Solving Personnel Questions

South Central Regional Library Council
Webinar
March 17, 2013
“Words are not the sole medium of exchange in teaching and learning—we educate with silence as well. Silence gives us a chance to reflect on what we have said and heard... In authentic education, silence is treated as a trustworthy matrix for the inner work students must do, a medium for learning of the deepest sort.”
Take two minutes to write about a positive experience that you had this week—it can be something you experienced today, yesterday or during the first evening, something that happened in a conversation or when you were alone. Forget about grammar or making it coherent—just write....
Linda Bryan

12+ Years with Cornell Library
Human Resources

• Assoc. Dir. Organizational and Staff Development
• Acting Human Resource Director
• Staff Development Specialist

Expertise in creating positive change,
Relationship Building
Training and Consulting
Love of Learning
Change

An Event: It is situational and is external to us.
Change Management
starts with the outcome

Transition Management
starts with wherever people are
Badly planned or implemented change creates painful transitions

Change

Unmanaged transition makes change less likely to work
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Starts</th>
<th>Beginnings</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Practical happening</td>
<td>• Psychological happening</td>
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<tr>
<td>• New situation</td>
<td>• New understanding</td>
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<tr>
<td>• New systems</td>
<td>• New values</td>
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<tr>
<td>• New titles</td>
<td>• New attitudes/identities</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Need to be designed</td>
<td>• Need to be nurtured</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Result from decisions</td>
<td>• Result from process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Take place on schedule</td>
<td>• Follow internal clock of the heart and spirit</td>
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Improving Communication during Transition

Remember the Basics:

– People trust behavior over words
– Understanding is more important than agreement
– Listening is twice as important as talking
– Tell them the truth - good news and bad
– People usually complain before they create
Passions

Zone of Great Leadership

Strengths
Crucial Conversations—interpersonal exchange we may dread having but know we cannot avoid because...
The Free Flow of Meaning

di•a•logue or di•a•log
(dì´e-lôg´, -lòg´)
What Makes Dialogue Work?

Dialogue differs from how we typically handle crucial conversations in two ways:

- We give up the goal of convincing others or staying silent to avoid conflict and focus instead on contributing to a shared pool of meaning.

- We take responsibility for getting all meaning into a shared pool—including that of those who disagree with us.
The Effects of Mutual Purpose

• Dialogue cannot begin until Mutual Purpose exists.

• Without Mutual Purpose people withhold meaning.

• Mutual Purpose is the foundation of trust.

• Build Mutual Purpose.
When Respect Is Violated

- Dialogue ceases when Mutual Respect is violated.
- Safety breaks down when Mutual Respect is violated.
Our Stories Create Our Emotions; We Create Our Stories

Let's look at the cause of all emotions.
First, you see or hear.

You’re working on a report, and your boss checks up on you three times in one hour, offering suggestions.
Second, you tell a story.

You decide that your boss is questioning your capabilities. She doesn’t believe you can complete the task on your own. She thinks you’re incompetent.
Third, you generate a feeling.

You feel hurt and defensive. This leads to anger—your boss obviously hasn’t paid attention to the other reports you’ve turned out to spec in the past.
Fourth, you act.

You hold a grudge and don’t listen or respond to your boss’s suggestions.
STATE My Path

S - Share your facts
Tell your story
A - Ask for others’ paths
Talk tentatively
E - Encourage testing

“What” skills

“How” skills
The Benefits of Starting With Facts

• Facts are least controversial part of the path

• Facts are more persuasive

• Facts are the last insulting

• Feelings and stories often keep us from facts.
Purpose or Strategy?

• We often find ourselves at cross-purposes because we confuse purpose and strategy.

• Break this impasse by asking others what they want.

• Once you’ve clarified your purpose, you can then step away from your strategy and explore options that serve everyone’s purpose.
My brain under normal circumstances

Operating from your pre-fontal lobe – (The home of positive emotions, generous perspective, high-level thinking.)

