



Today

- Learn the business case for leveraging strengths
- Identify common obstacles to building a strengths-based culture
- Investigate your own strengths
- Learn how to identify signs of working in one's strength-zone
- Leave with a toolbox of coaching questions that will help assess other people's strengths



The Strengths Investment

The most effective leaders are always investing in strengths.

- ...when an organization's leadership fails to focus on individuals' strengths, the odds of an employee being engaged are a dismal 9%.
- ... when an organization's leadership focuses on the strengths of its employees, the odds (of engagement) soar to 73%.

- Rath & Conchie



The Business Case for Strengths

Organizations that have had strengths-based interventions show:

- 10%-19% increase in sales
- 14%-29% increase in profit
- 3%-7% increase in customer engagement
- 9%-15% increase in engaged employees
- 6- to 16-point decrease in turnover (in low-turnover organizations)
- 26- to 72-point decrease in turnover (in high-turnover organizations)
- 22%-59% decrease in safety incidents

- Gallup



So What Gets in the Way?

Why aren't we better at investing in our strengths?

Fear

- Of immodesty
- Of upending group norms/culture
- Of vulnerability

And

- We think we'll grow more in our areas of weakness



TRUE OR FALSE? You will grow the most in your areas of greatest Weakness.



Your Best Investment

Speed Reading Class

STUDENT	Slow Readers	Fast Readers
<i>Pre Test</i>	85 WPM	300 WPM
<i>Post Test</i>		
<i>% Change</i>		

Source: Gallup Organization



When We Do Focus on Weakness

Performance suffers by

-26.8%

- Corporate Leadership Council, 2002 (a study with 19,000 employees from 30 different countries.)



The Strengths Zone

Without an assessment tool, how do you know when you're in "the zone?"

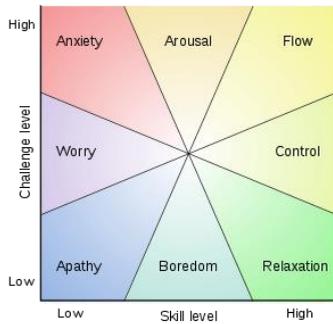


Strengths Clues

- Time flies by
- You forget to eat (or sleep!)
- It's hard for others to get your attention
- You look forward to doing it
- You enjoy thinking about it
- You think about it when you don't have to
- You come alive when you talk about it

Flow:

Mental state in terms of challenge level and skill level, according to Mihaly [Csikszentmihalyi](#).





Further Exploration

- Non-work activities: What are your hobbies and why do you enjoy them?
- Childhood memories: What did you enjoy doing as a child and why?
- Authenticity: When do you feel most like the real “you”?
- Ease: What activities come naturally to you without even trying?



Further Exploration

- Attention: Where do you naturally focus your attention?
- Learning: What are the things you’ve picked up quickly, learning almost instantly?
- Motivation: What motivates you naturally?
- To-Do Lists: What never needs to get added to your to-do list, because there’s no way you’d forget doing them?



Still Stuck?

Yes, you do have strengths.

Take five minutes at the end of the day and jot down when you felt most energized and engaged. After two weeks look for patterns by asking yourself why you marked those tasks highly. Your strengths will emerge.



Still...Still Stuck?

Yes, you do have strengths.

Enlist the help of your friends and colleagues. Ask for feedback about what they think you do best and when they notice you're in "the zone."



You Are Here

What percentage of your time do you spend doing activities that strengthen you?





What's the impact on...



when you do not spend a majority of your day doing things you really like to do?



What's the impact on...



when you do spend a majority of your day doing things you really like to do?



Things to Watch Out For

- One person's strengths might naturally conflict with another person's strengths
- Strengths and weaknesses are two sides of the same coin. There is a shadow side to strengths
- Either way, framing feedback in terms of strengths is a much more positive experience!



THANK YOU!

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