

Strengths Self - A Journey of Discovery

Description

An introduction to the Clifton Strengths, a tool to help develop how you use your talents to achieve academic, career and personal success. In this 2 hour virtual session, participants will review the tenants of strengths-based development and the strengths vernacular. They will also begin to understand how best to apply their top themes to their personal lives and professional work.

Outcomes

Following this session, participants will be able to:

- Describe the strengths-based development philosophy
- Define their top 5 themes
- Determine how their themes relate to who they are
- Begin to apply their themes to how they approach their lives both professionally and personally
- Identify how their themes fit into their work team dynamic

Session Pre-work

- Facilitator pre-work:
 - Need to send out Strengths codes to those who need to complete assessment
 - Collect and prep Signature Themes Report and Strengths Insight report
 - Create team grid based on registered audience members
 - Setup poll questions in platform
 - Prep and provide handouts/materials during session
- Assignment for participants:
 - Complete Strengthsfinder assessment
 - Review your Signature Theme Report and highlight statements that describe you

Outline

Begin 5 minutes after official start time to give participants time to login

(10 minutes) Session Introduction

- Welcome
 - The power of Strengths' language of appreciation, acceptance, and reflection.
 - This focus of today is on a journey of discovery about 'self' but not necessarily about 'individualism, self in the context of a collective
- Introduction of Facilitators
 - List top five and identify one favorite

- Overview of the Session/Outcomes
 - Describe the strengths-based development philosophy
 - Define your top 5 themes
 - Determine how your themes relate to who you are
 - Begin to apply your themes to how you approach your life both professionally and personally
 - Identify how your themes fit into your work team dynamic
- Icebreaker/Poll: I can agree with...
 - Responses will be zero through five to answer how many of the individual's themes they agree with before the session
 - The purpose of this session is to hopefully see a shift in the average for the group, so we'll assess this again towards the end of the session.

(10 minutes) Starting with Why: Strengths-based Approach

- Quote: Strengths Philosophy
 - "Individuals gain more when they build on their talents, than when they make comparable efforts to improve their areas of weakness."
- Gallup research shows that people working in the strengths zone...
 - Look forward to going to work
 - Have more positive interactions with co-workers
 - Treat customers better
 - Tell their friends they work for a great organization
 - Achieve more on a daily basis
 - Have more positive, creative, and innovative moments
- Focus on each person's strengths and manage around weaknesses
 - Growth depends individual natural talents and effort
 - The best performers in a particular job may deliver the same outcomes using different behaviors or perspectives
 - Weakness fixing prevents failure; strengths building leads to success
 - "When we are at our best, we bring out the best in others. Every person matters when actualizing human and organizational potential." (76)
- Intro to the Simon Sinek video: Simon's video encapsulates what we are talking about with the difference from weakness fixing from the strengths-based approach.
 - Video: Simon Sinek -- Your Strengths Toolbox
 - Reflection: Do you agree with him? What are your thoughts? Have you ever thought of your talents as a toolbox?

(5 minutes) StrengthsFinder Overview

- What StrengthsFinder is:
 - Tool for development and discovery about yourself
 - Identifies how you are "wired"

- Helps you understand the lens through which you view the world
- Common language to integrate within an organization
- Maximizes productivity
- Where you find your energy, what exhausts you
- What StrengthsFinder isn't:
 - Tool for hiring, promotion, or advancement
 - Identify the "right" vs "wrong" or "good" vs "bad" talents
 - Labeling people
 - One-size-fits-all approach
 - An excuse to NOT do something because "It's not my strength"
 - Complete explanation of who you are and why you do things
 - Self-boost: It's not a tool for self-promotion or hyperindividualism but rather a tool for discovery and how you see yourself as part of something greater

(10 minutes) Strengths Terminology

- Talents
 - At the core of these themes are the raw talents
 - A naturally recurring pattern of thought, feeling or behavior that can be productively applied
 - Each theme is nuanced with various talents that can be productively applied.
- Talent Themes: conceptual and statistical grouping "cluster" of related talents with 34 general areas
 - The more talents within a theme that are present based on the assessment, then the more likely that theme would rise to the top five
 - Facilitator to give example of talents they possess within the theme
- Strength: The ability to use your themes of talent to provide a positive outcome through a consistent, near-perfect performance
 - Themes aren't strengths until the individual puts in the time and effort
 - The metric is impact
- Strengths Building Equation
 - Talents are not strengths until the investment of time and effort
 - Your talents aren't strengths without investment in knowledge and skill to reach towards a consistent, positive impact.
 - This is important not just for positive impact but also the self-awareness of when to avoid negative impact by managing the talents.

(10 minutes) Check in if questions and break

(5 minutes) Domains of Leadership

- This framework helps individuals see their powerful contributions to groups or teams, how they work with others, and how they get work done. The purpose is

not to be well-rounded, but to understand the power of their unique contributions to others.

