



intouch
INSIGHTS

“The magic lies within” and what it means to me

By Simon Bull



Isn't it great when things go like clockwork? But have you ever looked at what's under the bezel? You'll find lots of little cogs and springs and ratchets – each one a different size, going in a different direction, and at different speeds. And it's essential of course – you need that variety to create something that's **greater than the sum of its parts**.

That's the great thing about people. We are all individuals and we're the better for it. Life would be dull if we were all the same; if we all had the same skills, talents, experiences and styles – the same strengths. Would we all dress the same? Would there be just one genre of music? Would we all want the same role?

It's been a passion of our Founder, Patrick Collins, since the very beginning; to recruit a wide variety of people at touch, who are passionate about what they do and fundamentally hold key values that make them friendly, trustworthy and personable.

I love looking round the office and seeing all those different individuals, because then I know that together we have all the right ingredients to handle any challenge and deliver an outstanding solution.

Difference is good, and when you get the perfect mix of unique people, magic happens!

**"Today you are YOU, that is TRUER than true.
There is NO ONE alive who is YOUER than YOU!"**

Dr. Seuss



The uniqueness of people has always been my passion. Asking what are their strengths, what do they want and need, what gives them confidence, who is an introvert and who is an extrovert? (OK that last one's easy, right?) Maybe? What I know for sure is that everyone needs a unique space for their voice. For example, an introvert will be quiet in meetings, but that doesn't mean they have nothing to say – in fact they've probably given the question more thought than anyone else in the room. So where is their platform? Probably in a well-crafted email or a 1:1 chat the next day.

That can be the challenge of managing diversity. It does take extra thought, care and consideration to ensure your team-mates are working to their strengths, that everyone can communicate effectively, and that you're therefore delivering to the best of your ability. And it's worth it because the more you put in, the more you'll be rewarded.

So, if there's no one alive who's me-er than me, then what makes me, me? The Gallup Strengths Finder course I did a few years ago put empathy at the top of my list. I think it's a fair reflection – I think I have a good radar for other people's emotions. It's certainly helped me to work alongside colleagues and clients; to build relationships and deliver to high standards as a team. But I have learned too, that empathy needs checks and balances. Sometimes I can adopt others' emotions as my own – let's hope they're not having a bad day! And sometimes I trust it too much and it turns out to be just plain wrong. I embrace it though, for better or worse.

Then I have something called Maximiser. Just gaze at any of my excel documents and admire the wonder of my formatting! That's right, I can't help but be a perfectionist. I can draw on this strength to gather all the details from

a client's enquiry, to build out a complicated budget, to deliver a presentation to the best of my ability, or maybe just make sure I get the most out of my holiday. But just like empathy it can be an asset and a hazard – I need to be careful not to invest more time in a project than is necessary or spend too long planning something, rather than just getting started.

What do you think your strengths are?
And how do you complement the strengths of those around you?



What I've enjoyed learning is the way my strengths work together with others. Are you brimming with confidence, are you logical or a free spirit, do you make connections and friendships quickly and easily, do you love to learn, are you creative and artistic, are you a natural leader? Yes, people who are both 'red' will work well together, but will they look at every angle when replying to a client's brief? After all, what colour is your client – what is it that they're looking for?





Summary

At touch associates, we've all recently completed the Discovery Insights programme, which has been a fascinating way to learn more about myself, my colleagues, how we interact, and what our personalities and strengths look like as a whole. I believe we reflect the culture born from Patrick's ambition to create a diverse, ambitious and harmonious team.

We all have the ability to complement each other, just like the exquisite components and inner workings of a beautiful timepiece. Let's celebrate our differences and see if we can run like clockwork.

Simon David