

# Strengths Finding Capability The Importance of Being “Personal Asset Smart” to Employability

Mission Impact Council

September 2016



# The Mission Impact Council



## MIC Common Agenda

*“To increase opportunities and equity in learning beyond the classroom for 12 to 24- year-olds that results in socially responsible, culturally competent youth leaders and employees that will create a greater Twin Cities.”*

The **Mission Impact Council (MIC)** is a collective impact initiative of over 30 diverse Twin Cities organizations co-chaired by the Greater Twin Cities United Way, the Twin Cities YMCA, & Youthprise.

In addressing the common agenda and our three opportunity gaps, we identified six capabilities that answer the question: *“What is it we want all youth to be able to be and do?”*

# What are the Six Capabilities?

## **Bridging the Youth Development & Leadership Gap**

- ✓ Leadership Capability – “Civic Smart”
- ✓ Social Competence Capability – “People Smart”

## **Bridging the Cultural Competence Gap**

- ✓ Positive Identity Capability – “Self Smart”
- ✓ Cross-Cultural Competence Capability – “Culture Smart”

# What are the Six Capabilities?

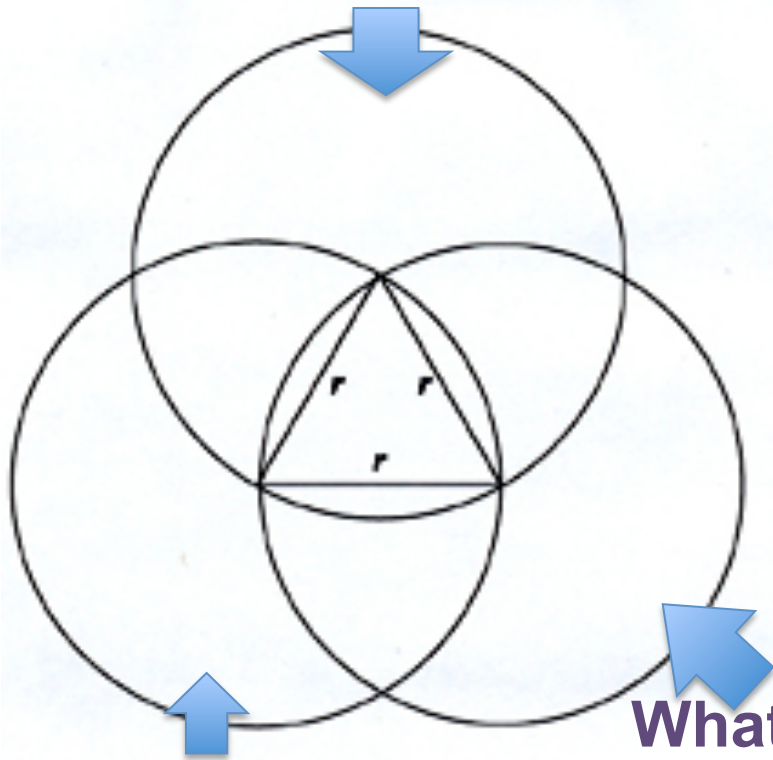
## Bridging the Employability Gap

- ✓ Growth Mindset Capability – “Possibility Smart”
- ✓ Strengths Finding Capability – “Personal Asset Smart”



# What is a Strengths Finding Capability?

What you are  
good at...  
your “spark”



Where there is a  
need...

What you are  
passionate  
about...

Youth with a strengths finding capability know:

- Their Distinctive Talents (what am I good at?)
- Their Passions (what do I care about?)
- Ways to meaningfully channel both (where is there a need?)

# Why is this Important to Employability?

## **Youth Development and Workforce Preparation**

Search Institute research shows that youth that have identified and grow their strengths score significantly higher (67%) on a range of behaviors that prepare people for the workforce & score significantly lower on several negative behaviors.

## **Growing Strengths-Based Leaders**

Research on 20,000 leaders shows that successful leaders are not defined by being competent at many things; they are defined by having one to three extraordinary strengths that can lift up their organizations.

# Why is this Important to Employability?



## Gallup Strengths Movement

Donald Clifton, Edward “Chip” Anderson, Marcus Buckingham, Tom Rath

In a world of global competition, people must know how to identify, grow, and channel their unique strengths.

# Impact Lives

Transforming communities one life at a time

## **Approach to Strengths-Based Identity and Leadership**

Belief: Before one can truly lead, you need to understand your gifts, talents, and strengths and of those around you.

Work with adults and students in various environments.

