

## Building Resilience: Strengths

### Why?

It is widely accepted that increasing resilience and positive approaches are important to people in work but we've all seen Jobseeker's Allowance claimants whose morale and self-belief visibly decrease during their time out of work. How do we remedy this?

Often Jobcentre advisers tackle this informally, doing the best they can to improve their claimant's morale; the best advisers will use resources available on the internet for the claimants to support themselves.

The claimant experience in a Jobcentre tends to focus on the weaknesses people have and how we can help them; this is similar to healthcare (think of the language we use like 'diagnostic' interview) but it can be more effective to aim for being 'healthy' rather than 'not unhealthy' - which can lead people to focus on what they are bad at. A light touch approach can stop these issues before they cause harm to people.

### How does it work?

We all know confidence in your own abilities is fundamental to finding work (see this [article](#) from MEP Seligman as an example) – believing you have something to offer an employer will drive how you sell yourself in your CV, application or interview. In our Jobcentre environment, claimants have naturally been through a stressful period of either losing their job or having not worked for a long time.

Strengths tests, like the one below, provide the individual with strengths about their personality they can apply to any scenario. The respondent is not given weaknesses or a score for their strengths – a strength is a strength, not a high or low scoring strength.

### Applying it to Jobcentres

As part of the behavioural insights trial, Jobseeker's are requested to complete a strengths testing exercise at some point in the first 13 weeks of their claim. The exercise is particularly useful if:

- morale or confidence have visibly fallen
- the claimant is looking to refresh/update their CV or prepare for an interview

The effect of these tests should provide the claimant with a greater belief that they have something to offer an employer, giving them a more positive and optimistic approach to finding work.

You can register on the [Authentic Happiness](#) website or at [www.viasurvey.co.uk](http://www.viasurvey.co.uk) and complete your own strengths test there. Alternatively, you can complete the signature strengths test used in the Behavioural Insights trial [here](#).