- In addition, this helps us better understand our perspective and motivations and how these differ from others
- You are all 34 themes. Some are more natural than others which appear as your top five themes.
- An example of how this might look as a team has been shared in the provided resources

(5 minutes) Theme Dynamics

- Logical Pairs
 - Often are themes are not working individually but in tandem
 - Just like the tools on a toolbelt, we leverage these talents within the themes interchangeably or in tandem as we need to. These top talents are so natural that we are comfortable with knowing how to use them sometimes without even thinking about it. They are handy and easy to access.
 - Logical pairs are defined as themes that are commonly used together within an individual, and these are logical pairs that Gallup has found most commonly appear together in someone's top five.
 - Even if you don't have one up here, you still have one because we all use multiple themes as we need to and especially if you wrote multiple themes in answer to the question on the worksheet.
- Paradoxical Pairs
 - These pairs compliment each other between individuals when building a team and rarely found in someone's top five together.
 - This creates an opportunity for conflict because of opposing viewpoints, but it also creates great opportunities for partnership if the individuals can appreciate the other perspective.
 - Facilitator to give example of leveraging partnership (paradoxical pair) with someone that he/she works with

(10 minutes) Activity: Signature Themes Report Discussion

- Looking at your top 5 Themes, share in discussion one of the themes that you connected with and why (look for one(s) where there is a lot of highlighting)
 - Facilitator to be prepared to answer questions if there is limited audience participation
- Additional questions for discussion:
 - What was your first reaction to the Clifton StrengthsFinder results?
 - What new discovery have you made about yourself?
 - What surprised you?
 - What theme did you think you would see at the top but didn't?

- Have you shared your Signature Themes report with anyone? What was their reaction?

(20 minutes) How you use your Themes

- Guiding Principles
 - Themes are neutral: Themes don't make people great or terrible. They depend on the development into strengths or weaknesses.
 - Themes are not labels: Humans are too complex to be defined by an individual word. The StrengthsFinder assessment is meant to act as a tool to understand and appreciate the complexity and diversity of humanity.
 - Lead with positive intent: How we think and feel about a person will affect our involvement and interaction with that person.
 - Differences are an advantage: Differences can be used as resources that could create an advantage.
 - People need one another: We can achieve more when we work together and intentionally tap into each other's talents.
- Top 5 -- What's within reach and what's in storage?
 - Emphasize: You are all 34 themes.
 - Reference back to Simon Sinek video about the toolbox to continue analogy
 - Dominant themes -- Top five are always with you -- Toolbelt (5-10)
 - Supporting themes -- Easy access to pull out these talents if you need them -- Toolbox (6-15, maybe 20)
 - Lesser themes -- You really have to work hard to access talents you are not always comfortable using -- Work van (remaining)
 - Important: How do you know if they came from storage? You know because it drains your energy to use them. Much less comfortable.
 - You can probably recognize those themes that are at the bottom of the 34 because they are draining or difficult to understand.
- Raw vs Mature Talents
 - Mature talents are talents/behaviors are having a positive impact. These are things you have invested time and effort into developing. Raw talents those that have not been developed and could potentially have a negative impact. The metric is impact.
 - Facilitator to give an example from their own top five.
 - Don't accept your themes as they are -- Strive to develop these into mature themes that can be leveraged as strengths
 - If you repeatedly use your theme with a negative impact, you might build a negative reputation. This can build a barrier label, which is what we are going to talk about next.
- Barrier Labels
 - Give an example of a theme seen in a negative light

- Multiple causes: Either the theme is having a negative impact or the theme is giving the perception of a negative impact.
 - Important to be self-aware
 - Facilitator to share example from their own top five either acting as barrier label and/or being perceived as a barrier label

(10 minutes) Wrap-up

- Poll: I can agree with...
 - Is there a difference in the results from the first time completing this poll?
- How will you apply it?
 - As an individual and a team, change and expectation as leadership changes.
 - We are not governed by one role in our job description.
 - Change is not supposed to be easy, it is always hard and out of our comfort zone.
 - How does this tie into our strengths and talents? Getting the right people in the right roles.
- Takeaway: Barrier Labels Worksheet & Chart
 - On the exercise worksheet, fill in your five themes in the first column.
 - In the second column, give an example of a time when you used this theme but it was perceived as one of the barrier labels or it was having a negative impact.
 - In the third column, give an example of a time when you used this theme to make a positive impact.
 - Consider: Have you ever seen a powerful talent mistaken as a weakness?

Provided Materials

- Signature Theme Report
- Barrier Labels Activity
- Moving Beyond Barrier Labels Descriptions
- Strengths Insight Report
- Strengths Quick Reference Card
- Four Domains of Leadership
- Team Grid (names and themes of audience members)
- All 34 Themes Full Descriptions