StrengthsFinder is our primary tool for self-awareness, team work, and leadership.





## True or False?

- A. Your personality changes as you grow older.
- B. You will grow most in your area of weakness.
- C. A good team member does whatever it takes to help the team, even if it is not in that team member's area of strength or interest.

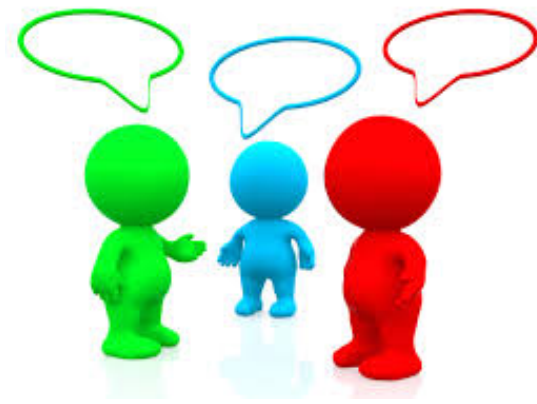
# True or False?

Myth #1: Your personality changes as you grow older.

Truth: You actually become more of yourself.



# True or False?



Myth #2: You will grow most in your area of weakness.

Truth: Your strengths provide the greatest opportunity for growth.



## True or False?

Myth #3: A good team member does whatever it takes to help the team.

Truth: They express their strengths – and help others express theirs – to ensure the team achieves its goals.



## Key Questions and Concepts

Do I have the opportunity to do what I do best every day?

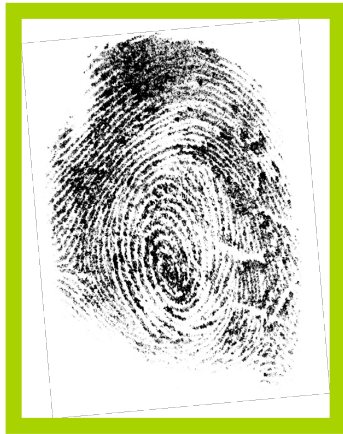
What makes you stand out?

You cannot be anything you want to be - but you can be a lot more of who you already are.

“If you spend your life trying to be good at everything, you will never be great at anything. While our society encourages us to be well-rounded, this approach inadvertently breeds mediocrity. Perhaps the greatest misconception of all is that of a well-rounded leader.”

– Strengths-Based Leadership, Rath & Conchie

# Your Fingerprint



The one in seven billion configuration that is “you”  
Your signature thumbprint  
Roads with the most traffic get widened

# Strengths Finder: Where did this all come from?

Positive Psychology

34 most common

Neuroscience

5 dominant

Psychometric Tool

3-4,000 Decision

40+ years of research

1 in 7 Billion

20-80

98.9%



# What is a “Strength”?

Definition: strength is the natural ability to produce near perfect performance, a level of greatness, and positive outcomes on a specific task.

$$\begin{array}{c} \text{Talent} \\ \text{Knowledge} \\ \text{Skill} \\ \text{Experience} \\ \text{Fit} \\ + \\ \text{Production} \\ \hline \text{Strength} \end{array}$$

Each participant receives the reports from Gallup.

Also receives a two-part report from ImpactLives that:

- Explains more about the “Genius & Beauty” of their themes
- Provides action ideas on how to turn those themes into strengths



**Andrea Gálvan**

Empathy	Developer	Relator	Responsibility	Includer
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**Empathy-Relating**

Your genius involves the ability to form high quality, deep, personal understanding and relationships with others. You have an unusual and beautiful ability to feel into what it feels like to be another person. You can often feel what someone else feels without them saying a word. As a result, you can form very close, intimate relationships with people. Your Empathy has profound effects on others because they feel so deeply understood. Many people feel like they come healthier and more at peace being in your presence because your understanding of people goes beyond the words they can find to express themselves. While it may be hard on you to hear the pain of others, they will feel deeply indebted to you because you can understand them at such profound levels. The genius of empathy makes you a great lover of other people and they are fortunate to have you as a friend.

You can sense the emotions of those around you. You can feel their feelings as though they were your own. You may not agree with each person's perspective or condone the choices, but you understand. You help others give voice to their emotional life. People are drawn to you. They appreciate that you understand them.

**Action Ideas for YOU**

- Help your friends and colleagues to be more aware when your peers are having a difficult time.
- Partner with someone with strong Command or Activator talents. This person will help you take needed action.
- Consider a confidante or mentor role. Your discretion and desire to be helpful will be greatly valued.

