APS Supervisor Core: Strengths-Based Development/Supervision

INSTRUCTOR LED TRAINING

TRAINER MANUAL

Academy for Professional Excellence

APSWI
Adult Protective Services Workforce Innovations

The Academy for Professional Excellence is a project of the San Diego State University School of Social Work

Funding Sources

This training was developed by the Academy for Professional Excellence's [Adult Protective Services Workforce Innovations] program, with funding from the California Department of Social Services, Adult Programs Division.

Revisions and remediation, 2026

Workforce Development Specialist Brenda Wilson-Codispoti, LCSW

Curriculum Developer, 2020

Joanne Chen, MA, CPC Introduction

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Introduction

We are pleased to welcome you to **APS Supervisor Core: Strengths-Based Development/Supervision Trainer Manual** developed by Adult Protective Services Workforce Innovations (APSWI), a program of the Academy for Professional Excellence under a grant from the California Department of Social Services, Adult Programs Division.

The Academy for Professional Excellence, a project of San Diego State University School of Social Work, was established in 1996 with the goal of revolutionizing the way people work to ensure the world is a healthier place. Our services integrate culturally responsive and recovery-oriented practices into our daily work to promote healing and healthy relationships. Providing around 70,000 learning experiences to health and human service professionals annually, the Academy provides a variety of workforce development solutions in Southern California and beyond. With five programs, three divisions and over 100 staff, the Academy's mission is to provide exceptional learning and development experiences for the transformation of individuals, organizations and communities.

APSWI is a program of the Academy for Professional Excellence. APSWI is designed to provide competency-based, multidisciplinary training to Adult Protective Services professionals and their partners. APSWI's overarching goal is the professionalization of Adult Protective Services professionals to ensure that abused and vulnerable older adults and adults with disabilities receive high quality, effective interventions and services.

APSWI partners with state and national organizations and experts in the older adult and adults with disabilities professions to empower APS professionals and those they serve to live safely, peacefully and in a world that is free from abuse and neglect.

APSWI's partners include:

- National Adult Protective Services Association (NAPSA) and the National Adult Protective Services Training Center (NATC)
- California Department of Social Services (CDSS), Adult Programs Division
- County Welfare Directors Association of California (CWDA), Protective Services Operations Committee (PSOC)
- California's Curriculum Advisory Committee (CAC) Committee

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Acknowledgements

This training is the result of a collaborative effort between Adult Protective Services administrators, supervisors, staff development officers and line staff across the state and the nation; professional educators; and the Academy for Professional Excellence staff members. APSWI would like to thank the following individuals and agencies:

Agencies

California Department of Social Services Adult Services Division

National Adult Protective Services Association

Arizona Department of Economic Security, DAAS-Adult Protective Services

Committees:

Former Supervisor Curriculum Advisory Committee

Southern California's Training Planning Committee

National Adult Protective Services Association (NAPSA) Education & Development Committee and former Supervisor Curriculum Advisory Committee

Curriculum Developer

Joanne Chen, MA, CPC (2020)

Revisions

Workforce Development Specialist Brenda Wilson-Codispoti, LCSW (2026)

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How to Use This Manual

This curriculum was developed as a virtual **2.5 hour workshop, not including breaks,** using the Zoom platform, paying close attention to virtual training best practices. It can be tailored to a different virtual platform (WebEx, GoTo Training, etc.), if necessary. It may also be trained in-person by modifying activity and engagement prompts as necessary. When possible, virtual and in-person prompts are given.

The Participant Manual should be sent ahead of time as a fillable PDF if using Adobe Acrobat or to allow participants to print a hard copy.

- Actions which the trainer takes during the training and trainer notes are written in **bold**

Use of language: Throughout the manual, APS professional is used to denote individual staff who may go by various titles. The term client is used most often to describe the individual at the center of the APS investigation. However, if concept or material was directly quoted from copyrighted material, another term may be used.

