curious about what makes them specifically capable. Your Individualization means you are already reading the new hire before they have found their footing, noticing what they bring, what they seem to need, and how they are likely to function within the existing team. Your Futuristic gives you something most onboarding managers lack: a clear and compelling picture of where the team is going and how this person fits into that future.

New hires who know where they are headed from week one develop faster and commit sooner. The potential gap in your natural onboarding approach is patience with the pace of the early months, the period before someone is performing close to their ceiling. Your drive toward significance and excellence can create implicit pressure in a phase that needs permission to be slow before it becomes fast. The question worth sitting with is whether the new person has enough room to find their footing before you expect them to reach their ceiling.



## How You Build Engagement Through Strengths

Engagement under your leadership is primarily built through a recognition of individual capacity. You do not manage people as interchangeable roles. You manage them as distinct contributors, each with a particular way of adding value, and you coach accordingly. Your Maximizer strength means your conversations focus on developing what is already strong rather than correcting what is merely weak. That approach produces durable engagement because it is rooted in each person's sense of competence and growth.

The place where intention is required is with team members whose strengths are less visible to you—those who are quiet, unconventional, or whose contributions do not naturally stand out. Regular, deliberate attention to the full roster prevents engagement from concentrating only in the easiest places to see. The team members who benefit most from your natural approach will perform visibly. The ones who need intentional attention will show you what deliberate investment can do.



## How You Develop People

Development is where your profile is most concentrated. The combination of Individualization, Maximizer, Learner, and Futuristic creates a manager who is instinctively oriented toward growth in a way that is specific, forward-looking, and grounded in each person's strengths rather than a generic template. Your development conversations carry weight because they are tailored. You do not run the same conversation with every person. You start from what you know about them and build toward what you believe they can become.

The area to watch is the consistency of these conversations when workload is high. Your Achiever and Focus can pull your attention toward output at the expense of the weekly conversations development requires. Development does not happen in the performance cycle. It happens in the ongoing exchanges that keep it alive between reviews. Protecting that time, even when work is pressing, is one of the most direct investments you can make in retaining your best people.



## How You Create Career Growth

Your Significance and Futuristic make you a manager who thinks naturally about where people are going, not just what they are doing. You can see a team member's potential more clearly than most, and you are motivated by the idea that your leadership can enable that growth. That internal picture is a valuable asset because it gives you something specific to coach toward.

The opportunity is in translating that vision into explicit conversations about career direction. Your internal view is only useful if it becomes shared dialogue. Team members who know their manager has thought about their future—and shared it—are among the most retained. The distance between the vision you carry and the conversation you have not yet had is where career growth either happens or quietly stops.

The employee experience your team has under your leadership is shaped by a manager who takes the work seriously, sees people clearly, holds a high standard, and genuinely invests in what each person can become. The arc of that experience, from onboarding through development and into career growth, reflects the same core orientation throughout: the belief that excellence is possible, that individuals matter, and that the work is worth doing well. Awareness of where that orientation is already strong and where intention is required to supplement it is what separates a good manager from a great one.

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