

Creating a More Productive Workplace



Andy Long
Director of Admissions
Northeastern Junior College

Why are you here?



MOTIVATION

IF A PRETTY POSTER AND A CUTE SAYING ARE ALL IT TAKES TO MOTIVATE YOU,
YOU PROBABLY HAVE A VERY EASY JOB. THE KIND ROBOTS WILL BE DOING SOON.

www.despair.com

An introduction to strengths

Marcus Buckingham video:
Trombone Player Wanted



Recap: Workplace Myths



EFFORT

HARD WORK NEVER KILLED ANYBODY,
BUT IT IS ILLEGAL IN SOME PLACES.

www.despair.com

Keys to finding your talent



CONSISTENCY

IT'S ONLY A VIRTUE IF YOU'RE NOT A SCREWUP.

www.despair.com

My Top 5

- Ideation
- Input
- Strategic
- Learner
- Achiever

The Team's Top 5

- Emma – Individualization, Achiever, Responsibility, Relator, Learner
- Brock – Achiever, Woo, Competition, Positivity, Includer
- Linda – Consistency, Responsibility, Adaptability, Learner, Relator
- Terry – Futuristic, Activator, Individualization, Strategic, Command

What about weaknesses?



INEPTITUDE

IF YOU CAN'T LEARN TO DO SOMETHING WELL,
LEARN TO ENJOY DOING IT POORLY.

www.despair.com

Workplace – Q12



CONSULTING

IF YOU'RE NOT A PART OF THE SOLUTION,
THERE'S GOOD MONEY TO BE MADE IN PROLONGING THE PROBLEM.

www.despair.com

Your Turn

- Groups of 4ish
 - Focus on you
 - What you get paid to do?
 - Hot buttons?
 - Successes from the last year
 - One Strength and how you currently use it in your job or how you would like to use it more. (love it/loathe it)
 - One area of the Q12 your group is strong in and why you think that is and one area you would like to see improvements and what could be done.

The Gallup Q12

- 1) Do you know what is expected of you at work?
- 2) Do you have the materials and equipment you need to do your work right?
- 3) At work, do you have the opportunity to do what you do best every day?
- 4) In the last seven days, have you received recognition or praise for doing good work?
- 5) Does your supervisor, or someone at work, seem to care about you as a person?
- 6) Is there someone at work who encourages your development?
- 7) At work, do your opinions seem to count?
- 8) Does the mission/purpose of your company make you feel your job is important?
- 9) Are your associates (fellow employees) committed to doing quality work?
- 10) Do you have a best friend at work?
- 11) In the last six months, has someone at work talked to you about your progress?
- 12) In the last year, have you had opportunities at work to learn and grow?

Using the Q12:

- A. Go through and score each question on a 1-5 scale with 5 being strongly agree and 1 being strongly disagree.

- B. Circle one of the questions that your workgroup does extremely well. What specific things does your workgroup do to make this question a strength?

- C. Underline one of the questions that you think your workgroup could improve on. What changes would you like to see and what can you do to improve this in your workplace?

- I. Video: Starting out I have a clip of a video by Marcus Buckingham who studies strengths at Gallup and then started his own business.
- II. I've seen this video I bet 10 times and still enjoy and am motivated every time I see it. There is one point I want to recap from this video and that was the part on some of the commonly held myths Marcus talked about and if you are a note taker there is a handout to help you follow along.
- III. Myths and Truths
 - a. #1
 - i. Myth: As you grow your strengths change
 - ii. Truth: As you grow you become more of who you are
 - b. #2
 - i. Myth: Work on your weaknesses to become well rounded
 - ii. Truth: Grow in the area of your strengths

The Animal School — A Parable —

Once upon a time the animals decided they must do something decisive to meet the increasing complexity of their society. They held a meeting and finally decided to organize a school. The curriculum consisted of running, swimming and flying. Since these were the basic behaviors of most animals, they decided that all the students should take all of the subjects.

