



WORKPLACE WELLBEING

Chapter 3

Understanding Your Strengths, Values and Blind Spots

Developing Greater Self-Awareness at Work

In this chapter

Explore how understanding your strengths, personal values and blind spots can build self-awareness, improve workplace relationships and support meaningful professional growth.

SPACE TO BREATHE THERAPY



Understanding Your Strengths, Values and Blind Spots: Developing Greater Self-Awareness at Work

Every employee brings a unique combination of skills, experiences, personality traits and perspectives into the workplace. These qualities influence how we solve problems, communicate with others, make decisions and respond to challenges. However, many people move through their careers without fully understanding what drives their behaviour or recognising how they are perceived by those around them.

Developing self-awareness involves more than simply recognising our strengths or acknowledging areas for improvement. It also requires understanding the personal values that guide our decisions and becoming aware of the blind spots that may unintentionally influence our behaviour. Together, these three elements—strengths, values and blind spots—form the foundation of personal and professional growth.

When we understand what we do well, what matters most to us and where we may unintentionally limit ourselves, we become better equipped to make informed decisions, build stronger relationships and continue developing throughout our careers.

Self-awareness is not about perfection

It is about becoming more intentional in how we work, communicate and lead.

Understanding Your Strengths

Strengths are the abilities, qualities and personal characteristics that allow us to perform effectively and contribute positively to our work.

Strengths are not limited to technical skills. They also include the personal qualities that influence how we interact with others and approach our work.

Examples include:

- Problem-solving
- Creativity
- Organisation
- Leadership
- Adaptability
- Empathy
- Analytical thinking
- Active listening
- Communication
- Resilience
- Curiosity
- Reliability

Many people naturally focus on improving weaknesses while overlooking their strengths. However, understanding and developing our strengths allows us to contribute more effectively and increases confidence, motivation and job satisfaction.

Why Knowing Your Strengths Matters



Recognising your strengths allows you to:

- Build confidence.
- Take on responsibilities that suit your abilities.
- Work more efficiently.
- Support colleagues.
- Make informed career choices.
- Enjoy greater job satisfaction.
- Continue developing your natural talents.

Strengths support engagement

Employees who regularly use their strengths often report feeling more engaged, motivated and fulfilled in their work.

Recognising Your Strengths

Many people underestimate their own abilities because tasks that feel easy to them may also feel ordinary.

To identify your strengths, ask yourself:

- What tasks do I enjoy most?
- What work gives me energy?
- What do colleagues often ask me to help with?
- What compliments do I receive regularly?
- Which challenges do I feel confident tackling?
- What activities help me lose track of time?

Feedback from trusted colleagues can also provide valuable insight into strengths we may overlook.

Understanding Your Personal Values

Values are the beliefs and principles that influence our behaviour and decision-making.

They help answer questions such as:

- What matters most to me?
- What motivates me?
- What kind of work feels meaningful?
- What behaviours do I admire in others?
- What type of workplace helps me thrive?

Common workplace values include:

- Integrity
- Honesty
- Respect
- Compassion
- Fairness
- Creativity
- Collaboration



- Independence
- Growth
- Security
- Innovation
- Service
- Excellence
- Inclusion

Our values influence how satisfied we feel in our work.

Why Values Matter

When our work aligns with our values, we are more likely to experience:

- Motivation
- Engagement
- Purpose
- Commitment
- Job satisfaction
- Psychological wellbeing

When our values conflict with workplace expectations, we may experience:

- Stress
- Frustration
- Reduced motivation
- Emotional exhaustion
- Moral discomfort
- Disengagement

For example, someone who highly values collaboration may struggle in a workplace that encourages excessive competition.

Values can guide career choices

Understanding your values helps you make career decisions that align with who you are.

Living Your Values

Values are reflected through everyday behaviour.

If you value respect:

- Do you actively listen to colleagues?
- Do you treat everyone fairly?

If you value honesty:

- Are you willing to have difficult conversations respectfully?
- Do your actions match your words?

Reflection helps ensure our behaviours remain consistent with our values.

What Are Blind Spots?



Blind spots are aspects of ourselves that we struggle to recognise but that may be visible to other people.

Everyone has blind spots. They are not character flaws. They simply represent areas where our self-perception differs from how others experience us.

Examples might include:

- Interrupting people without realising.
- Avoiding conflict.
- Taking on too much work.
- Becoming defensive during feedback.
- Speaking too quickly.
- Micromanaging.
- Not recognising the impact of stress on others.
- Assuming others think the same way we do.

