APSWI
Adult Protective Services
Workforce Innovations

APS Supervisor Core: Strengths-Based Development / Supervision

Instructor-Led Training

We create experiences that transform the heart, mind, and practice.

Academy for Professional Excellence

About the Academy & APSWI

The Academy is a project of San Diego State's School of Social Work. Serving over 20,000 health and human services professionals annually, the Academy's mission is to provide exceptional workforce development and learning experiences for the transformation of individuals, organizations and communities.

APSWI, or Adult Protective Services Workforce Innovations, is a training program of the Academy that provides innovative workforce development to APS professionals and their partners.


San Diego State University

ACADEMY PROGRAMS

APEX

APSWI Adult Protective Services Workforce Innovations

CWDS Child Welfare Development Services

LIA Leaders in Action

SACHS Southern Area Consortium of Human Services

TribalSTAR

Purpose of Land Acknowledgement



Academy for Professional Excellence

The purpose of a land acknowledgement is to recognize the relationship of Indigenous peoples to the land. It is multi-faceted in its meaning. It shows respect to the people of the land, to the land itself and to their relationship to one another. They are statements that recognize the dispossession from the land, the harm brought by colonial practices, beliefs and policies. They validate and recognize the continued presence of Indigenous peoples everywhere. Lastly, when offered in earnest and with sincerity, they are the first steps in reconciliation and healing.

Land Acknowledgement

National Deliveries

For millennia, hundreds of Tribal nations have been a part of this land. This land has nourished, healed, protected, and embraced them for many generations in a relationship of balance and harmony.

As members of the Academy community, we acknowledge this legacy. We promote this balance and harmony. We find inspiration from this land and its original inhabitants of this Nation.

Making a statement isn't enough. It is important that we share ways people can take action to support Native American people and land back efforts. This can involve researching and learning more about the indigenous communities of the lands you are on at Native Land Digital; returning artifacts and land to their appropriate tribal communities; working to protect and preserve the land, and much more.

For more information and resources, see our Land Acknowledgement page.

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Housekeeping & Introductions



Technology



Agenda



Agreements

Your Trainer for Today:

[NAME]

[TITLE]

[ORGANIZATION]

Top 5 [STRENGTHS, ROLES, ETC:

Learning Objectives

1. Compare and contrast the benefits and limitations of strengths-based approach.

2. Identify how your top strengths/talents (as described in your assessment report) have contributed to your role/career.

3. Discuss how you might approach supervising staff in an APS case study using the strengths-based approach and your top strengths/talents.

Group Agreements

- Supportive: Encouraging/Strengths-Focused
- Non-Judgmental & Respectful
- Permission to share only what I feel comfortable sharing

- Ask for clarification when needed
- Accountability - your role in implementation
- Acknowledge diversity of attendees
- Self-care

Group Agreements

"Confidentiality will be maintained: What happens during this training will not be shared outside of this group with the exception that the learning and key takeaways can be shared. Specific details shared by members of these groups during this learning session will not be divulged."

What is Strength?

- Something that you're good/talented at
- What you are known for
- What comes easily to you / innate
- Energizing, feels good/fun to use
- Can be developed
- Can atrophy due to lack of use
- Drives performance
- Flow



Who Represents Strength?