My brain under the stress of a conflict situation

Operating from the amygdala - Home of defensive/protective emotions; primitive, fight/flight response
Our Stories Create Our Emotions and Our emotions Create our Actions

THE EMOTIONAL GUIDANCE SCALE

UPWARD SPIRAL: HPF
1. Joy / Knowledge
2. Passion
3. Enthusiasm
4. Positive Expectation
5. Optimism
6. Hopefulness
7. Contentment

DOWNWARD SPIRAL: LNF
8. Boredom
9. Pessimism
10. Frustration / Irritation / Impatience
11. "Overwhelmed"
12. Disappointment
13. Doubt
14. Worry
15. Blame
16. Discouragement
17. Anger
18. Revenge
19. Hatred / Rage
20. Jealousy
21. Insecurity / Guilt Unworthiness
22. Fear / Grief / Depression / Powerlessness / Victim
## Notice Which Condition is at Risk

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Debate or Surrender</th>
<th>Circling back</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accusations</td>
<td>Acting angry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yelling</td>
<td>Pouting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name-calling</td>
<td>Hurling insults</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Looks of fear or pain</td>
<td>Getting Offended or insulted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hidden agendas</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Important Conversations

Goals when under stress

• Be right
• Look good/save face
• Keep the peace
• Win
• Punish, blame
• Avoid conflict

Goals of Dialogue

• Learn
• Find the truth
• Produce results
• Strengthen relationships
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DON’Ts</th>
<th>DOs</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Focus on finding answers</td>
<td>First ask questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Try to impress</td>
<td>Allow others to express</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seek first to be understood</td>
<td>Seek first to understand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talk to fill space</td>
<td>Embrace silence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Judge</td>
<td>Accept</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doubt</td>
<td>Trust</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Giving Advice is Also Important

- First listen, then share
- Better listening leads to better advising
- Embrace the “genius of the AND”
- Advocacy AND inquiry

### TABLE 1: Ratios for the Three Bipolar Dimensions (Losada & Heaphy, 2004)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Inquiry/Advocacy</th>
<th>Positivity/Negativity</th>
<th>Other/Self</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High-performance teams</td>
<td>1.143</td>
<td>5.614</td>
<td>.935</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium-performance teams</td>
<td>.667</td>
<td>1.855</td>
<td>.622</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low-performance teams</td>
<td>.052</td>
<td>.363</td>
<td>.034</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
“Go back inside yourself and look: if you do not see yourself as beautiful, then do as a sculptor does with a statue he wants to make beautiful: he chisels away one part, and levels off another, makes one spot smooth and another clear, until he shows forth a beautiful face on the statue. Like him, remove what is superfluous, straighten what is crooked, clean up what is dark and make it bright, and never stop sculpting your own statue, until the godlike splendor of virtue shines forth to you.”

Plotonius
“The soul grows by subtraction, not addition.”

Thoreau

“In pursuit of knowledge, every day something is acquired; in pursuit of wisdom, every day something is dropped.”

Lao Tzu
Step 1: Know Thyself
‘Know thyself’ was the inscription over the Oracle at Delphi. And it is still the most difficult task any of us faces. But until you truly know yourself, strengths and weaknesses, know what you want to do and why you want to do it, you cannot succeed in any but the most superficial sense of the word.”
“Know thyself.”

The Oracle of Delphi

“This above all: To thine own self be true, And it must follow as night follows day, Thou canst not then be false to any man.”

Shakespeare
Step 2: Be Thyself
“Becoming a leader is synonymous with becoming yourself. It’s precisely that simple, and it’s also that difficult.” -- Warren Bennis

- The “One Type of Leader” myth
- How can I be a leader; let me count the ways
- Overlap between passions and strengths

“Excellent team leaders... are aware of their natural styles—they know what they like to do, what they can do easily and well, and what they can accomplish only with difficulty if at all. They learn over time how to exploit their special strengths and preferences, and how to contain or circumvent their weaknesses.”

Richard Hackman
“If a person is perpetually oblivious to his own feelings, he will also be tuned out to how others feel.”

Ralph Waldo Emerson

We must remember that knowledge of one’s own deep nature is also simultaneously knowledge of human nature in general.”

Abraham Maslow

“What is most personal is most general.”

Carl Rogers
“Good teaching cannot be reduced to technique; good teaching comes from the identity and integrity of the teacher.”

Parker Palmer
“Authority is granted to people who are perceived as authoring their own words, their own actions, their own lives.”

Parker Palmer
Tal’s Mission Statement: Bringing Happiness to Life
I have created this virtual world for the purpose of helping individuals, relationships, and organizations flourish.