The duck proved to be excellent at swimming, better in fact than his teacher. He also did well in flying, but he proved to be very poor in running. Since he was poor in this subject he was made to stay after school to practice it and even had to drop swimming in order to get more time in which to practice running. He was kept at this poorest subject until his webbed feet were so badly damaged that he became only average at swimming. But average was acceptable in the school so nobody worried about that - except the duck.

The rabbit started at the top of his class in running, but finally had a nervous breakdown because of so much make-up time in swimming - a subject he hated.

The squirrel was excellent in climbing until he developed psychological blocking in flying class when the teacher insisted he start from the ground instead of from the tops of the trees. He was kept at attempting to fly until he became muscle bound - and received a C in climbing and a D in running.

The eagle was the school's worst discipline problem, in climbing class he beat all of the others to the top of the tree used for examination purposes in this subject, but he insisted on using his own method of getting there.

The gophers of course, stayed out of the school and fought the tax levied for education because digging was not included in the curriculum. They apprenticed their children to the badger and later joined the ground hogs and eventually started a private school offering alternative education.

c. #3

- i. Myths: It is important to sacrifice for the team's need
- ii. Truth: What your team needs is for you to use your strengths

NBA finals: Kobe Bryant averaged 30.2 pts/game. Pau Gasol averaged 10.8 rebounds a game.

IV. Clues to finding your strengths

- a. Yearnings – What kinds of activities are you naturally drawn?
 - i. This conference when I saw a call for proposals I automatically started to think about what I could present. I imagine some of you had similar thoughts and others had no thoughts at all. I was excited when I learned I had such a big turnout.
- b. Rapid Learning – What kinds of activities do you seem to pick up quickly?

- i. Book learning – take some classes on-line and it is easy for me to think about how it all works. I do well in these classes without much effort. Tuesday night I told my wife I was working on homework and so I didn't have a chance to wash the dishes, but got my homework done in no time and was actually playing on the computer.
 - c. Flow – In what activities did the “steps” just come to you automatically?
 - i. I have a cousin who just graduated and sells forklifts now. He is not an expert in forklifts, but from visiting with him he is an expert in sales. Made money selling educational books over one summer of college. He told me he would go to the diners in the morning and befriend all the locals to get an idea of what neighborhoods he would have the most success.
 - d. Glimpses of Excellence – During what activities have you had moments of subconscious excellence, when you thought, “How did I do that?”
 - i. There are things you do better than most of the population. It is natural to you. It may be working with people or analyzing a spreadsheet or coming up with new ideas.
 - e. Satisfaction – What activities give you a kick, either while doing them or immediately after finishing them, and you think, “When can I do that again?”
 - i. I'm loving this today. I really enjoy being in front of a group either visiting a high school or speaking to this group here.

V. Gallup's 34 Strengths (see handout)

- a. Benefit to using these strengths
 - i. Helps define what you already know
 - ii. Gives everyone a common language
- b. Now, Discover Your Strengths or Strengthsfinder 2.0 both provide codes where you can go on-line to take a test to give you your top 5.

VI. My top 5

- a. Ideation, Input, Strategic, Learner, Achiever

- b. Ideation – read page on ideation
 - c. When I listen to people something they say will make me think about something else and then something else and I'll end up laughing about something that wasn't funny at all. I love to attend conferences, because they provide the stimulus to come up with new ideas. I also enjoy driving from school to school that gives me time to think and not have interruptions.
 - d. Briefly explain the others
 - i. Input – close to 100 folders in my inbox, kept old lesson plans for 6 years, loved collecting baseball cards
 - ii. Strategic – come up with a plan. Think about how people will react and adjust from there.
 - iii. Learner – Enjoy the process of learning. Always taking a class – started 4 different master's programs
 - iv. Achiever – Accomplishment – loved having something to measure myself on – GPA, evaluations, checklists
 - e. Look at the 34 descriptions and mark some of the ones that sound like they describe you.
- VII. The Team's top 5 – advantage is the common naming system
- a. Went through with all of my staff after they took the test. It was a great way for me to get to know them better and hopefully help them know more about themselves.
 - b. Look at individuals – Emma – Individualization, Achiever, Responsibility, Relator, Learner – able to make great connections with students, hard worker, when she starts a task she finishes it.
 - c. Brock – Achiever, Woo, Competition, Positivity, Includer – People like him. Also, wants to succeed
 - d. Linda – Consistency, Responsibility, Adaptability, Learner, Relator – Able to process apps and make sure the process is similar to all. I don't need to worry about the job getting done. Can also roll with the changes being made.
 - e. Terry – Futuristic, Activator, Individualization, Strategic, Command – has a presence, do it and ask forgiveness later.

