

The Quiet Strengths Guide

Turn Your "Weakness" Into Your Competitive Advantage

By: Martin Schweinsberg, Ph.D. (ESMT Berlin) | The Quiet Power Playbook

Your kindness isn't holding you back. Your introversion doesn't limit you. They're competitive advantages.

This 5-step guide helps you get strategic about when to use what you've got. Based on 14+ years of research on persuasion, power, and politics with executive audiences.

How it works:

Pick one tendency that feels like it's holding you back. Map when it helps vs. hurts. Create your strategic rule.

STEP 1: Pick Your Tendency

What tendency feels like it's holding you back?

Common examples:

- "I'm too kind" (say yes when you should say no)
- "I'm too quiet" (don't speak up even when you have the answer)
- "I overthink everything" (analyze instead of act)

Your tendency:

Recent examples when this showed up:

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STEP 2: Make Two Columns

Think about your tendency. List specific situations in each column:

WHEN IT GETS IN MY WAY
WHEN IT HELPS ME

STEP 3: Look For Patterns

Review your two columns above. What do you notice?

When does this tendency help you?

When does this tendency hurt you?

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What situations bring out the helpful version vs. the harmful version?

STEP 4: What's Valuable About This Tendency?

Ask yourself: What is this tendency trying to protect?

Common answers: harmony, excellence, relationships, fairness, avoiding mistakes, avoiding rejection

My tendency is trying to protect:

Did this tendency serve me before (when my life was different)?

STEP 5: Write Your Strategic Rule

Complete this sentence:

"My tendency to _____ helps me when _____, but gets in my way when _____.
Going forward I will _____."

Example: "My tendency to overthink helps me when making important decisions, but slows me down in meetings. Going forward I'll think less when it matters less."

THE RESULT:

Most traits aren't "bad" — they're just tools.
Every tool is helpful in some situations, not in others.

Don't try to 'fix yourself'. Get strategic about when you use what you've got.

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Page 3 of 3