On the website you will find a whole range of online courses, books, live lectures and workshops, as well as products through which I create a bridge between the Ivory Tower and Main Street — translating the rigorous research conducted in universities into accessible material that most people can apply in their personal and professional lives.

http://www.talbenshahar.com/
Positivity Ratio

Barbara Frederikson

Marcel Losada
Broaden and Build Theory of Positive Emotion

**intellectual resources**
develop problem-solving skills
learn new information

**physical resources**
develop coordination
develop strength and cardiovascular health

**social resources**
solidify bonds
make new bonds

**psychological resources**
develop resilience and optimism
develop sense of identity and goal orientation
Frederickson and Losada discovered that experiencing positive emotions in a 3-to-1 ratio with negative ones leads people to a tipping point beyond which they naturally become more resilient to adversity and effortlessly achieve what they once could only imagine.
Strategies for Increasing Your Positivity Ratio

• Incorporate positivity booster
  – Scheduling lunch regularly with someone who makes me laugh
  – Take a 15 minute break and *really* listen to music I like
  – Watch funny movies

• Increase your positivity enhancers
  – Get sufficient sleep
  – Eat well
  – Exercise regularly (walking)

• Decrease Exposure to Negativity
  – Limit the amount of time I spend watching/listening to the news
  – Reduce amount of time I spend with negative people
  – Reduce the amount of time and energy I spend on activities that drain my energy
“Systems thinking is a conceptual framework, a body of knowledge and tools that has been developed over the past fifty years, to make the full patterns clearer, and to help us see how to change them effectively.”
no surprise that the unhealthiness of our world today is in direct proportion to our inability to see it as a whole.”

Peter Senge
1. Think about an important and challenging relationship in your life.
2. Describe two difficulties that you have within the relationship.
3. What works in this relationship?
4. What lessons are there for you in this relationship?
5. What do you appreciate/like in this person?
Expanding Perspective

• What am I missing or overlooking?
• How can I reframe the situation and zoom out?
• What can I see from 50,000 feet?
• Taking the long term perspective—taking the past and the potential future into consideration—what becomes clear?
• Is there another perspective I can take?
Expanding Perspective

• What am I grateful for?
• What progress have I made today?
• When were you at your best as a leader?
• When did you feel most safe at work?
• How do we create exceptional experiences for our clients?
• What can I appreciate (about other/self/life)?
“When I do not know myself, I cannot know who my students are. I will see them through a glass darkly, in the shadows of my unexamined life—and when I cannot see them clearly, I cannot teach them well.”

Parker Palmer
“We tend to focus on snapshots of isolated parts of the system, and wonder why our deepest problems never seem to get solved.”

Peter Senge
Essential Principles for Effective Organizational Communication

• Communicate directly to supervisors
• If it isn’t face to face, it isn’t communication
• Focus on the impact at the local work area
“If we approach a listening opportunity with the same self-abandonment as we do at the movies, think of how much more we stand to gain from
“The movie mindset confers the gift of another’s vision of life. Everyone’s movie is an adventure.”

Rebecca Shafir

- Scratch beneath the surface
- Ask questions if necessary
- Connecting the dots (creating coherence)
- Benefits to teller and listener

“Truly listening, forgetting yourself for a short time, and getting into the speaker’s movie can be the kindest gift you can give to another.”

Rebecca Shafir
“Active listening is an important way to bring about changes in people. Despite the popular notion that listening is a passive approach, clinical and research evidence clearly shows that sensitive listening is a most effective agent for individual personality change and group development…. People who have been listened to in this new and special way become more emotionally mature, more open to their experiences, less defensive, more democratic, and less authoritarian…. Not the least important result of listening is the change that takes place within the listener himself. Besides providing more information than any other activity, listening builds deep, positive relationships and tends to alter constructively the attitudes of the listener. Listening is a growth experience.”

Carl Rogers
• No interruption
• Genuine interest
• Time affluence (Kasser)
• Mindfully absorbed
• Get into the person’s shoes (empathy)
• Put ego on side
“We’re typically over-qualified in naming our weaknesses and much less savvy about those things at which we are naturally good.”

