The Next 40 Minutes

- Strengths Philosophy
- Identifying Strengths
- Benefits of developing to strengths
- Methods to developing strengths
- How Mercy is applying strengths-based development
Strengths Philosophy

The assertion that individuals are able to gain far more when they expend effort to build on their greatest talents than when they spend a comparable amount of effort to remediate their weaknesses.

(Clifton and Harter, 2003) Strengths Based Leadership
Talent, Knowledge and Skills

**Talent**
- Naturally recurring patterns of thought, feeling and behavior that can be productively applied

**Knowledge and Skills**

**Knowledge**
- Factual
- Through experience
  - Learnable

**Skills**
- Learnable
- An action that produces desired results one can get better at with practice
Another way to define Talent

A natural ability not acquired through effort that provides intrinsic satisfaction, results in spontaneous behavior, and can be cultivated to achieve near perfect performance.

--Talent+, www.talentplus.com
Example Talent, Knowledge and Skills
Susan Boyle
HOW DO WE IDENTIFY NATURAL TALENT?
Measures of Natural Talent

Clifton Strengths Finder

- Measures personal talent that identifies areas where an individual’s greatest potential for building strengths exists
Measure of Natural Talent

Four Signs of a Strength

1. You’ve had success with this in the past.
2. You do this type of activity often, volunteer for it, etc.
3. You love to learn new ways to do this.
4. It’s enjoyable.
Measures of Natural Talent

Talent+ Interview

Builds a profile of strong individuals who perform exceptionally in an organization’s unique culture.

www.talentplus.com
IF IT’S ALREADY A TALENT, WHY BOTHER? WHY DEVELOP SOMETHING I’M ALREADY GOOD AT?
Benefits to an individual developing to strengths

Benefits to the Organization of Managing to Strengths

- Leaders who focus on employee strengths are 30 times more likely to have actively engaged workers, as compared with leaders who provide no feedback whatsoever.
- Leaders who focus on employee strengths are one-third more likely to have actively engaged employees, as compared with leaders who focus on weaknesses.

WHAT DO WE REALLY MEAN BY STRENGTHS-BASED LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT?

HOW DO WE DEVELOP NATURAL TALENTS?
Making Yourself Indispensable

If you want to get to the top, develop skills that complement what you already do best.
by John H. Zenger, Joseph R. Folkman, and Scott K. Edinger
Four-step method to develop talents

Given by HBR Authors:

1. Identify your strengths (natural talents)
2. Choose a strength to focus on – where you have passion and the organization has need
3. Select a “complimentary” behavior
4. Develop it in a “linear” way.

Other approaches to develop talent

- Apply a natural talent in a new area of work
- Hone the natural talent by learning and applying new tools, skills or techniques
- Know when to “dial down” a natural talent

Source: Talent+, Lincoln, NE
What do we do with areas of lesser talent?

1. Stop doing the activity (delegate it, trade, etc.)
2. Team up with someone who is talented in it.
3. Offer up one of your strengths and gradually steer this activity toward the strength and away from the weakness.
4. Perceive your weakness from a different perspective. (paradigm shift)

Source: Marcus Buckingham, Go, Put Your Strengths to Work, 2007
How to become a Talent Based Organization?

(Talent + Fit) \times \text{Investment} = \text{Growth}
THE START OF MERCY’S JOURNEY
Mercy’s Talent-Based Organization

(Fit)
- Selection
- Criteria Fit
- Mercy Fit
- Talent Fit

(Investment)
- Engagement, Growth & Enrichment
  - On-boarding
  - Co-worker Development
  - Leader Development
  - Talent Career Acceleration
  - Succession Planning

(Mercy Experience)
- Service
  - Fulfillment of Brand Promise
  - Culture of differentiated service
  - Hard-wired Mercy Experience
  - Patient/Customer Loyalty
  - Co-worker/Physician Engagement

(Mission)
- As the Sisters of Mercy before us, we bring to life the healing ministry of Jesus through our compassionate care and exceptional service
Overview Mercy’s High Potential Process

Candidates
Complete Executive Talent+ Interviews

Leaders
Complete Talent Assessments on Candidates

Talent Review Discussions

Option A: Leader Conducts Conversation with Candidate to participate

Option B: Leader Conducts Growth Conversation with Candidate

Designs Plan & Implements Talent Development Plan or Growth Plan
Mercy’s high potentials developing to strengths

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<tr>
<th>Natural Executive Talents (Top 3-5 most intense talent themes as identified on the Talent+ Talent Profile)</th>
<th>Leadership Attributes (Top 3-5 strongest Leadership Attributes as identified on the Talent Assessment)</th>
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<td>Relationships</td>
<td>Engages Others</td>
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<th>Enrichment Activities</th>
<th>Measurement</th>
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Mercy developing all leaders to strengths

Strengths
- What are my greatest strengths?
- What talents, knowledge and skills do I recognize in myself? Which are strongest?
- How do my strengths allow me to best contribute to and serve Mercy?

Opportunities
- What opportunities would I like to participate in to enhance or grow my talents or skills and knowledge?
- How can I find ways to minimize the impact to myself and others for areas of lesser talent?

Aspirations
- What are my personal or professional aspirations, both short- and long-term?
- What personal aspirations would I like to explore?

Results
- What does progress look like? What does success look like?

Closing Story

Source:  Soar with Your Strengths, Donald O. Clifton and Paula Nelson, 1995