

## RECOGNIZING AND LEVERAGING YOUR STRENGTHS

Significant career success is founded on the ability to recognize and leverage your strengths. Strengths can be skills, specialized knowledge and natural talents. While weaknesses should be mitigated, success is most likely to occur as a result of enhancing and leveraging your strengths. Aligning your strengths with your broad career goals will lead to a higher level of performance. The following list of strengths is adapted from *Transforming Your STEM Career Through Leadership and Innovation* (2012) and *Future Work Skills 2020*. **What strengths do you possess?**

	Strength	Definition
	Cognitive Load Management	ability to discriminate and filter information for importance, maximizes cognitive functioning using a variety of tools and techniques
	Consistency	adherence to the same principles, course, form, etc.
	Computational thinking	ability to translate large sets of data into abstract concepts and data based reasoning
	Context	able to use the past and surrounding environment to make better decisions; can see both the detail and the big picture
	Cross-cultural Competence	ability to operate respectfully in different cultural settings and with people from different backgrounds; seeking to minimize impact of limiting stereotypes
	Deliberative	acting cautiously with a clear design
	Design mindset	ability to represent and develop work processes and tasks for desired outcomes
	Developer	reveals untapped potential
	Discipline	self-imposed control of one's behavior
	Empathy	especially in tune with the emotions of others
	Focus	a clear sense of direction
	Futuristic	an eye towards the future that drives present action and success
	Harmony	achieves success and avoids conflict through consensus (consensus building)
	Ideation	adept at seeing underlying concepts that unite disparate ideas

<b>Strength</b>	<b>Definition</b>
Inclusive	instinctively works to include others
Individualization	draws upon the uniqueness of individuals to create a successful team or plan
Input	habit of collecting information or objects for future use
Intellection	takes pleasure from thinking, thought provoking conversations and simplifying complex concepts into understandable models
Learner	values challenges and learning new things
Maximizer	seeks to take people and projects from great to excellent
New Media Literacy	ability to critically assess and develop content/uses for new media forms; leverages these media for communicating
Novel & Adaptive Thinking	proficiency of creating solutions and responses beyond what is rote or rule-based
Positivity	brings the light-side to any situation
Persuade	able to persuade others
Relator	comfortable with deeper relationships; interpersonal skills
Resilient	able to spring back after adversity, despite the challenges - forges ahead
Responsibility	follows through on commitments
Restorative	thrives on solving difficult problems
Self-Assurance	stays true to own beliefs and judgments, and is confident of her/his ability
Sense-making	ability to determine the deeper meaning or significance and translate that for others
Significance	seeks to be seen as significant to others
Social Intelligence	ability to connect to others in a deep and direct way, stimulate interactions
Strategic	able to see and/or plan a clear direction in complex situations
Transdisciplinarity	ability to understand concepts across multiple disciplines
Virtual collaboration	ability to work productively, drive engagement, and demonstrate presence as a member of a virtual team/collaboration
[define your own]	

<b>National Postdoctoral Association (NPA) Core Competencies Self-Assessment Checklist</b>										
Rate your current level of development in each of the following, with 1 being "Needs attention" and 9 being "extremely competent."										
For more information on these competencies, please visit <a href="http://www.nationalpostdoc.org/competencies">www.nationalpostdoc.org/competencies</a> .										
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	n/a
<b>1</b>	<b>Discipline-Specific Conceptual Knowledge</b>									
	Analytical Approach to Defining Scientific Questions									
	Design of Scientifically Testable Hypotheses									
	Broad-Based Knowledge Acquisition									
	Interpretation and Analysis of Data									
<b>2</b>	<b>Professional/Research Skill Development</b>									
	Literature Search Strategies and Effective Interpretation									
	Experimental Design									
	Statistical Analysis									
	Data Analysis and Interpretation									
	Laboratory Techniques and Safety									
	Principles of the Peer Review Process									
<b>3</b>	<b>Communication Skills</b>									
	Writing									
	Speaking									
	Teaching									
	Interpersonal									
	Special Situations									
<b>4</b>	<b>Professionalism</b>									
	Workplace									
	Institutional									
	Collegial									
	Universal									
<b>5</b>	<b>Leadership &amp; Management Skills</b>									
	Leadership-Strategic Vision									
	Leadership-Motivating and Inspiring Others									
	Management-Project Management									
	Management-Data and Resource Management									
	Management-Research Staff Management									
<b>6</b>	<b>Responsible Conduct of Research</b>									
	Conflicts of Interest									
	Data Ownership and Sharing									
	Publication Practices and Responsible Authorship									
	Identifying and Mitigating Research Misconduct									
	Research with Human Subjects (when applicable)									
	Research Involving Animals (when applicable)									