Stavros & Torres

Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure. It is our light, not our darkness, that most frightens us. We ask ourselves who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous, talented and fabulous? Actually, who are you not to be?”

Marianne Williamson
• Give me your....

Signature

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and facilitated by Linda Bryan
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The Strengths Concept
http://www.strengthsquest.com/home.aspx

• Developed by the Gallup Organization based on over 40 years of research on human strengths.

• Developed in 2001, now available in over 20 languages and used in more than 100 countries around the globe.

• The research of Don Clifton and Gallup on top achievers points to three basic findings about “the best of the best”:

  ✓ They build their lives upon their greatest talents.
  ✓ They manage around their weaknesses
  ✓ They invent ways to take their talents into areas where they want to improve and increase their performance.
Our Cultural Assumptions

“You can be anything you want to be, if you just try hard enough.”

✓ You cannot be anything you want to be—but you can be a lot more of who you already are.
✓ Each person has the greatest potential for success in specific areas.

“Each Person’s greatest room for growth is in his or her areas of greatest weakness.”

✓ Spending most of your time in your area of weakness-while it will improve your skills, perhaps to a level of “average”—will not produce excellence.
✓ Spending time on areas of strength will allow you to grow exponentially.

“The goal is to become well-rounded”

✓ The goal is to apply your natural talents in roles that are best suited to you.
✓ Seek asymmetry rather than symmetry.
Strengths Related Components of An Effective Team

Good Communication—
What are the Building Blocks to Creating this in a team?

• **Respect**-See other people’s view point as unique and of value.

• **Effective Listening**-”Seek first to understand before seeking to be understood”.

• **Validation**-Letting other people know that you heard and understand them regardless of whether or not you agree with them.


presentation developed by Sheri Mahaney and facilitated by Linda Bryan lgb4@cornell.edu
How Can Strengths Help Improve Team Communication?

By developing win-win strategies—

• Focusing on what all parties bring to the table and finding common ground can create synergy, produce good decisions, and reduce conflict.

• “Being able to connect with others and work well together is one of the most prized abilities that employers are looking for in new hires.”

Ingredients of A Strength

Most people start with a dominant talent—then add skills, knowledge, and practice to the mix.

**TALENT** (a natural way of thinking, feeling or behaving)

X **INVESTMENT** (time spent practicing, developing your skills, and building your knowledge)

= **STRENGTH** (the ability to consistently provide near-perfect performance)

## The Signs of a Strength

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Success</th>
<th>When you do it, you feel effective</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Instinct</td>
<td>Before you do it, you actively look forward to it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Growth</td>
<td>While you are doing it, you feel inquisitive and focused</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Needs</td>
<td>After you have done it, you feel fulfilled and authentic</td>
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</tbody>
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Evidence of Talents

• What do you receive compliments on?

• What do your friends say they like best about you?

• What behaviors have gotten you in trouble with teachers, parents or other adults?

• In what activities did the “steps” just come to you automatically?

• What are the things that you like best about yourself?
What About My Weaknesses?

Accept responsibility for them--

- Don’t use them as an excuse for not treating people appropriately, or
- for not doing a job that is expected of you.
- But **DO** learn how to manage them.
The Shadow Side of A Strength

Strengths also have a shadow side that is not like a true weakness.

The difference??

• A weakness is something you don’t do well at all and is draining.

• The shadow of a strength is something you do well but use too much in the wrong places.

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Managing Your Weaknesses

**Leverage your greatest talents.** Try using one of your talents to help you tackle an aspect of the job.

**Form complimentary partnerships.** Similar to leveraging your greatest talents, but in this case, you are borrowing the talents from someone else.

**Just Do it.** Sometimes, even if the task you have to accomplish is in an area of weakness, you still have to do it. Hopefully it is not the main part of your job!

**Stop doing it.** Sometimes, no matter how you apply your talents, you may find that you are simply not good at a task. This can work as long as the task isn’t a key part of the role.

**Heads up**—Managing your potential weaknesses isn’t always easy. It takes planning and effort, but in the long run if you proactively deal with shortages of talent creatively you will clear a path to strength for yourself, your teammates and the organization.

• Possible for any person?
  - Appreciative Inquiry (Cooperrider, 2002)

“To see the seed in something, that is genius.”