These Photos by Getty Images

Deficit Model

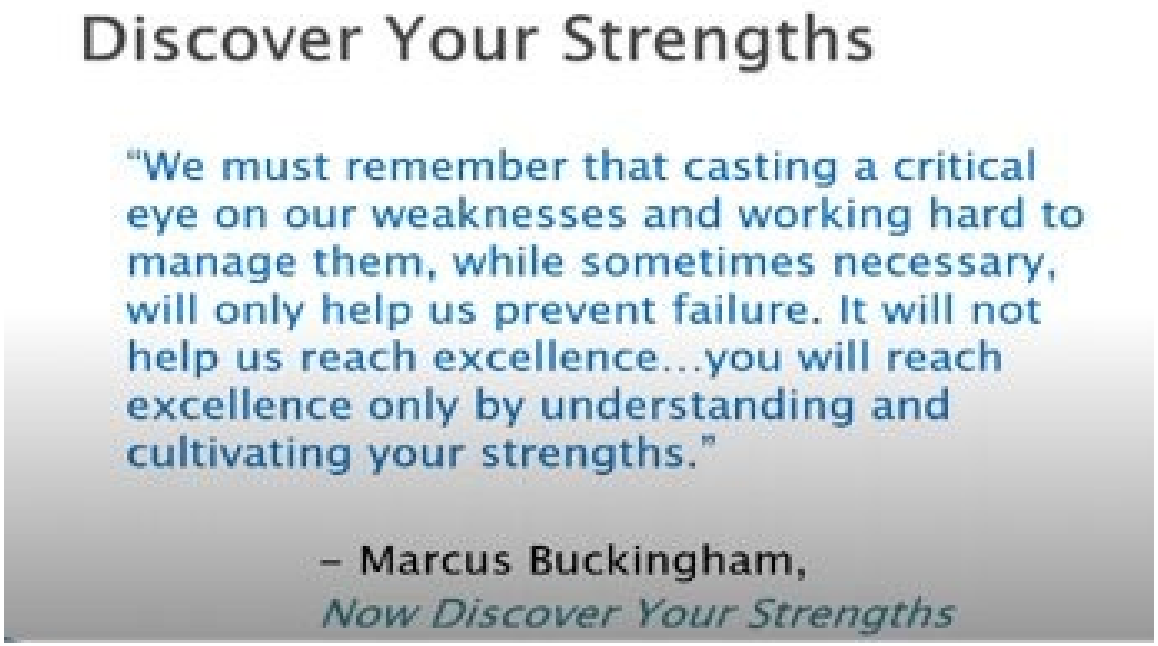






This photo by Getty Images

Discover Your Strengths



Benefits of Strengths-Based Approach



27 workplace studies of strengths-based interventions:

- Focused on the use and development of strengths
- Published between 2010 and 2019
- American, Indian, South African, Canadian, German-speaking, Dutch, Israeli populations

Miglianico, Marine et al. (2020). Strength Use in the Workplace: A Literature Review. *Journal of Happiness Studies*. 21.

Benefits of Strengths-Based Approach

- Well-being
  - “Satisfaction, pleasure, commitment, and meaning”



Benefits of Strengths-Based Approach

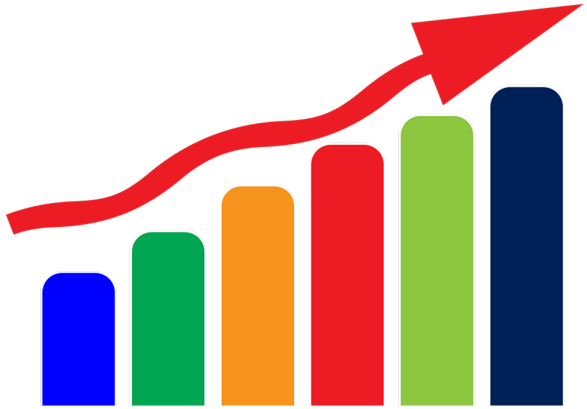
- Work Performance
  - Decrease burnout and turnover
  - Motivation
  - Managing workload
  - “Productivity, sales, and profit”
  - Team performance



Gallup. “2015 Strengths Meta-Analysis Report.” https://www.gallup.com/cliftonstrengths/en/269615/strengths-meta-analysis-2015.aspx

Benefits of Strengths-Based Approach

"Organizations that invest in strengths-based development achieve as much as a **29% increase** in profit."



https://www.gallup.com/cliftonstrengths/en/269615/strengths-meta-analysis-2015.aspx

Benefits of Strengths-Based Approach

- “Vitality, flow, passion and engagement”



(Source: Rath, T. (2007). StrengthsFinder 2.0. New York: Gallup Press.)

Benefits of Strengths-Based Approach

If your manager primarily…	The chances of active disengagement are…
Ignores you	40%
Focuses on your weaknesses	22%
Focuses on your strengths	1%

Rath, T. (2007). StrengthsFinder 2.0. New York: Gallup Press.

Poll: Strengths Use Gut Check

- How often do you leverage your strengths/talents at work?



Limitations of Strengths-Based Approach

Leaves Weaknesses Unaddressed

Solutions:

- Strengthen a weakness if it's impacting a key part of your job.

OR

- Find a complementary partner.

OR

- Use a strength to compensate for a weakness or help approach differently.

Jones, J. (n.d.). “The Two Problems with the Strengths-Based Approach.” Retrieved February 5, 2021, from https://drjasonjones.com/characterstrengthsapproach/

Limitations of Strengths-Based Approach

Overusing strengths or using inappropriately



Solution: Self-awareness is key.

Zhang, Liguo. 2014. "Reflections on the strength based perspective of a social worker."