Blind spots need outside perspective

Because blind spots are difficult to see ourselves, they often require feedback and reflection.

Why Blind Spots Develop

Blind spots develop for many reasons, including:

- Personal experiences.
- Habits.
- Assumptions.
- Workplace culture.
- Stress.
- Biases.
- Lack of feedback.

The longer a behaviour goes unnoticed, the more automatic it becomes.

Developing self-awareness helps bring these behaviours into conscious awareness.

The Role of Feedback

Feedback is one of the most effective ways to identify blind spots.

Constructive feedback allows us to compare how we see ourselves with how others experience us.

When receiving feedback:

- Listen carefully.
- Stay curious.
- Avoid becoming defensive.
- Ask questions.
- Reflect before responding.
- Look for recurring themes.

Look for patterns

Not every piece of feedback will be accurate, but patterns often provide valuable insight.

Understanding Cognitive Biases

Our thinking is influenced by unconscious biases that affect how we interpret situations and make decisions.

Confirmation Bias

Seeking information that supports existing beliefs while ignoring evidence that challenges them.

Halo Effect

Allowing one positive characteristic to influence our overall judgement of someone.

Recency Bias

Giving greater importance to recent events than earlier experiences.

Recognising these biases helps improve fairness and decision-making.

Balancing Confidence and Humility

Healthy self-awareness involves balancing confidence with humility.

Confidence allows us to:

- Recognise our strengths.
- Trust our abilities.
- Take on challenges.

Humility allows us to:

- Continue learning.
- Accept feedback.
- Acknowledge mistakes.
- Value other perspectives.

Both are valuable

Together, confidence and humility support lifelong professional growth.

Practical Strategies for Increasing Self-Awareness

Developing awareness of strengths, values and blind spots is an ongoing process. Helpful strategies include:

Reflect Regularly

Take time to review experiences and identify patterns in your behaviour.

Ask for Feedback

Invite honest, constructive feedback from trusted colleagues, supervisors or mentors.



Observe Yourself

Notice how you respond during meetings, difficult conversations and periods of stress.

Review Your Values

Ask yourself whether your daily work reflects what matters most to you.

Continue Learning

Attend training, coaching or supervision that encourages personal and professional development.

Questions for Reflection

Consider the following questions:

Strengths

- What am I naturally good at?
- When do I feel most confident?
- What contributions am I proud of?

Values

- What matters most to me at work?
- Which workplace behaviours do I admire?
- Does my current role align with my values?

Blind Spots

- What feedback do I receive repeatedly?
- How might others experience me differently from how I see myself?
- What habits might be limiting my effectiveness?

Use reflection as information

Reflection on these questions can provide valuable insight into personal growth.

The Benefits of Greater Self-Awareness

Employees who understand their strengths, values and blind spots often experience:

- Improved confidence.
- Better communication.
- Stronger relationships.
- Greater resilience.
- Better decision-making.
- Increased adaptability.
- More effective leadership.
- Higher job satisfaction.
- Continuous professional growth.

Organisations also benefit from employees who are open to learning, willing to reflect and committed to personal development.



Key Takeaways

- ✓ Strengths, values and blind spots all contribute to self-awareness.
- ✓ Understanding your strengths increases confidence and engagement.
- ✓ Knowing your values helps guide meaningful career decisions.
- ✓ Everyone has blind spots, and feedback helps identify them.
- ✓ Reflection and curiosity support ongoing personal and professional growth.
- ✓ Balancing confidence with humility creates opportunities for continuous learning.
- ✓ Self-awareness improves communication, leadership and workplace wellbeing.

Final Thoughts

Understanding your strengths, values and blind spots is one of the most powerful ways to develop professionally and personally. While technical skills may help us secure a role, it is often our ability to understand ourselves, learn from experience and remain open to growth that determines our long-term success.

Recognising your strengths enables you to contribute with confidence, while understanding your values ensures your work remains meaningful and aligned with what matters most to you. At the same time, acknowledging your blind spots demonstrates humility and a commitment to continuous improvement rather than perfection.

Self-awareness is not a destination that we eventually reach. It is an ongoing journey of curiosity, reflection and learning. The more we understand ourselves, the better equipped we become to navigate workplace challenges, build positive relationships and create a fulfilling, resilient and rewarding career.

Chapter reflection

What is one strength you want to use more intentionally, one value you want your work to reflect more clearly, and one possible blind spot you could explore with curiosity?