He and she have been replaced with the gender-neutral they throughout this manual, unless quoted from copyrighted material. This should not be thought of as plural persons, but rather a gender-neutral term describing all humans.

Customizing the Power Point:

- This manual is set up so that the trainer script/content material is on the same page as the accompanying PowerPoint slide.
- To hide a slide in PowerPoint, on the Slides tab in normal view, select the slide you want to hide.
- On the Slide Show menu, click Hide Slide. The slide number will have a line through it to show you have hidden it.
- The slide remains in your file even though it is hidden when you run the presentation.

Course Outline:

The course outline, provided in the next section of this manual, is the class schedule used for development of this curriculum. It can be used to help determine how much time is needed to present each section. However, times will vary based on the experience and engagement of the audience.

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Trainer Guidelines

Trainers will need to familiarize themselves with the Strengths Assessments covered in this training and take at least one themselves. Please note that there is **Pre-Work for the participants to take prior to their participation in the virtual or in-person training. Pre-work should be sent to participants two weeks in advance of participants taking the training. Please note there is a cost associated with each of the Strength's assessments with the exception of the StandOUT Strengths assessment, at no cost. Please review carefully "Tips for Trainers on the Strength Assessments" on the next page.** APS supervisory experience is helpful but not necessary to facilitate this virtual workshop.

Suggestions for virtual training when possible:

- Have a moderator or co-host who can primarily focus on the virtual aspects of this training (e.g., monitoring chat box, launching polls, assigning breakout groups, monitoring participant reactions, etc.).
- Test out the use of the breakout room feature prior to conducting this training.
- Log in at least 30 minutes prior to the training to ensure the virtual classroom is fully functioning and that you are comfortable navigating it.
- Your equipment and platform may dictate how you do some activities or discussion. There are times you may not be able to see everyone's faces, names or reactions (thumbs up, mute/unmute, etc.). There is a need for both verbal discussion and chat discussion. At such times, the moderator will fill a critical role monitoring those features you cannot. Practice during a run through how you will use the various functions for each section.
- The optimal size for this virtual training is 25-30 participants.

The following **teaching strategies** are incorporated:

- Lecture segments
- Interactive exercises (e.g., breakout groups, chat box discussion, polling activities)
- Question/answer periods
- PowerPoint Slides

The following **equipment and materials** are needed:

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- Trainer Manual
- Participant Manual
- PowerPoint Slides
- Headset with microphone Computer

CliftonStrengths Assessment

1. Review sample reports: Signature Strengths Report, Your CliftonStrengths 34 Report.
2. Take the assessment and review your Signature Strengths Report.
3. View Your Greatest Talents video and Theme Thursday Season 5: Highlights from Your 34 CliftonStrengths Clifton's Strength Assessmentvideos on at least one of your Top 5 CliftonStrengths. Bonus: Apply one of the tips given!
4. For your Signature Strengths, review the Balcony and Basement handout for all 34 CliftonStrengths.

VIA Character Strengths Survey

1. Take the assessment and review your results report. If needed, review the descriptions of your top strengths.
2. Download and review the summary descriptions of all 24 strengths.
3. Review sample reports: Sample Total 24 Report (contains sample profile on pg. 2)Via Character Strengths Assessment
4. Review "A Character Strengths Revolution" video.

Strengths Profile

1. Review sample reports: introductory profile, expert profile.
2. Review videos on using the tool; topics include profile overview, realized strengths, unrealized strengths, learned behaviors, and weaknesses.
3. "How CliftonStrengths Compares with Strengths Profile" article How Clifton's Strengths Compares with Strengths Profile Article

StandOut Strengths Assessment

1. Take the free assessment and review your report.
2. Watch Videos of your Top 2 Standout Roles
3. Review sample reports: Connector-Provider, Advisor-Creator, Pioneer-Teacher, Creator-Stimulator. Review StandOut Strengths Sample Reports
4. Review How Do CliftonStrengths and the StandOut Assessment Compare?

