How identifying and focussing on your personal strengths can elevate your leadership

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Creative Metier

COMMUNITY OF LEADERS

Welcome to the Creative Metier Community of Leaders

Making it easier for you to change the world

In this edition of the Community of Leaders newsletter we deep dive into using your personal strengths to elevate your leadership.

If you missed the last edition, where we explored your values as a leader, you can find that here.

Focus on Your Personal Strengths

Who would you be as a leader if you stopped trying to improve your weaknesses and instead focussed on deepening your strengths?

In coaching, we often hear leaders focus on what they think they're not doing well and need to improve:

'If I was more organised I could make time for the strategic things'

'If I could improve my communication skills my team would perform better'

'If I were more confident we would generate more revenue'

The result of this is that you spend time in an energetically draining space, asking, 'Why am I not good at this?' 'How can I change this?'. The outcome is that you stay stuck in the problem and don't have a positive way forward.

What if you didn't need to focus on what's not working and could instead find a different way?

Using a personal strengths based approach can help. Positive psychology research (1) shows that when you consciously focus on your personal strengths to achieve goals and solve challenges, you are more:

- Motivated
- Energised

- Resilient
- Effective
- Authentic
- Empowered

Sounds great right?

We know it can feel risky to only focus on strengths and not on developing the weaker areas.

You might worry that ignoring your weaknesses could lead to gaps in your capabilities or that you might not be addressing important areas for growth. However, the reality is that when you play to your strengths, and you support your team to play to theirs, you approach each day with more confidence and enthusiasm, often finding innovative solutions that might elude you when you're stuck in a deficit mindset.

By building on what you do well, you create a positive feedback loop.

Successes bolster your confidence, which in turn makes you, and your team, more willing to tackle challenges. You will find that your perceived weaknesses become less relevant as your strengths shine through, making you a more effective and fulfilled leader overall.

So, consider what might change if you embraced your strengths and let them lead the way.

(1) J. Wang et al, (2022) Strengths based leadership and employee work engagement: A multi-source study, Journal of Vocational Behaviour

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Deepen Your Thinking

Do you know what your personal strengths are, and have they changed over time? Head over to the free Via Strengths Finder to find out.

Once you have explored the meaning behind your top five strengths on the Via website, you can start to think about how to apply them in your leadership.

Here are some examples of how to do that:

1. Think of an ambition you would like to achieve or a challenge you would like to solve then answer:

How can my strength of ..... help me to achieve my goal of .....?

or

How can my strength of ..... help me solve the challenge of .....?

If you are unsure of how your strengths can help, then focus on what you **do** know. Think of previous experiences, ask friends or colleagues about their perceptions of your strengths.

2. Where do you, and where could you, leverage your strengths in your current role? How can you identify and deepen these areas?

3. Thinking about the personal strengths of your team, how can you recognise and complement individual strengths to build a stronger collective?

Submit Your Question

Each month we provide an opportunity to anonymously submit your questions on the leadership topic. Click the button below to **send us your question by 19 July**, we will record the answers and publish the private community podcast on 23 July.

We didn't get any submissions last month, we would love to hear your thoughts or questions on using strengths in your leadership so please do take this opportunity to ask us anything!

Submit your question

Explore More on Strengths

Short read: Why Leaders Should Focus on Strengths, Not Weaknesses

Short read: You, the Leader: Own Your Power and Rise Up

Long read: The Strengths Based Organisation: How to boost inclusivity, wellbeing and performance - Emily Hutchinson and Caroline Brown

Long read: Strengths Based Leadership - Tom Rath and Barry Conchie

Latest Blog Post

Feeling under resourced at a human level? This is something we see so often in coaching. Senior leaders who are working exceptionally hard and doing a brilliant job, yet feeling isolated and exhausted at a human level.

Group coaching provides this human level resourcing, as well as a perspective shift, peer support and a deep sigh of relief that you are not alone as a leader.

Read more about the power of group coaching in our latest blog post

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