

How can you build on your talents?

Developing talents

Everyone has talents. Everyone has the potential for further development. A process of continuing development helps to unlock the potential of your talents. This is a process that is influenced by a wide range of factors: on the one hand, personal qualities and the opportunities available in your direct surroundings can all have a beneficial effect on your personal development. Equally, though, there may be certain challenges and constraints at work, both of a personal nature and in terms of the nature of your surroundings. You can learn how best to cope with these.

Armed with a clear picture of how your personality and surroundings can affect your development, you stand a better chance of making informed, conscious choices and you are better equipped to invest in your own development.

The big challenge is working out how you can do this in a manner that is in keeping with your own personality and which makes maximum use of the opportunities in your surroundings. Succeed and you can put your talents to good use – not just for yourself, but for others, too.

Curious as to how this can work for you?

The first thing you need in order to develop your talents is an inquisitive attitude. In other words, you need to be keen to find out how things work, to understand, reach out and share; you need to be critical, constantly ready to ask questions and on an active quest for new opportunities.

An open mind geared towards personal growth is the main prerequisite here. Making mistakes is part of the process – it's from them that you learn the most.

Are you willing to try out new things? Are you ready to rise to new challenges? Are you a stayer, who doesn't give up when things go wrong, even when they go wrong again and again? Do you welcome criticism and see it as a platform for improvement? Do you derive your inspiration from other people's success? These are all qualities that you can develop by looking carefully at what you're good at and not so good at, and how you can improve yourself.

Set yourself clear goals. Discover how you can motivate yourself to make the effort that you need to make in order to achieve your goals. You can set yourself new goals as you go along – or adjust your existing goals, on the basis of new experiences and newly acquired understanding.

Expressed talents

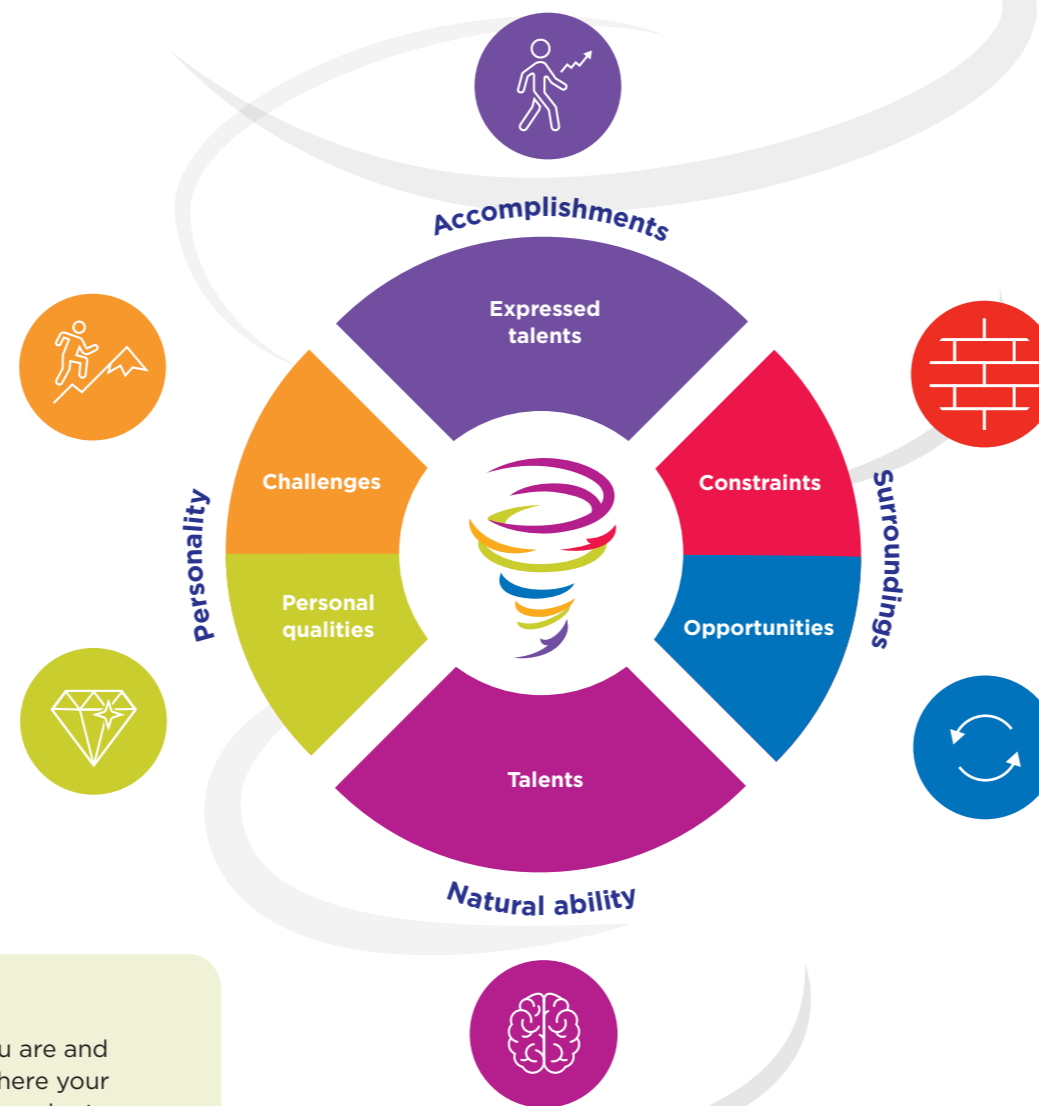
You can uncover and express certain talents in your behaviour, activities or accomplishments in all manner of fields, such as science and technology, sports, the arts, music, languages or in your team leadership or interpersonal skills. In the process, you'll learn what best suits your own personality. Enjoy your achievements and share them with others. What sort of activities appeal to you most? What gives you energy and a sense of satisfaction? When does it feel like you've found your flow? How can you be of benefit to others? And do you take good care of yourself?