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Virtual Training Tips

Training and facilitation have always been an art. Virtual training is no exception. Below are some helpful tips to remember and implement when training in a virtual environment.

- Assume nothing.
  - Do not assume everyone has the same knowledge or comfort level with technology or has access to equipment like printers, video camera, headsets or even reliable Wi-Fi.
- Distractions are everywhere.
  - Participants have greater access to distractions (email, phone, phone, others at home) which can take their focus away from the training. Therefore, explain everything and summarize before asking participants to complete an activity and check for clarification.
- Over explain when possible.
  - The virtual room doesn't allow participants to see everything you're doing as they can in-person. Share as you navigate the virtual environment. If you are silent while looking for something or finding a screen, they may think something is frozen.
- Mute with purpose.
  - "Mute all" function can help ensure we don't hear conversations we're not supposed to. However, it can also send a message to the participants that they are a passive participant and may not make them feel comfortable taking themselves off mute when you want them to speak.
- Two screens can be a lifesaver.
  - This allows you to move your chat box or participant gallery view away from your presentation so you can see more of what's going on.
- Rely on practice, not luck.
  - Winging it during an in-person training or facilitation may work from time to time but doesn't work in the virtual environment. In addition to covering the content, you have to manage all of the technology issues, learning styles in a virtual room, and it will show if you're not prepared.
- Bring the energy.
  - As trainers, we are no strangers to being "on," standing and moving around. However, some of the body language, subtle nonverbal skills we relied on the in-person training room, do not translate well in the

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virtual environment. While this may make you more tired, it's important to up your enthusiasm, voice, and presence in order to engage with attendees.

- Be mindful of your space.
  - Training virtually brings an entirely new component of what we're willing to share with others. Learners can get distracted with what's in your background, whether what is physically there or if you set your video to use a virtual background.
  - It's important to reflect on questions of privilege, diversity and equity when thinking of your training space.

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Executive Summary

Course Title: Supervisor Core: Strengths-Based Development/Supervision: Skill-Building Instructor-Led Training

Why focus on strengths? The research is clear that the use and development of strengths in the workplace increases work performance, retention, and well-being for staff at all levels. Join us for this interactive, foundational training on strengths-based development and supervision. Identify and explore your strengths and how to apply a strengths-based supervisory approach with your staff. Tips, tools and best practices will be shared for use on the job and in supervision.

Instructor Led Training: The following virtual instructional strategies are used throughout the course: short lectures (lecturettes), interactive activities/exercises including breakout groups, chat box discussions, large group discussions, self-reflection, poll options, and individual practice. PowerPoint slides and case scenario demonstrations are used to stimulate discussion and skill development.

Participants will need access to a computer with video conferencing capability and be able to connect to the virtual platform being used to deliver this training. A headset or earbuds with microphone and a video camera are highly encouraged. Participant Manual is available to either print a hard copy or free-type.

Course Requirements:

- **Pre-Training Assignment**: Prior to the training, participants will be sent a Prework Supplemental Manual. They will complete a strengths assessment and the Your Top Strengths Handout (parts as indicated in directions). It will take approximately 60-75 minutes.
    - This **must** be completed prior to attending the training. This will be included as a major processing activity and needs to be readily available for the training.
- Completion of the entire module is required to receive course completion credit.

Intended Audience: This workshop is intended for new supervisors or experienced staff who may require a refresher

Learning Objectives:

By the end of this training participants will be able to:

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- Compare and contrast the benefits and limitations of the strengths-based approach.
- Identify how each of your top strengths/talents (as described in your strengths assessment report) have contributed to your role/career.
- Discuss how you might approach supervising staff in an APS case study using the strengths-based approach and your top strengths/talents.

