Career Vision 20/20: Your Superpower Is Your Competitive Advantage In the Workplace

Hello Wake Tech. This is Career Coach Larry Tucker. In this podcast I want to take a deep dive into how to uncover your unique gifts and talents, which you can actually turn into your superpower. Your Superpower is your unique skill set consisting of your expertise, skills and talents that you can use to save the world. No, you may not be able to run faster than a speeding bullet, or be more powerful than a locomotive, or even able to leap tall buildings in a single bound. But, you probably have the ability to do something better than 99% of the world's population. That thing that you do better than anyone else, is your Superpower! Oh yeah, I know what you're thinking. You are thinking, "I don't have any Superpowers!" The fact of the matter is that every one of us has at least one Superpower. You just haven't uncovered it yet. In fact, all human beings have an amazing ability that we're often not even aware of, and that gives us the power to change the world. Superpowers are responsible for some of mankind's greatest accomplishments. They allow each of us to contribute unique and needed gifts to the world in ways that nobody else can. And studies have shown that people who use their superpowers are happier, less stressed, more fulfilled, and go on to live, longer, and more productive lives. Many of us don't recognize our superpowers because they come so easy to us. We don't think they're special. We take them for granted because we think everyone has them too. We often can't see our own real superpowers until we dig deep and observe what we are doing differently than others. Your superpower is an important ability. It is the thing that gives you a competitive advantage in life and in the workplace. That is why you need to be aware of it, and fully activate it. When you decide to start leaning in towards your unique abilities, they will become your personal brand. And others will seek you out to benefit from your superpower. In fact, that is what your superpower is meant to be. A tool to help you become a benefit to the world. After all, that's why they call it a Gift, because your Superpowers are not just for you. It's how you can share your Gift and make a meaningful contribution to the World. But It's all up to each and every one of us to uncover our superpowers, and then offer it to others, so that others can learn from it, and benefit from it, and so they too can change their life's as well. So, If you have been wondering how to uncover your superpowers, then this podcast episode is for you. So, grab a pen and a notebook, get cozy, and get ready to do a little soul searching, because this is going to be good and a lot of fun. So, let's get into the steps of how to uncover your true Superpowers.

So, let me start by sharing with you some tips on exactly how to uncover your superpowers. I want to walk you through a few little exercises that will help you see how your own behaviors and abilities are different and set you apart from everyone else. First, I want you to think about your **strengths**, your expertise, your skills, and your talents that make you stand out in a crowd. However, in order for them to qualify as a superpower, they must be extraordinary expertise, extraordinary skills, and extraordinary talents that you do better than 99 percent of the population. So, what expertise, what skills, what abilities or what talents do you have that you do better than 99 percent of the population? I want you to think about that and write them down. Now, I know that's a challenge to uncover, so let me help you break it down. There are a few ways we can simplify uncovering your greatest strengths. If you have an employment history, what compliments are frequently mentioned on your performance appraisals? In other words, what expertise, skills or talents are frequently reported that separate you from others in the workplace? And if you need to pause this podcast to think about it, go ahead and do so. But I want you to write it down. Also, think back on your childhood. What compliments do you

remember receiving from others, throughout your childhood, and even throughout your life, about what you do better than most people? Write it down. Now, think about what advice or what type of help or assistance did most of the family members, friends, or co-workers come to you for? And they may still do today. Write it down. The last and probably the best way to uncover what you do better than 99 percent of the population is to get feedback from those people who know you best. You know it's hard to see the picture when you are part of the frame. Odds are that you have a skill, expertise or talent that you take for granted that your friends not only notice but cherish in you. And one of the reasons why many of us struggle with identifying our Superpowers is because it comes so natural to us, that we take it for granted. So, If you're having a hard time identifying your superpowers or getting clear on what they are, the best thing to do is ask someone who knows you well. I recommend that you choose 3-5 people who know you well in different contexts such as co-workers, classmates, family members and friends. Ask each person to spend a few minutes describing what they like or appreciate about you. What they see as your natural gifts, or what they think you do well. After receiving this feedback about your strengths, thank them and write their comments down. After recording the comments from those 3-5 people who know you best, review what they said and look for patterns and the overlapping themes from their various comments. Circle the knowledge, skills, and talents that are is most frequently mentioned. I want you to do the same thing with the list of your performance appraisal accolades, compliments you received as a child, and the advice and areas of help, people frequently come to you for. Circle the 3 most frequently mentioned overlapping themes on all of the list of your strengths. These are the things that people told you were exceptionally good at. If multiple people said the same thing, chances are they may be your true Superpowers and may very well give you a competitive advantage in the workplace. The next strategy to help you uncover your Superpowers is to write down your greatest Accomplishments that you are proud of. What are your greatest **accomplishments** that best define your life? Keep in mind that these may or may not have anything to do with what society considers important achievements. For example, becoming president of your high school debate club. Or, getting your Black belt in Karate at age 18. Or, achieving the highest level on your favorite Video game. Or even how you overcame a childhood illness. When I was asked this question, I came up with eight accomplishments which included how I overcame my childhood stuttering; how I got my Bachelor's degree in Communications, and my Master's Degree in Career Counseling; and how I was able to compete in Toastmasters International's World Championship of Public Speaker's Speech Contest. Each one of these was an accomplishment that I was proud of. How about you? What are the major accomplishments that you are proud of in your life? Write them down. Once you list your accomplishments, pick the top 3 accomplishments that you enjoyed most and that mean the most to you. Then write down how you achieved that accomplishment, and what skills, talents, or expertise you drew upon in order to enable you to achieve each one of those accomplishments. Once you have completed your list, go through it and look for the common threads, patterns and overlapping themes that exist. Circle the themes that occur most frequently on your list. The themes that you circle may be your superpower! If you find more than one repeating theme, your Superpowers may comprise of a combination of expertise, abilities and talents. Again, look for the overlap. For example, Communications, Motivation and Career Development were the most recurring and overlapping themes on my completed list of accomplishments. As a Career Coach, a Motivational Speaker, and a Podcaster, I use all three of my Superpowers to help others discover their Superpowers and do what they were born to do. The final strategy of uncovering your superpowers is to list the tasks you enjoy doing so much that you seem to lose the track of

