

Play to Your Strengths

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Think about the singing and non-singing tasks that are involved in quartetting. Are you responsible for the tasks at which you are best?

What gets in the way of you focusing on what you do best? Do you spend extra time focusing on tasks that do not come naturally?

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According to Gallup research, people have greater potential for success in their areas of strength, and the key to human development is building on who you already are



Enter: The Strengths Zone

Focus on what you do best and develop those strengths

Studies have shown individuals who focus on their strengths have improved confidence, direction, hope, and kindness toward others.

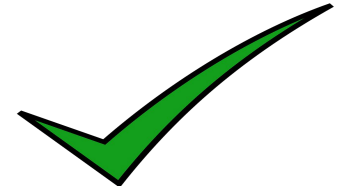
Within the workplace, individuals who are not given the opportunity to focus on their strengths are 6x less likely to be engaged in their job.

So why don't we all live in the strengths zone??

- **Most people are:**
 - **Unaware of their strengths**
 - **Unable to describe their strengths**
 - **Unable to identify the strengths of those around them**



We often talk about what is wrong with people or what doesn't work



Let's start talking about what is right with people and what people do well

Knowledge + Skills +
Regular Practice are
most helpful when they
amplify your natural
talents

The most successful people start with
dominant talent, then add skills,
knowledge, and practice to multiply their
raw talent

If you are born with the
potential to have a four
octave range, but never
exercise the muscles
needed to establish that
range, it will not develop.
However, if you work as
hard as someone without
as much natural potential,
you will likely see much
greater return

Talent (a natural way of thinking, feeling, or behaving)

X

Investment (time spent practicing, developing skills, building knowledge base)

=

Strength (ability to consistently provide near-perfect performance)

Talent x Investment = Strength

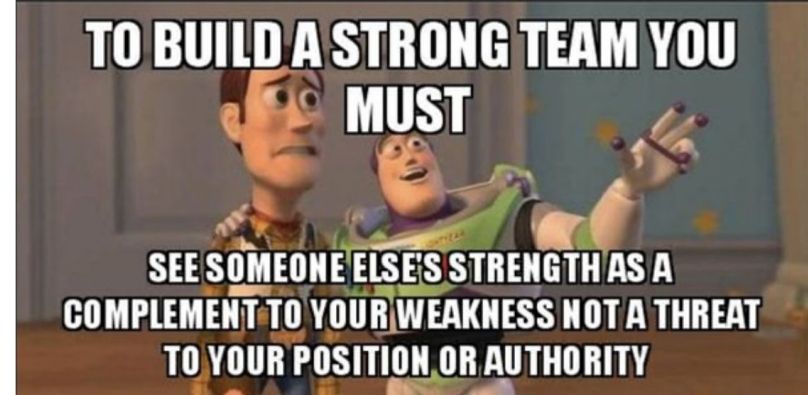
- ❖ One individual scores 5/5 for investment but only 2/5 for talent; their strength score is 10
- ❖ Another individual scores 5/5 for talent and invests the time and energy into developing their skills to score 5/5 on investment; their strength score is 25

It may be easy to describe expertise we have acquired, but it is much harder for most people to describe their natural talents. Look for a common theme, as talents are often connected by something in common:

- ❖ Natural tendency to create engaging stories, share thoughts, and know exactly how to describe something are directly tied to communication
- ❖ Sense of commitment, dependability, avoidance of excuses have a responsibility theme

Managing Weaknesses

- ★ It is helpful for everyone to know their areas of lesser talent
 - Lesser talents can lead to weaknesses; simply knowing what your lesser talents are can help you avoid them becoming weaknesses
- ★ If you can acknowledge areas with which you struggle, you can identify how to work around them
- ★ There are tasks we must do that we may not be naturally good at
 - Establish systems to manage these areas and stay on track
 - Partner with someone who has more talent in that area
 - For instance, if you struggle to create rehearsal plans, work with another quartet member to create sample plans and use them as templates. After each rehearsal, write down what went well and what didn't work. Ask for feedback from your quartet members on what they liked/didn't like.
 - If you have difficulty staying on top of your quartet emails, set aside a time or put an alert in your phone every day when you can sit down at your computer, uninterrupted, and focus on your emails