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Course Outline

CONTENT	MATERIALS	TIME
WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS, COURSE OVERVIEW	**PPT slides 1-9**	**Total: 10 minutes**
Land Acknowledgment and Housekeeping		
Trainer/s Introduction		
Learning Objectives		
Group Agreements		
STRENGTHS-BASED APPROACH	**PPT slides 10-24**	**Total: 20 minutes**
What is Strength		
Who Represents Strength?		
Deficit Model		
Benefits of a Strength-Based Approach		
Activity *(Individual)*: Strengths Use Gut Check	Polling Ability	
Limitations of a Strengths-Based Approach		
Strengths Assessment	**PPT slides 25-32**	**Total: 50 minutes**
Strengths Assessments	Your Pre-Work	

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CONTENT	MATERIALS	TIME
Activity: *(Individual)*	Matching and Action Planning	
Activity: *(Small/Large Group Discussion)*		
Your Top Strengths	Pre-Work Handout: "Your Top Strengths"	
STRENGTHS-BASED SUPERVISION	**PPT slides 33-40**	**Total: 50 minutes**
Strengths-Based Supervision		
Activity: Strengths Based Supervision	Polling Ability	
Activity: *(Individual)*	Handout: "Strengths Based Supervision Self-Assessment"	
Strengths-Based Questions	Handout: Strengths-Based Coaching Questions for Supervisors	
Activity: *(Small/Group)*		
Wrap-Up	**PPT Slides 41-44**	**Total: 20 minutes**
Key Concepts		
Activity: PIE *(Individual)*		
Evaluations		
TOTAL (Excluding Breaks)		**2.5 hours**

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Welcome, Introductions and Course Overview

Time Allotted: 10 minutes

Associated Objective(s): Compare and contrast the benefits and the limitations of the strength-based approach

Method: Method: Lecture, Large group discussion, chat (if virtual), and a poll

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Slide #1: APS Supervisor Core: Strengths-Based Development/Supervision



Welcome participants and allow everyone to settle in.

Ask participants to sign in or type names, titles, and counties into chat box.

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Slide #2: About the Academy and APSWI



Explain that the Academy for Professional Excellence is a project of San Diego State School of Social Work. Its mission is to provide exceptional workforce development and learning experiences for the transformation of individuals, organizations, and communities.

Explain that Adult Protective Services Workforce Innovations (APSWI) provides innovative workforce development to APS professionals and their partners. APSWI is a program of the Academy for Professional Excellence along with others listed on the slide.

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Slide #3 & 4: Land Acknowledgment



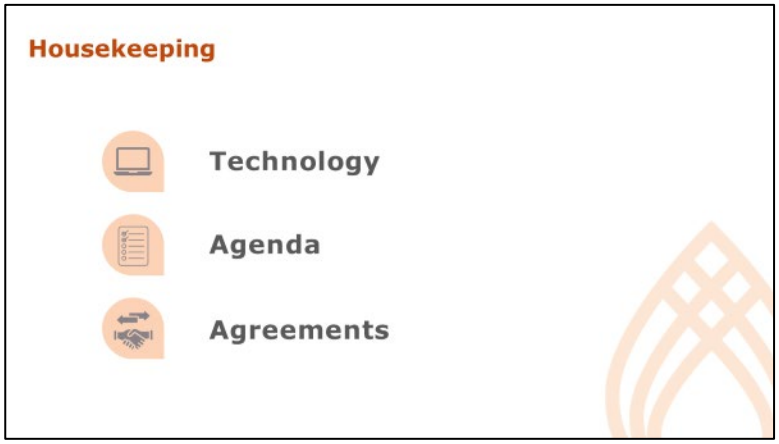
Trainer note: These slides incorporate a national land acknowledgment to honor the land that anyone who accesses the materials is on. When training, insert the land you're training from.

Share:

- Slide #3- 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.
- Slide #4- 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; the land of the original inhabitants of this Nation. Find the tribe(s) in your area at Native Digital Land.