The broad grouping of strengths can be categorized into the following **Four Domains**



**Executing**

**Thinking**

**Influencing**

**Relating**

**SF  
Themes:  
Four  
Domains**

**Executing**

Achiever  
Arranger  
Belief  
Consistency  
Deliberative  
Discipline  
Focus  
Responsibility  
Restorative

**Thinking**

Analytical  
Context  
Futuristic  
Ideation  
Input  
Intellection  
Learner  
Strategic

**Influencing**

Activator  
Command  
Communication  
Competition  
Maximizer  
Self-Assurance  
Significance  
Woo

**Relating**

Adaptability  
Developer  
Connectedness  
Empathy  
Harmony  
Includer  
Individualization  
Positivity  
Relator

**Knowing the make-up of the team members and their strengths helps for more effective teamwork and the ability to allow each person to do what “they do best”**

## **Executing**

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## **Thinking**

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“I’ve never met an effective leader who wasn’t aware of his talents and working to sharpen them.” –Former NATO Supreme Allied Commander Wesley Clark, in *The New York Times Magazine*

“Without an awareness of your strengths, it’s almost impossible for you to lead effectively.”

–Strengths-Based Leadership, Rath & Conchie

# Obstacles to This...



**“I Don’t know My Strengths”**

**“I Know My Strengths, but my school/family/job don’t Value Them”**

**“I Know My Strengths, but my I can’t figure out where and how to use them”**

# What “Systems” Can Do!

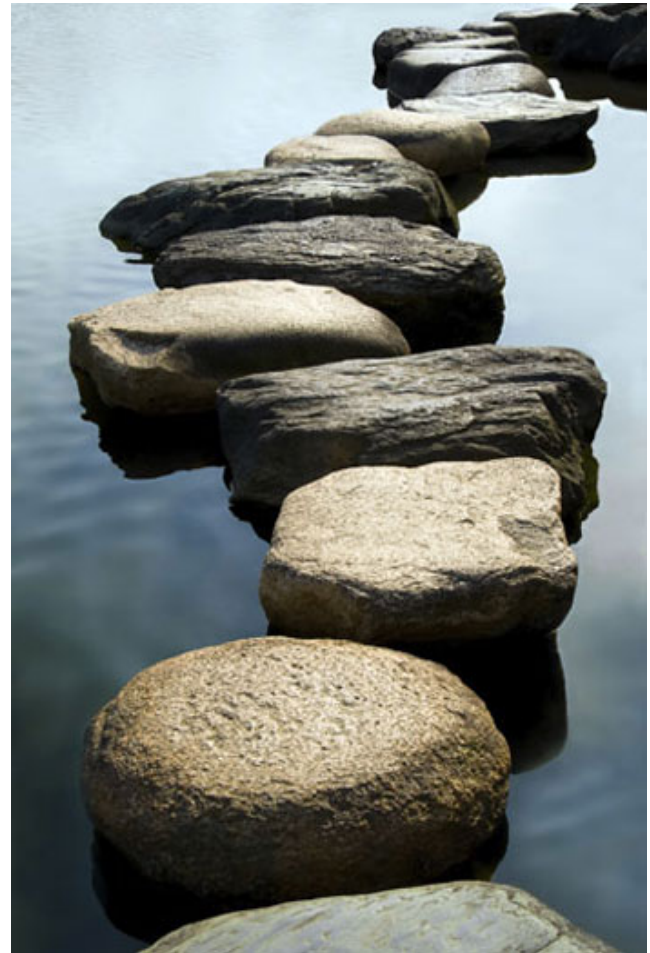
- Create diverse opportunities for youth to explore new strengths and to express their existing strengths.
- Make identifying strengths an expected outcome for youth programs.
- Encourage everyone to be strength champions





# What “Systems” Can Do!

- Teach multiple intelligences
  - “How are you smart?” rather than “Are you smart?”
- Help youth connect their strength’s soft and hard skills to employability possibilities.
- Teach those that hire youth the vocabulary and rationale for strengthsfinding.



# How can your Organization Increase our Youth's StrengthsFinding Capability?

Change Your Mindset!



# How can your Organization Increase our Youth's StrengthsFinding Capability?

1. Help them determine their interests and talents.
2. Help them learn more about their interests, talents, and strengths.
3. Help them practice and work on their strengths by making sure the environment allows for this and by finding others to help them get better.
4. Talk to them about what they are good at, what they are passionate about, and where the world has a need.
5. Connect them to areas of interest, talent, and passion.
6. Help them find someone else to do the tasks that don't align to their strengths.