Lao Tzu

“A fundamental concept related to AI is that every person, place, and thing has something of value, some worth, some untapped opportunity; one simply has to inquire into it.”

Stavros & Torres
Most Change Efforts Fail

- Knowing/understanding is not enough
  - Ritualized action is necessary for motion
- Doing is not enough
  - Guided reflection is necessary for direction
- Deliberate practice (Ericsson, 1993)
Exercise: The “Ideal” Person

1. Think of a person in business you admire.
2. Write down the traits and characteristics you admire about that person.
3. Highlight 4-8 of the most important characteristics.
4. Rewrite in the first person.
5. Read to someone you trust.
Exercise: Best Possible

Think about your life in the future. Imagine that everything has gone as well as it possibly could. You have worked hard and succeeded at accomplishing all of your life goals. Think of this as the realization of all your life dreams. Now, write about what you imagined.
Sentence Completion Stems Exercise

- Say/write the stem and then complete it
- Alone or in group
- Brainstorm: think after, not during
- Uncritical: no right/wrong
- At least six endings
- Divide and conquer (gradual, 5% at a time)
- Be flexible, innovate
- Further explore interesting endings
Exercise: Sentence Completions

1. To bring 5% more (happiness) to my life...
2. If I dedicated more time and effort to pursuing my dreams...
3. To realize my dreams...
4. I am beginning to see that...
1. Read over your sentence endings.
2. Come up with another sentence stem.
3. Complete the stem.
4. Write about insights, ideas, commitments.
5. Share with some you trust.
If I allowed myself to be 5%, less of a perfectionist...

- I will feel lighter
- Life will be easier
- I will be less successful
- I will succeed more
- I will let people down
- Those who are close to me will appreciate me just as much
- I will not need to prove myself constantly
- I will enjoy my life more
Exercise: Creating Specific Reminder

1. List an area of personal growth or challenge.
2. State in positive, present, and purposeful language.
3. Write down 2-4 statements elaborating on statement
Bring Best Self to a Challenge
(Public Speaking)

- I am a calm and authentic public speaker
  - Speaking in front of people is a privilege, an opportunity for me to share what I care about most in the world.
  - Rather than having to prove myself, I strive to be known, to be authentic and real, to express myself.
  - I experience natural fluctuations in energy and presence. I am a passionate human being, not a perfect machine.
My Ideal Self

• I focus on the moment
• I strive to know and be known
• I embrace togetherness
• I give myself the permission to be human
• I play and am playful
• I appreciate
• I am humble
• I have integrity
• I focus on the moment
  - I let go of trying to control the past and the future, and breathe into the present. This is it.

• I give myself the permission to be human
  - I embrace vulnerability, accepting the ups and the downs like I accept the law of gravity. I have patience and know that this too shall pass.

• I appreciate
  - There are treasures
My Ideal Self at work

• I am completely supportive of my team
• I listen to everyone’s ideas
• I believe in myself
• I am at ease leading the dialog
• I give myself permission to be human
• I avoid gossip and am a benefit finder
• I am an effective communicator both verbally and in writing
How to Become Your Ideal Self

• Post or re-read the list regularly
• Keep it top of mind to direct your thoughts and actions
• Repetition is key
• Focus and visualize
• In difficult situations, ask yourself “What would my ideal self do?”
Mini Reminder

- First breath: centering
- Second breath: an Ideal-Self sentence
- Third breath: gratitude
- Come up with your own sequence (content and length)
Exercise: The “Ideal” Team

1. Think of a team or group of people you admire.
2. Write down the characteristics you admire about that team.
3. Create a master list of the group’s most admired characteristics.
4. Highlight 4-8 of the most important characteristics.
5. Discuss how we can bring these characteristics to our team.
Team Strengths

• Complete Via Strengths online survey
• What strengths do we have in common?
• Any surprises?
• How do our strengths fit together?
• How can we help each other further develop?
• There is no “WOW”!
• Making common sense more common
• Reminding
To practice what you have learned:

- Accountability
- Support
- Encouragement
- Safe
- environment to share

Who is in your choir?
Have You Filled a Bucket Today?

A Guide to Daily Happiness for Kids

By Carol McCloud... Illustrated by David Messing
• This week I practiced...
• What I noticed is...
• I could use your help with (or your ideas on)
Take Care of Yourself