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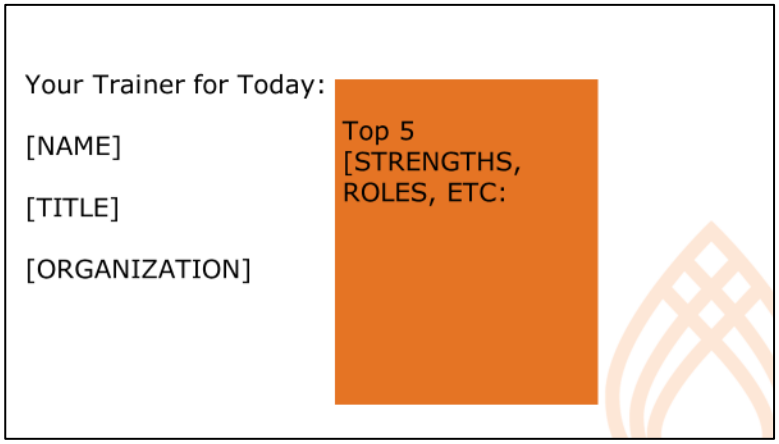
Slide #5: Housekeeping



Moderator to provide overview of breakout rooms that will be used throughout the training and then pass it to trainer.

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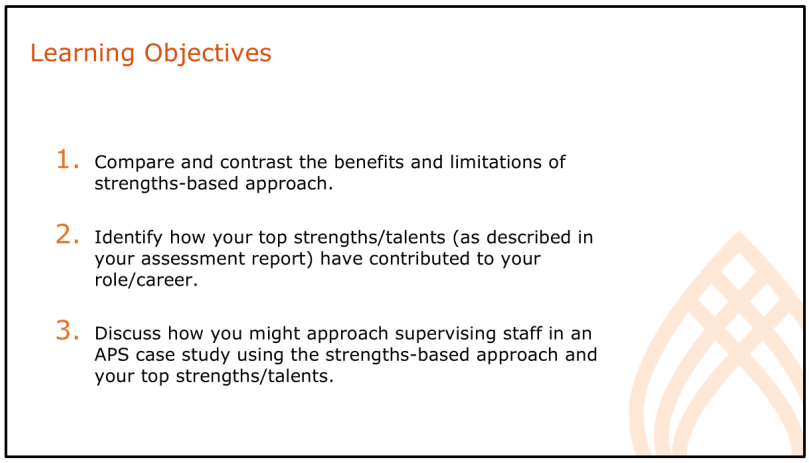
Slide #6: Introduction of Trainer



Introduce yourself and share your Top 5 strengths/roles. "As you can see on the slide, my Top 5 strengths/roles are"

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Slide #7: Learning Objectives



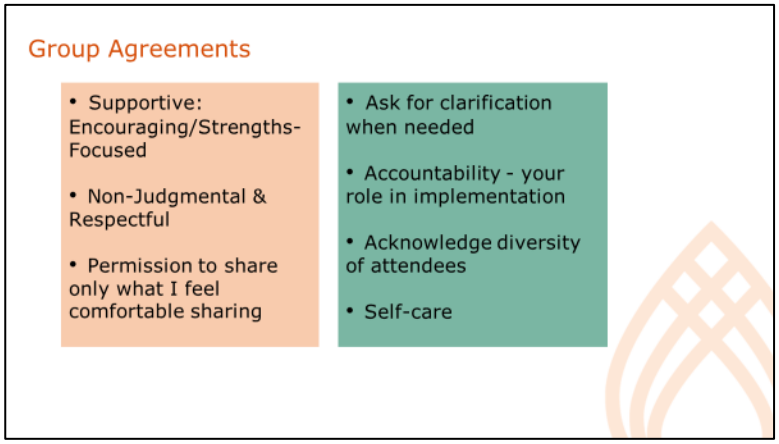
Cover the learning objectives of this workshop.

