**Purpose and Duration:**

The StrengthsQuest (SQ) is an online assessment of 34 strengths and talents; each report includes your top five Signature Themes. The SQ was designed for college students. According to the SQ, being aware of your talents can help build confidence and may lead to greater satisfaction in school, work, and other relationships. This handout provides key definitions related to the SQ and includes several exercises. This Action Guide will take 15-45 minutes to complete.

**Definitions:**

*Talent* = an innate, naturally recurring pattern of thought, feeling, or behavior.

*Knowledge* = The sum of key learning or discovery acquired via past experience.

*Skills* = Acquired competency, facility, or proficiency gained from education or experience.

Taken together, **Talents + Knowledge + Skills = Strengths**

*Strength* = Ability to provide consistent, near-perfect performance in a given activity. To build your strengths, identify your talents, and add knowledge and skills.

**Procedure (if you have not yet taken Strengthsquest):**

1. Go to https://www.strengthsquest.com/
2. Click on “Register” in the upper right hand corner
3. Type in your Access Code and the Verification Code and click “Continue with Registration”
4. Proceed with the registration. You must have an e-mail address to complete.
5. Once registered, you will have access to all features of the site, including the StrengthsFinder.
6. Take the Clifton StrengthsFinder and find out your signature themes. It’ll take 45 minutes to complete and you have 20 seconds to answer each question. If you sign out or lose connection, you will start where you left off last.
7. Save and print a copy of your results and bring it with to your next CAPE appointment.
8. Complete the Exercises and Reflection Prompts located in this guide.
Procedure (if you have already taken Strengthsquest):

1. Go to https://www.strengthsquest.com/
2. Click on “Sign in” in the upper right hand corner
3. Enter your username and password. Your username is likely your U of M email address
4. Print a copy of your results from the “Signature Theme Report” and explore the Strengthsquest site
5. Compete the Exercises and Reflection Prompts located in this guide.

Exercise 1: Verifying Your Signature Themes with Friends and Family
Find two people who know you very well and trust, and let them know about your Signature Themes. Be sure to provide your contact with a short summary of the SQ themes beforehand. Ask them specific questions about each of your five Signature Themes:

- Do you see this theme in me? How so?
- Are you surprised that this is one of my strengths?
- Are there any additional themes or talents that you see in me?

Exercise 2: Relating Strengths to a Major or Career

Reflect on the following questions:

- List below one major or career (choose one) you are interested in.
- List one of your five strengths.
- Give an example of a time you used that strength. (It could be at a past job, volunteer experience, school activity, class, future career, etc.)

| Example | As a high school senior, I was assigned a group project in my biology class. One of the group members was sick the day of our presentation, so I had to jump in without time to prepare and present their portion. Because of my **flexibility**, we were able to complete all portions of the presentation to receive full credit. |

Now, list how you could use this strength in your future major or career.
Exercise 3: Action Items
1. Go to StrengthsQuest.com and log-in.
2. Click on “Strengths” and “Student Action Items”.
3. You will find the following categories for each of your five talent themes:
   a. Affirming and Developing
   b. General Academic Life
   c. Study Techniques
   d. Relationships
   e. Class Selection
   f. Extracurricular Activities
   g. Career
4. Select the action items you think would be useful to pursue for at least one of your (do as many as you find helpful!) Signature Theme(s) by checking the box for each relevant action item in as many categories as you choose. Print your action items.

Reflection Prompts
When you meet with your coach, be prepared to discuss the following questions:

- Did others confirm your strengths? What feedback did you receive from other people?
- How can you apply your top strength(s) to a major or career?
- What are your action items? Do you need any support in order to take action?