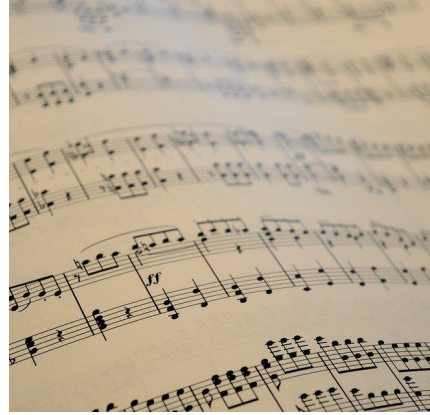


Create a list of tasks involved in quartetting

- Groups of 4-5
- Create a list of tasks that are part of quartetting
 - Get specific
- Star the tasks at which you excel
 - Pay attention to patterns of strengths (i.e. themes of communication, attention to details, responsibility)
- Circle the tasks for which you are primarily responsible
 - Do the stars and circles overlap?
 - Are there any circled items that can be taken on by another quartet member or "outsourced"?

Examples to get you started:

- Creating a visual plan
- Selecting music
- Finding costumes
- Managing correspondence
- Internal coaching



What did you discover in your group session?

What are some examples of tasks you thought of that are involved in quartetting?

Sample Tasks Involved in Quartetting

- Internal coaching
 - Tuning
 - Vowels
 - Diphthongs
 - Visual
 - Emotional
 - Resonance
 - Posture
 - Breathing
 - Freedom in sound
 - Artistry
 - Cleanliness (scooping)
 - Accuracy of each part
 - Synchronization
 - Singable consonants
 - Unity
 - Look at the judges' scoresheets for target areas
- Warm ups
- Emotional plan for songs
- Interp for songs
- Creating rehearsal plan
 - Keeping group on track during rehearsals
- Writing up notes following coaching
- Marking music
- Arranging
- Stylist
 - Costumes
 - Makeup (purchasing and doing the day of the performance/contest)
 - Hair (doing the day of the performance/contest)
 - Shoes
 - Jewelry
- Selecting music
- Creating packing list for performances/contest
- Managing quartet finances
- Finding learning tracks
- Making learning tracks
- Getting copyright clearance
- Managing quartet email and phone
- Managing social media accounts
- Managing website
- Creating logo
- Logistics
 - Paperwork for contest
 - Registering the quartet
 - Gifts for other quartets at contest (if done in your region)
 - Coordinating coaching
 - Coordinating food for all day events
- Finding and coordinating performances
- Creating set lists for shows
- Creating fundraisers
- Talking on stage
 - Creating script or ideas for talking on stage
- Blowing the pitch pipe, being responsible for pitch list for songs
- Thank you notes
- Creating virtual performances
- An entirely separate list of areas if your group records a CD
- Marketing the group
- Bringing snacks to rehearsal!

Resources for Identifying Strengths

While we discussed specific tasks involved in quartetting, it is worthwhile to spend time identifying your core strengths. This can help you discover other areas you may excel in, but haven't realized you should explore.

- Strengths Finder
- SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) Analysis
<https://www.forbes.com/sites/lisaquast/2013/04/15/how-to-conduct-a-personal-s-w-o-t-analysis/#9f3e79028d8b>
- Best tests to help you understand your strengths and weaknesses
<https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbescoachescouncil/2018/01/22/best-tests-to-help-you-understand-your-strengths-and-weaknesses/#72d6fd32495a>

Mark Twain once described a man who died and met Saint Peter at the Pearly Gates. Knowing that St. Peter was very wise, the man asked a question that he had wondered about his entire life.

He said, "Saint Peter, I have been interested in military history for many years. Who was the greatest general of all time?" Saint Peter quickly responded, "Oh, that's a simple question. It's that man right over there." "You must be mistaken," responded the man, now very perplexed. "I knew that man on earth, and he was just a common laborer." "That's right, my friend," assured Saint Peter. "He would have been the greatest general of all time, if he had been a general."

Don't be afraid to be
great!

Find your strengths, hone your
skills, and explore and pursue
your passions with great discipline
and vigor!