By the end of this training, you will be able to:

1. Compare and contrast the benefits and limitations of the strengths-based approach.
2. Identify how your top strengths/talents (as described in your strengths/roles 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.

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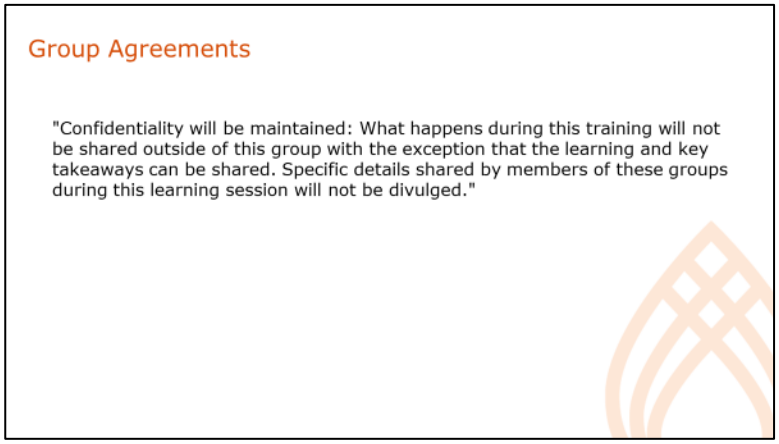
Slide #8: Group Agreements



Explain to help create an online environment where everyone here feels comfortable and safe to share, I'd like to introduce a couple of group agreements. See if they resonate with you.

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Slide #9: Group Agreements (Quote)



Share the Academy's confidentiality statement. "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."

Ask learners for any additional group agreements to add to the list. Do a final check with all learners.

Ask "Does anyone have any questions about these agreements?" "Is everyone comfortable with all these?"

Thank everyone for upholding these agreements.

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Strengths-Based Approach

Time Allotted: 20 minutes

Associated Objective(s): Compare and contrast the benefits and limitations of the strength-based approach.

Method: Discussion, Lecture, and a polling activity

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Slide #10: What is a Strength?



Trainer note: this side is animated. Read the answers in the chat box aloud, noting any common answers and affirming learners. Then click on the slide to share your answers.

Share to start, let's see where we are currently as a group in terms of our understanding of what strengths are. What comes to mind when you think of the word "Strength"? It could be a word or phrase.

Go ahead and type your answer into the chat box, but don't press "Enter" yet. We will have everyone press "Enter" together. Okay everyone, go ahead and press "Enter" now.

Read the answers in the chat box.

Click to reveal answers on the slide

Here's what I've come up with based on what I see in the literature.

Trainer note: Read these out loud and make connections with the answers shared by learners.

- 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
- and there's flow when were using a strength

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Slide #11: Who Represents Strength?



Trainer Note: Images are animated.

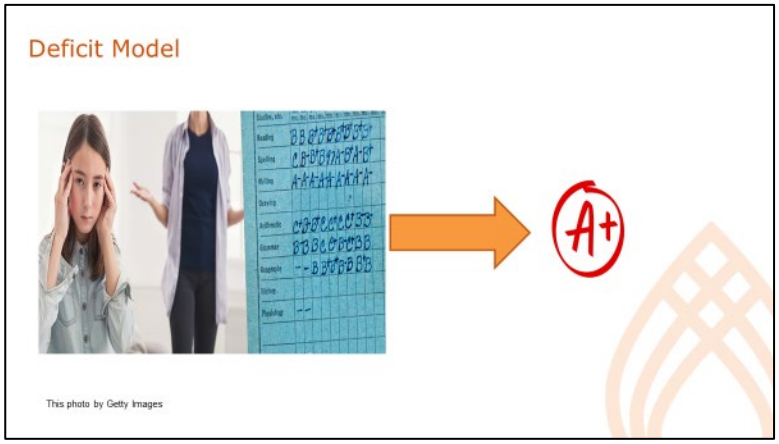
Ask: "Who comes to mind when you think of the word 'Strength'?" Go ahead and share in the chat box.