Limitations of Strengths-Based Approach

Focuses on the individual

Solutions - Ask yourself:

1. What outcomes are desired?
2. Who can best help achieve those outcomes?
3. What developmental support does my direct report need

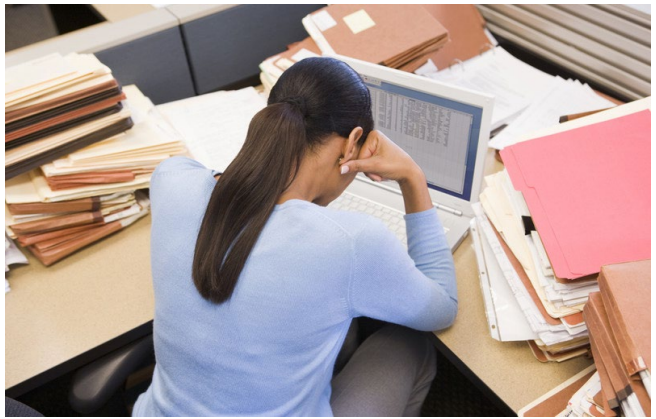
https://hbr.org/2016/01/strengths-based-coaching-can-actually-weaken-you

Limitations of Strengths-Based Approach

Neglects Structural Obstacles

Solutions:

- Help remove structural obstacles
- Provide resources



Strengths Assessments

Clifton Strengths	• The oldest and most popular
VIA Character Strengths	• 2nd oldest, uses virtue categories, universal across cultures/nations
Strengths Profile	• 3rd oldest, measures energizing/non-energizing and frequency of use as well
Stand Out Strengths	• newest, merges individual strengths to create role types (free of charge)

Strengths Assessments

- Measure intensity of strengths use
- Strengths can be developed
- Upgraded versions of some assessment reports available ($)
- Terminology of and approach to weaknesses differ
- Not for hiring

Your Prework

Complete Part 1 and Part 2 (questions #1 and #2 only) of "Your Top Strengths" Worksheet.

Part 1.

Signature Strength/Role	At my best using this strength, I ...	What do I need to watch out for (i.e., blind spots) when using this strength ...	Support/Actions needed to be at my best with using this strength ...
Example: Responsibility	• Take ownership of every project to ensure high quality output/outcomes. • I am extremely reliable. Others can count on me and often turn to me for support.	• I tend to take on too much and get overwhelmed. I feel responsible for everything. I need to be more selective about what I take on.	• Delegate more. Divide up tasks with others and be clear about who's responsible for what. • Say no to projects that are not aligned with our annual priorities. • Negotiate deadlines if needed. • Work with my supervisor to come up with clear metrics to know what's enough.

Your Prework

Part 2. Reflection Questions

- At work, what are your top responsibilities?
- What are you known for at work?



Solo Work: Matching

Fill out the Question #3 (in Part 2) by matching top strengths to your important responsibilities:

How have your Signature Strengths/Strengths Roles helped you be successful in what you listed for Questions #1 and #2?

Top Responsibilities	Signature Strengths/StandOut Roles
Helping to resolve employee issues and disputes	Individualization, which helps me custom-design solutions that will satisfy all involved. Consistency, which helps me create clear and fair rules that everyone can follow.

Solo Work: Action Planning

Complete Part 3 (Action Planning) of "Your Top Strengths" Worksheet.

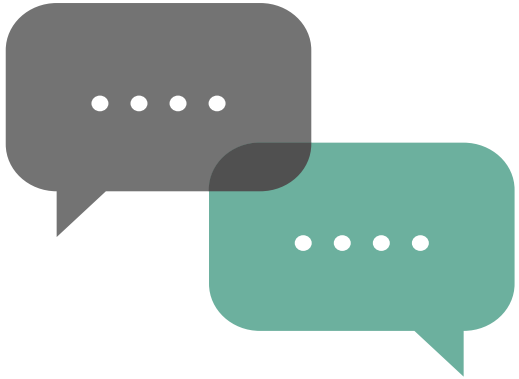
Signature Strength/ Role	How might you use this strength more?	What support is needed?
Example: Relator	• I can take more time to connect with my staff individually instead of just focusing on business. I will reserve the first 5-10 minutes of supervision to get to know them as people. • I will also reserve 10 minutes during team meetings for ice breakers.	• I can solicit ice breaker ideas from my staff so that they feel a part of the process.

Small Group Discussion Questions

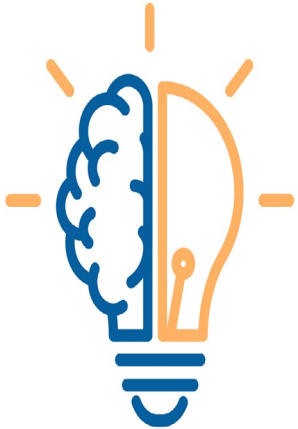
1. What were your first impressions of your results report? Anything that surprised you?

2. How have your top strengths (as indicated by your report) helped/hindered you in your current role as supervisor and past roles?

3. Is there anything that you should start doing or stop doing related to your strengths?



Large Group Discussion



Briefly, please share with us:

Any takeaways, discoveries, surprises?

Strengths-Based Supervision

"The practice of frequent and positive interactions whereby [the] supervisor identifies talent, creates opportunities to develop that talent, and encourages employees to align their talents and tasks toward a specific goal."