time. They call this being in a state of "**Flow**." In positive psychology, "a FLOW state, also known as being in the Zone, is the mental state in which a person performing some activity is fully immersed in a feeling of energized focus, full involvement, and enjoyment in the process of the activity. It is the complete absorption in what you are in engaged in doing to the point that you lose all sense of time." Ask yourself, what do you read, watch, listen to, or do that when you are engaged in reading this, watching this, listening to this, or doing this, you are so focused and engaged in this activity that time just slips away? Let me give you an example. I love reading articles and books and listening to podcasts on finding your passion and living your life purpose. I also love watching television shows like America's Got Talent, American Idol and the Voice. It makes my heart sing to see people actually pursuing and living their passions and accomplishing their dreams. And, nothing is more exhilarating to me than delivering a talk on stage in front of an audience. When I am engaged in these activities, I lose all track of time. My wife will tell you that I will stay up late at night fully engaged in these activities. And I can't wait to wake up in the morning to do them all over again. So, let me ask you. What do you love reading, watching, listening to, or doing so much that when you are engaged in this particular activity you are on a natural high and time just seems to fly away? In other words, what do you love learning about? I want you to write that down. More than likely, the activities that you were engaged in when you were experiencing a state of FLOW are activities that utilize your highest level of expertise, skill, and talent. And that makes sense, because that intense focus and immense enjoyment allows you to develop and hone that expertise, that skill, and that talent related to that subject matter to its highest level of potential and performance. Enabling you develop the expertise, skills, and talents better than 99 percent of the population. By the way, not only is FLOW a pretty powerful clue to uncovering your Superpowers. If you are trying to decide on a college major or career that might be right for you, the specific activities in which you experience a state of FLOW are excellent indications of your Career potential. So, now that you have completed your three lists. Take each of your lists. The list of your Strengths, the list of your Accomplishments, and list of your State of Flow. Compare each of your lists by identifying the patterns, and overlapping themes. Which themes seem to show up the most? It's a very good chance that they are your Superpowers.

So, when you look at your life's journey from where you've been to where you are now… When you observe those things that set you apart from others… that expertise, that unique talent, and those skills that you have acquired… you can decipher what your superpower is! For me, my superpowers are using my Communication Skills, my expertise in Career Development, and my ability to motivate the unmotivated to help people identify their life purpose and empowering them to do what they were born to do! That is the heartbeat of what I do and why I do it! And I believe my job as a Career Coach, Motivational Speaker and a Podcast host truly reflects that. And maybe you are considering doing something with your superpowers too. Take a look at how many ways you can use your superpowers from your life to support others in their own life. There are a million ways to tap into your Superpowers to offer them up to the people who want to have access to what you do and what you know. It just takes a little intentional digging into your Strengths, your accomplishments, and where you experience flow to tap into your superpowers, to determine what you can contribute to others, and how you can make a difference in the world. And guess what. You can make a difference! You right now have a superpower that has not only the ability to transform your life, but also has the ability to impact and transform the life of others. And the more confident you get in understanding that, the more freely you will express it, the more openly you will be about it, and the greater impact you will

make on this world. Wake Tech's Career & Employment Resources provides a variety of career assessment tools to help you clarify your talents, skills and passions and learn how to leverage your unique skillset with a career that aligns with your Superpowers. If you are having trouble figuring out your superpower and would like to learn more about your unique talents and abilities, then talking to a Career Coach is a great idea. One of our Career Coaches will be able to professionally assess your strengths and interests to help guide you to a career path that works best for you. Contact us at careers.waketech.edu to make an appointment with one of our career coaches today! Until next time!