VIII. Once you discover your strengths and start to learn more about your co-workers you can go from looking at individual level of productivity to group productivity.

IX. Q12 – Gallup

- a. 3 decades of research, over a million individuals interviewed, pulled out the questions that made a difference.
- b. Questions that separated top performing groups from lower performing groups. Some questions like pay and benefit were important to all so they didn't show a difference between groups.
- c. Used these questions to study 2,500 business groups with over 105,000 employees.
- d. Also found out that employees usually don't leave companies they leave managers
- e. 12 Questions that relate to higher profit, productivity, retention, and customer satisfaction

X. Can be broken into groups

- a. What do I get?
 - i. Do you know what is expected of you at work?
 - ii. Do you have the materials and equipment you need to do your work right?
- b. What do I give?
 - i. At work, do you have the opportunity to do what you do best every day?
 - ii. In the last seven days, have you received recognition or praise for doing good work?
 - iii. Does your supervisor, or someone at work, seem to care about you as a person?
 - iv. Is there someone at work who encourages your development?
- c. Do I belong here?
 - i. At work, do your opinions seem to count?
 - ii. Does the mission/purpose of your company make you feel your job is important?

- iii. Are your associates (fellow employees) committed to doing quality work?
- iv. Do you have a best friend at work?
- d. How can we all grow?
 - i. In the last six months, has someone at work talked to you about your progress?
 - ii. In the last year, have you had opportunities at work to learn and grow?

XI. We take this survey at least once a year and then the key is to get feedback and ideas from everyone, not explain everything, but look for continuous improvement.

- a. My learning – my attempts
 - i. Q1 – Clear expectations with measurements based on numbers – goals are not work hard, recruit, but to get a specific # of visitors, apps, enrolled students
 - ii. Q2 – found out a few of my staff wanted headphones for our new phones – IT already had some – I would have never known if I didn't ask. Was able to purchase a new chair for a worker this last year.
 - iii. Q3 – We take the Strengthsfinder – Talk about strengths – Would like to do the I love it or I loathe it activity where they look at everything they do for a couple of weeks
 - iv. Q4 – Recognition or praise – I need to do better – follow up e-mails, hand written notes, Gallup had drops in the bucket, telling people they do a good job.
 - v. Q5 – Try to show concern – difficult for me
 - vi. Q6 – Encourages development – Going through the book 21 laws of leadership, going through Trombone Player Wanted, have staff pick books to discuss.
 - vii. Q7 – Do your opinions count – Try to be very open in my process – Q12
 - viii. Q8 – Mission/Purpose – a little easier working in education, don't neglect – would like to get student stories

- ix. Q9 – Be careful of silos – everyone works hard, but doesn't always know what is going on
- x. Q10 – Need help
- xi. Q11 – ranked a little lower – Team did not see the evaluation process as meeting their needs in this category.
- xii. Q12 – Go back to encouraging development. There are cheaper growth opportunities instead of conferences

XII. Rank your work group on these questions on a 1-5 scale

- a. What does your work group do well?
- b. Where could you improve?
- c. What can you affect?

XIII. Interactive Part –

- a. Focus on You
- b. Strengths
- c. Q12