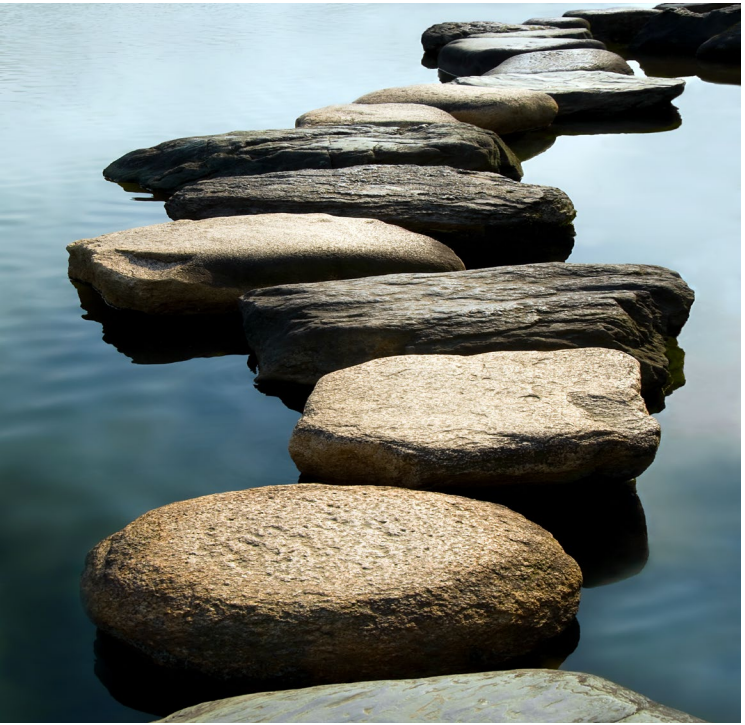
Academy for Professional Excellence. Feb. 10, 2017. "Implementing Strengths-Based Supervision." Presentation.

Strengths-Based Supervision Examples

1. Asking the question, “Why do you think I would promote you?”

2. Putting people in project groups based on their strengths
   - (e.g., a mix of achievers who could put things into action, strategic thinkers, those who have influencing strengths/talents).

Strengths-Based Supervision



"Essentially a 'way of being' with supervisees where attention is given to power 'with' rather than power 'over,' and the environment is such that both supervisor and supervisee contribute their expertise to the relationship.'"

Davys and Beddoe. (2010). *Best Practice in Professional Supervision: A Guide for the Helping Professions*.

Poll – Strengths-Based Supervision

- How often do you help your direct reports develop their strengths?

Solo Activity – Self Assessment

1. Complete Parts 1 & 2 of "Strength-Based Supervision of Staff Self-Assessment" individually.

1. If there's time, complete Part 3 (Action Planning).

Tool: Strengths-Based Questions

Strengths-Based Coaching Questions for Supervisors

1. Describe a successful day. What made it successful?
2. What are you doing/managing well? What are you finding challenging/not managing well?
3. What are you feeling good about?
4. What's working well for you at the moment?
5. What's worked for you in the past? (e.g., strategies/tools/resources/supports/skills)
6. What have you learned so far that could be helpful in moving forward?
7. Which of your top strengths can you leverage to help you move forward?
8. How can we build on where you are now?
9. What's one thing that you could do to take a step in the right direction?

(Adapted from: https://positivepsychology.com/strengths-based-interventions/)

Small Group Work: APS Scenario



Instructions:

1. Trying on a particular Strength lens/hat: How might you apply one or more of your strengths (as identified by the assessment) to this scenario?

2. How might you apply one or more of strengths-based supervision best practices to this scenario?

3. Collaborate on a plan to approach this scenario.

Feel free to use any of the coaching questions, and draw on your own experiences/solutions you've used.

Small Group Work: APS Scenario

An APS caseworker struggled with the fact that there was less control over their schedule/caseload and needed to be extremely flexible, unlike in their previous position with In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS), where one had more control.

As the supervisor, what would you do in this case?

Large Group Debrief

Please share your plan with us!

Workshop Summary & Questions

We covered:

- Explored the benefits and limitations of a strength-based approach
- Reflected on how our individual strengths contribute to our professional effectiveness
- Through case study analysis and discussion, we considered how leveraging personal strengths can support staff development and promote positive outcomes

What questions do you have?

P-I-E



Reflect and note:

- **P**riceless piece of information
  - What has been the most important piece of information to you today?
- **I**tem to implement
  - What is something you intend to implement from our time together today?
- **E**ncouragement you received
  - What is something that you already are doing and were encouraged to keep doing?

Evaluations

Your feedback is valuable!

- Please complete evaluations.

Thank you for taking time out to spend on your own professional development.

Thank you for what you do for our communities!