Starting in Fall 2016, Purdue University received a grant for all new beginning and transfer students to take the StrengthsFinder assessment. My interest was to assess the Fall 2016 cohort of First-Year-Engineering (FYE) students’ results. I was curious to see the signature themes of those who took the assessment and analyze whether or not there is any correlation between certain StrengthsFinder themes and their engineering major choice.

My initial data set includes six engineering majors represented by 624 students:
- Aeronautics and Astronautics Engineering (AAE): 203
- Biomedical Engineering (BME): 67
- Chemical Engineering (CHE): 136
- Environmental and Ecological Engineering (EEE): 28
- Industrial Engineering (IE): 161
- Nuclear Engineering (NUCL): 29

What Some of the Literature Says: StrengthsFinder Study with Doctor of Pharmacy Students

Objective: “To describe student pharmacists’ Signature Themes from the Clifton StrengthsFinder across 5 Midwestern pharmacy institutions and to compare themes by gender, institution, and undergraduate population (Janke et al., 2015, p. 1).”

Results: “The results of this study show that student pharmacists…have remarkably consistent Signature Theme profiles (Janke et al., 2015, p. 4)…Signature Themes provide insight about students who are attracted or admitted…however…there is no research demonstrating that specific Signature Themes are associated with career advancement, or other positive outcomes…(Janke et al., 2015, p. 6).”

What is StrengthsFinder?

“The CliftonStrengths for Students® talent assessment (formerly StrengthsFinder), based on the concept of intentionally developing your strengths rather than your weaknesses, identifies students’ Top 5 Signature Themes from a list of 34 talents (Purdue University, n.d.).”

The 34 Strengths are split in to 4 domains:
- Executing
- Influencing
- Strategic Thinking
- Relationship Building

What of the Literature Says: StrengthsFinder Study with Doctor of Pharmacy Students

Future Steps

- Analysis of ABE, CE, CEM, ECE, IDE/MDE, ME, MSE signature themes
- Are there common themes among students related to gender or domestic/international status?
- How do the top themes connect to the engineering curriculum (program and/or ABET outcomes)?

ENGR Students’ Top 5 Strengths

1. Learner
2. Achiever
3. Analytical
4. Restorative
5. Competition

Purdue Students’ Most Common #1 Strengths

Achiever
Restorative
Learner
Analytical
Input

Purdue Engineering Staff Leadership Academy, Cohort 1