

STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES ACTIVITY

Every single one of us has **BOTH** strengths and weaknesses. The end goal of this activity is to ensure that the team is able to tap into the greatest inherent gifts and talents each member brings to the team as well as to support one another's opportunities for growth and improvement.

Here's how the activity works. You want to schedule a time when the team can get together to focus on this activity. The amount of time you will need depends on the size of your team. You will need about two or three minutes for each person. So, if you have 5 people, you will probably want at least 15 minutes. If you have a team of 10, you will likely need at least 30 minutes. If you have a larger team like 15 or 20 people and you cannot set aside 45 minutes or an hour, you can break the activity into a couple of shorter meetings.

Prior to the meeting, everyone will need some time to complete some pre-work so that they can arrive ready to share their individual Strengths and Weaknesses with the rest of the team.

At the meeting, each person will be invited to share two images with the rest of the team and explain why they chose them. One image should represent the single greatest strength or contribution you bring to the team. And, the second image should represent your greatest weakness or opportunity for improvement.

Let's start with identifying your strength. This is no time for humility! Your team really needs to know what makes you so great and how the team can best utilize those gifts and talents.

To determine your single greatest strength and an image that represents it, it may be helpful to reflect on the following questions:

- "Why are we lucky to have you on this team?"
- "What are you naturally, really good at?"
- "What is the best use of you?"

Once you determine what your strength is, do a search online for an image that best represents it. As an example, here is an image and explanation of the greatest strength I believe I bring to any team or project that I am part of:

Strength: I am willing to take risks and try new things. I am not afraid to fail and am willing to go first when the team must make changes and try new things. The only thing I love more than pushing my own boundaries is sharing my journey with others so they can discover their own potential. I imagine the climber in this picture to be setting a new route and leaving



Now let's focus on identifying your weakness. Just as sharing your strength is no time for humility, sharing your opportunity for improvement is no time for shame or embarrassment. Again, EVERYONE has BOTH strengths and weaknesses.

To determine your weakness and an image that represents it, it may be helpful to reflect on the following questions:

- "What are you just naturally NOT very good at?"
- "What about you most gets in the way of your success?"
- "What do you need help with?"

Once you determine what your weakness is, do a search online for an image that best represents it. As an example, here is an image and explanation of the greatest strength I believe I bring to any team or project that I am part of:

Weakness: I really struggle with repetition. I quickly get bored and have a hard time staying motivated and engaged when I have to do a lot of repetitive tasks that do not require creativity or challenge.



Having a team of people openly share these things with one another builds trust and enables us to create a culture and environment of support. What you will inevitably find is that the strengths and weaknesses among your team will complement and balance one another. In other words, my strength will no doubt balance someone else's weakness. For example, whereas I am comfortable with change and like to try new things, I may have others on my team who struggle with change. So, I may be able to help, support, or inspire them to be more open to change.

And, by the same token, others will no doubt be skilled or gifted at the very thing I naturally struggle with and can therefore teach me how to improve. For instance, whereas I struggle with repetition and staying motivated, others on my team may be able to help motivate me and stay focused on the aspects of my job that I struggle with.

The only way we can leverage our inherent strengths and support one another's challenges is to name them and discuss them. At your team meeting, when people share their strengths, the rest of the team should ask questions. For instance, you might ask, "Are you getting to utilize that strength enough on this team?" or "How could we better utilize that gift on this team?". It is also helpful if others can chime in and validate that this is the person's strengths by providing examples of how they see this person living out this strength and how it has benefitted the team or our members. In the event that you think someone is being too humble, you might even chime in say so and tell them what you see as their greatest strength.

Once again, when people share their weakness, the rest of the team should ask questions. For instance, you might ask, “How can the team help you with that?” or “What do you need to improve in that area?” Things like that. Other team members are also invited to offer their help or support.