KNOWING AND USING YOUR STRENGTHS

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About Me – Beverly Banister

• **Major:** Chemical Engineering, 1983

• **Job:** Air, Pesticides, and Toxics Management Division Director, US EPA

• **City:** Atlanta

• **Hobbies/Interests/Family:** Traveling, Gardening and Hiking

• **Fun Facts:**
  • Traveled to 6 Continents
  • Visited Camp David in 2016
  • Volunteer at the YMCA for over 26 years
About Me – Meha Jha

- **Major:** Chemical Engineering, 2014
- **Job:** Marketing Analyst at Emerson Automation Solutions
- **City:** Houston, Texas
- **Hobbies:** Traveling, STEM, Netflix, Gen-Z Blogger
- **Fun Facts:**
  - Avid Black Friday Shopper,
  - Lived in Singapore
  - Traveled to 13 countries in 2015
About Me – Brittany Wilson

• **Major:** Biosystems Engineering, 2009

• **Job:** Environmental Engineer at Southern Company

• **City:** Birmingham, AL

• **Hobbies:** Hiking, photography, animals – I LOVE animals!!

• **Fun Facts:**
  • Goal to hike every national park
  • Work with my husband (currently & previously)
  • Built a natural gas power plant in Wyoming
Strength Session Roadmap

- Discussing
- Understanding
- Identifying
What are strengths?

Talent

Knowledge

Skills

Strengths are a combination of talent, knowledge, and skills
A Tale of Two Football Legends

**RUDY RUTTIGER**

“Against All Odds”

**CAM NEWTON**

“Superman”

Are you a Rudy or a Cam?
What Does This Teach Us About Strengths?

You can capitalize on your natural abilities or overcome a deficit by focusing on weaknesses.

You can choose the path of least resistance or the path of most resistance in life.

You can’t be anything you want to be- but you can be more of who you already are.
Why Should We Focus On Strengths?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Using Strengths</th>
<th>Not Using Strengths</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I am good at what I do</td>
<td>I do not excel at work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My work is energizing</td>
<td>My work is tiring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I look forward to my job</td>
<td>I dread my job</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time goes quickly</td>
<td>Time drags on</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am enjoyable to be around</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I treat clients, coworkers and friends well</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

People who focus on Strengths are 6X likely to be engaged in their jobs
Strength Session Roadmap

Discussing

Understanding

Identifying

100+
Identifying Our Strengths

Talent

Knowledge

Skills
How to Identify Your Talents

• What comes *naturally* for you?
• What *energizes* you?
• What is *consistent* with your personality and behavior and results in a *positive* impact?

Think- What am I good at?
How to Identify Your Knowledge

• What *formal education* or *training* do you have?
• Do you have any professional *certifications* or *licenses*?
• What is *consistent* with your personality and behavior?
• What *lessons learned* have you had from *experiences*?

Think- What do I know?
How to Identify Your Skills

• What types of *activities* (technical and soft) can I do well?
• What can I do and get *repeatable*, positive, proven results?
• What do I *know how* to do?
Strength Example Profile: Oprah Winfrey

"What I know is, is that if you do work that you love, and the work fulfills you, the rest will come."

-Oprah Winfrey

Talent
- Motivator
- Global Thinker
- Visionary

Knowledge
- Communications
- Media Relations
- Business Management

Skills
- Negotiations
- Acting
- Public Speaking
Strength Example Profile: Steve Jobs

Talent
- Visionary
- Presenter
- Optimizer

Knowledge
- Hardware
- Manufacturing
- Media Industry

Skills
- Computer
- Programming
- Negotiations
Strength Session Roadmap

- Discussing
- Understanding
- Identifying
What about YOUR Profile?

Talent
Knowledge
Skills

Take 5 Minutes to Brainstorm on Your Worksheet!
Discussion Questions

1) Did you find this exercise hard? Do you think we tend to spend more time thinking about our weaknesses and if so why?

2) Share about a time when you had a chance to do something you were really good at. What made you do well? (Think in terms of your strengths - talent, knowledge, and skills.)

3) Management guru Peter Drucker said:
   “Most Americans do not know what their strengths are. When you ask them, they look at you with a blank stare, or they respond in terms of subject knowledge, which is the wrong answer.”

   Why do you think most people struggle to describe their strengths?
   Why do people answer in terms of knowledge?
Tips for Strength Building

1) Don’t compare yourself with others – but do approach people who inspire or even intimidate you!

2) Concentrate on your strengths - we all have them, now maximize them!

3) Eliminate weaknesses by partnering with others.

4) Continue to discover yourself - you can't develop what you don't recognize.

\[
\text{Talent} \times \text{Investment} = \text{Strength}
\]

- **Talent** (a natural way of thinking, feeling, or behaving)
- **Investment** (time spent practicing, developing your skills, and building your knowledge base)
- **Strength** (the ability to consistently provide near-perfect performance)
Building your talents into strengths still requires hard work much like it does for physical strengths.

To have a greater return in life you need to focus on building your natural talents.

There is a multiplier for your raw dominant talent that occurs when you add skills, knowledge, and practice.

You should be aware of your natural talents!
Take away challenge

**Read** Strengths Finder 2.0

**Complete** the Online Quiz

**Analyze** Your Profile Assessment

**Compare** Your Results to Today’s Discussion

**Find** opportunities to build your strengths

Determining your greatest potential for strength development
Thank you!

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