

# Strengths Service - A Commitment to Service

## Description

In this session, participants will discuss who we serve as part of Dallas College and why. In a collaborative format, the session promotes leveraging strength themes to provide a quality long-term service experience.

## Audience

Open to any Dallas College employee

## Prerequisite

Completed Strengthsfinder assessment and have access to your top five themes

## Outcomes

Following this session, attendees will be able to:

- Engage in constructive dialogue to make meaning of the session's overarching themes
- Leverage collectively constructed knowledge of strengths to promote the dimensions of service
- Define the needs of those we serve
- Explain why service is vital to the success of our college

## Outline

### Introduction

- Introduction of facilitators
- Expectations for session/format
- Agenda and session overview
- Icebreaker: Introduce yourself, provide your title, and answer the question:
  - What does service look like in your role?

### Who We Serve

- Pose question to group for discussion: What are the needs of those you serve?
- Considerations/talking points:
  - We often consider the needs of others before ourselves
  - What do YOU need? -- value in self-care and support to take care of yourself before being able to serve others

- Service might look different depending on your role, but ultimately when successful, you will accomplish these three goals:
  - Bowen's Dimensions of Service: Trust, Commitment, Relationship

**Trust:** Review Scenario and Discuss

- What is trust or what does it look like in this scenario?
- How could trust impact this scenario?
- How do you build trust given your top five Strength themes?
- Considerations/talking points
  - Beyond just "branding" as you might see in the business world - move from advocating propaganda to conversation creating dialogue
  - Foundation for the other elements of commitment and relationship
  - Outcomes from the interaction should be treated as feedback rather than simply completion
  - Exchange is more about the intangibles than the tangibles
  - Measurements: responsiveness, reliability, actual/tangible product or performance, empathy, assurance (assurance = trust and confidence)
- Wrap up question: how do you build trust in your role?

**Commitment:** Review Scenario and Discuss

- What does it mean to have commitment or make a commitment?
- What is the commitment or sense of commitment in this scenario?
- What value does this commitment provide? Within your role?
- How do you build commitment given your top five Strength themes?
- Considerations/talking points
  - Dynamic between your role and those you serve
    - Student and Dallas College example: our commitment to providing students with a space for learning and their commitment to persist and complete
    - Employee and Dallas College example: investing in the knowledge and skills of the workforce – shifting from "consuming" to "creating and using"
  - Understanding the sacrifice or investment needed for educational opportunity and success
  - Requires active listening and collaborating – co-creating vested interest to create sense of ownership and self-accountability
  - Follow up and address ongoing issues as needed (when to loop in communication with supervisor)
- Wrap up question: how do you build commitment in your role?

**Relationship:** Review Scenario and Discuss

- What is needed in a relationship as part of the scenario?
- How do you build a relationship given your top five Strength themes?
- Considerations/talking points:

- co-collaboration with other interdependent groups and the shift needed in the organizational climate
- long term relationships over transactions
- Workplace climate that emphasizes fairness in how employees are treated creates a spillover effect that should be seen as a requirement for high service quality and customer satisfaction. (Bowen et al., 1999)
  - In this example, this would be considering fairness as equity (as opposed to equality)
- information and treatment should be symmetric and shared equitably and inclusively
  - sharing same information with all individuals
  - Platinum rule - “treating others as they wish to be treated”
- Wrap up question: What value is there in building relationships in your role?

### **Why Service is Vital to Our Success**

- As part of this discussion, we are considering “service” in the broadest sense
- Small Group Discussion: *What does Dallas College provide?*
  - Depending on size of group - split into two groups to answer the questions (at least 3 people in each group)
    - If possible, break groups up by role (supporting students, supporting employees, and supporting community)
  - Provide time to discuss answers to the question and then to present answers to the larger group
- Considerations/Talking Points
  - Shift your mindset from “We provide education” → “We provide an experience”
  - Who we serve -- who are you considering? Should this consideration be expanded?
  - Our students need this to be successful as part of this investment in themselves
    - Not transactional but life long
    - Creating a sense of ownership and empowerment
    - Supporting the community in more broad sense (not just students)
    - Helping to create thriving community

### **Conclusion**

- Wrap up/self reflection
  - Are you providing what our students need -- whether directly or indirectly?
  - Do you feel confident in your ability to serve students, employees, and/or the community as part of your role?
  - If not, how can Dallas College help? What can be done differently to support you as you serve?
- Opportunity for questions