Read the answers in the chat box aloud. Then **click** 3 times on the slide to share the people graphics.

Share: Notice that there's diversity in our answers. There is no ONE prototype for being strong. Everyone that we mentioned has their unique mix of strengths and talents, which are celebrated. So when we're talking about strengths, let's keep in mind that there are different pathways to success and that we can be successful by leveraging our top strengths and those of our employees.

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Slide #12: Deficit Model



Trainer Note: The images are animated. Start with the report card, discuss example then click on the screen twice to reveal the arrow and the A+

Explain Unfortunately, this strengths-based approach/perspective did not come about until the latter half of the 1900s from fields, including psychology, therapy, and social work. Historically, the emphasis has been more on the *deficit model,* which focuses on fixing/improving weaknesses. We see this focus starting in school.

Let's say that in school, you get A's, B's, and C's on your report card. Would your parents or counselor likely say: "Wow, now we know what you're really good at, we will help you get into a career that will leverage your strengths!"

Noooo. Instead, most likely they tell you, "You're in big trouble! You're going to buckle down and get these grades up or you're grounded for life."

Does anyone here actually have parents who practiced strengths-based parenting? Really? Can I join your family?

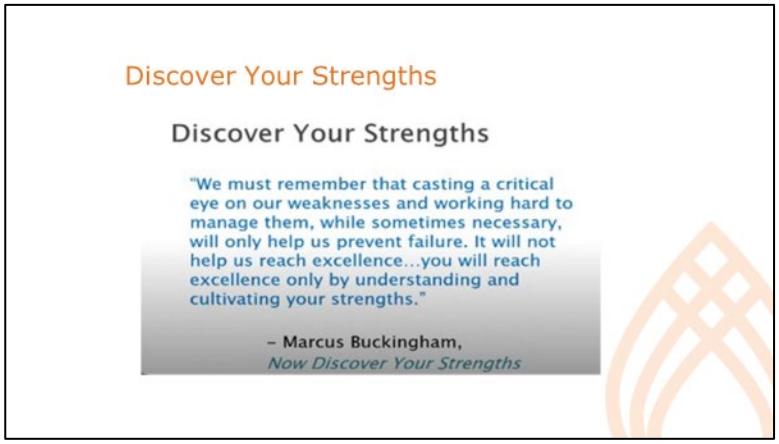
Trainer Note: Click on the screen twice to reveal the arrow and the A+.

What went wrong? In this case, grades, became the focus versus what went well/right.

In the workplace, we hire for strengths. Ironically, once people are onboard, traditionally we tend to focus on fixing weaknesses instead of allocating time to cultivate their strengths. Let's change this.

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Slide #13: Discover Your Strengths

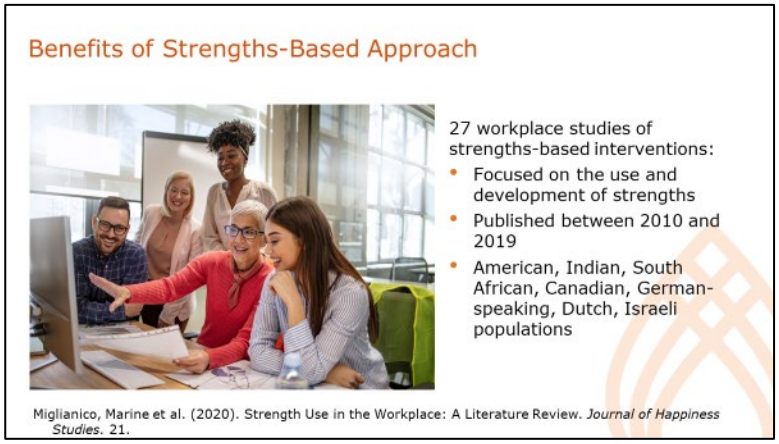


Share According to Marcus Buckingham and other experts in the strengths field:

"We must remember that casting a critical eye on our weaknesses and working hard to manage them, while sometimes necessary, will only help us prevent failure. It will not help us reach excellence…you will reach excellence only by understanding and cultivating your strengths."