Challenges

Rising to challenges is all about working on your weaknesses. It's often a case of leaving your comfort zone. You need to make an extra effort to meet your challenges and you may well learn a lot about yourself in doing so. It may be a question of something that triggers a certain response in you because it's either complex or exciting, or a fear that you want to overcome because you feel that you must. Working on challenges requires self-confidence and resilience, as well as the guts to face the unknown. So what are your challenges?

Personal qualities

Your personal characteristics define who you are and what you are capable of doing. These are where your strengths lie. But you need self-awareness in order to exploit your strengths. As you raise your awareness of your personal characteristics and core competencies, you acquire a better picture of how, when and where you can put them to best use. So what are your personal qualities?



Constraints

Constraints are things that get in the way, preventing you from reaching your goals, or things that don't give you the right incentives. They hem you in and may make you feel that you're not getting enough space or support. Are you capable of taking a fresh look and rethinking the situation? Can you change anything yourself? Can you accept those things you are incapable of changing? Do you realize when there is a choice?

Opportunities

Opportunities are circumstances and tools that help you move forward. It's easier to recognize opportunities if you know what you need and if you're open to new possibilities. A stimulating environment can help you learn to accept responsibility and make use of your talents and personal characteristics. Other people are your sources of support: people who understand, inspire and activate you, or people you can ask for help. Do you grasp opportunities that present themselves? Do you create new opportunities yourself? Are you willing to ask for help when you need it?

Talents

Talent is an ability to do something well, 'naturally' even, without any obvious effort. Your talents may lie in different areas. They may be of a social, intellectual, creative, practical, physical or artistic nature, for example. The degree of talent you possess, and the areas in which they lie, vary from one person to another. You can find out in which areas you possess the greatest potential by a process of personal exploration. You need to have an awareness of your talents in order to consciously develop in a particular direction that suits you and about which you feel passionate. When do you feel in your element? What sort of things seem to come naturally to you? What are your favourite methods of learning, thinking and doing?

What opportunities do you see for yourself?

Are you curious to learn and willing to do your best to discover how you can build on your talents?

Explore what you need to do in order to bring this about. Maximise the available opportunities and persevere!

Why not make a start by asking yourself the following questions?

What do I want?

Who am I?

What do I believe?

What can I do?

What do I do?

Where am I?



Purpose

What do you believe are the important things in life? What's it all about? What goals, ideas and plans do you have? How would you like to make a difference to others? How can you use your talents to give meaning, or more meaning, to what you want? How can your personal characteristics make you meaningful to yourself and others? What is the meaning of your life?



Identity

What do you like about yourself? What do you like about other people? What can you do for others? What can others do for you? What are your personal characteristics? How do you perceive yourself (in a particular situation)? Is there anything you would like to change and, if so, what? What sort of things do you value and how do these tie in with who you are?



Beliefs and values

What are your ethical and moral standards? What do you believe in? What are your core principles? Why do you do certain things? What motivates you? What inhibits you? How does your set of beliefs affect the things you do?



Capabilities

What are you good at? Do you use your skills? What are you not so good at? What can you do to improve yourself in these particular areas? What sort of things would you like to be good at? How can you work on these skills in a manner that suits your personality?



Behaviour

What type of behaviour do you exhibit to other people? Is this behaviour in line with your personality? Is your behaviour a true reflection of your personality? What is the impact of your behaviour? Is there anything in your behaviour you would like to – and could – change? How could you do this? How do you react to your surroundings? Do you adapt or resist? Or do you go along with the group, albeit half-heartedly?



Surroundings

How do you perceive your surroundings? What sort of things do you encounter? Do you see any opportunities or constraints around you? Who can you ask for help? Are there things in your surroundings that affect you emotionally? What happens in that case, when and with whom? What do you particularly appreciate about the behaviour of those around you? What forms of behaviour do you dislike? Where do you feel most at home?