

# PRACTICAL TIPS FOR STRENGTHS-BASED COACHING



Character strengths can be a pathway to discussion and discovery for coaches, therapists and leaders. Invite your client or employee to take the [VIA Survey](#) and bring their results to your meeting. Then, as their guide, prepare for the meeting by reviewing these tips to deepen your skills in seeing, connecting and developing their strengths.

## 1 Explore the client's experience

Start with asking about the client's experience as opposed to an academic interpretation of results. Get to know how they experience their strengths profile.

## 2 See and understand the client's experience

It is not wrong for them to have a deficit-focused mindset. Nor is it wrong that they saw problems in their top strengths. This experience can be "seen" and acknowledged, while you also gently guide them toward the positives of their strengths.

## 3 Connect strengths with behaviors

The linkage between the subjective experience of character strengths with actual behaviors the client can take is an overarching feature of character strengths-based approaches.

## 4 Offer character strengths seeding

It's important to offer examples of character strengths use, especially tailored to the client's context. This is called "character strengths seeding." Otherwise, many clients will not consider the relevance of character strengths.

## 5 Notice strengths overuse and underuse

The overuse of strengths is a hot topic and prevalent in the workplace. While the underuse of strengths is most likely a far worse problem for workers, the overuse makes for not only interesting conversation but potential for growth.

## 6 Consider leading a novel activity

Try the [3-sentence challenge](#). Invite your client to share, in one sentence each, how they use each of their top 3 character strengths in a strong and balanced way.

## 7 Look for opportunities to apply the ordering effect

The ordering effect is one of many emerging character strengths dynamics. As you become familiar with finding the optimal ordering of strengths in different situations in your own life—and in reaping the benefits—it is an extraordinary strategy to then offer to clients.

To learn more about using character strengths in your work to motivate, inspire and lead others, visit [viacharacter.org/professionals](https://viacharacter.org/professionals).