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Slide #14: Benefits of Strengths-Based Approach



Share what could happen if we shift the focus to cultivating strengths at work?

According to a literature review of 27 workplace studies across different populations (including American, Indian, South African, Canadian, German, Dutch, Israeli) published between 2010 and 2019, these were the results of strengths-based interventions.

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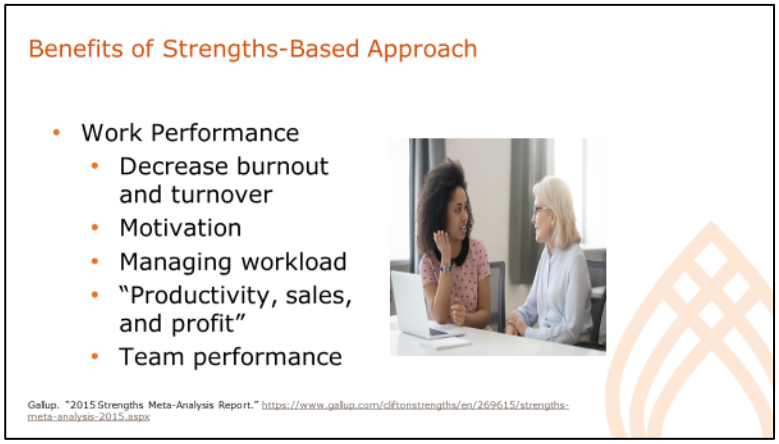
Slide #15: Benefits of Strengths-Based Approach



Share the benefits of the strengths-based approach include: Positive impact on well-being, including "Satisfaction, pleasure, commitment, and [sense of] meaning."

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Slide #16: Benefits of Strengths-Based Approach



Share developing and using strengths also positively impacts work performance. These interventions decreased employee burnout and turnover, increased employee motivation and ability to manage workload, and overall increased productivity, sales, profit, and team performance.

Gallup researchers have found that the strengths-based approach "affects key performance outcomes, regardless of the organization's industry or country."

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Slide #17: Benefits of a Strength-Based Approach



Share Gallup researchers also found that "Organizations that invest in strengths-based development achieve as much as a 29% increase in profit."

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Slide #18: Benefits of Strengths-Based Approach

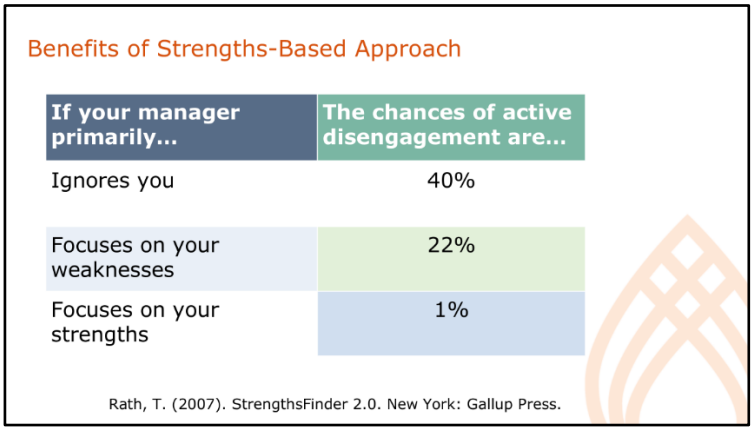


Share "Vitality, flow, passion and engagement" are also benefits, according to the literature.

In fact, Don Clifton, of Gallup, found that employees who focus on their strengths at work are "Six times as likely to be engaged in their jobs and more than three times as likely to report having an excellent quality of life in general."

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Slide #19: Benefits of a Strength-Based Approach

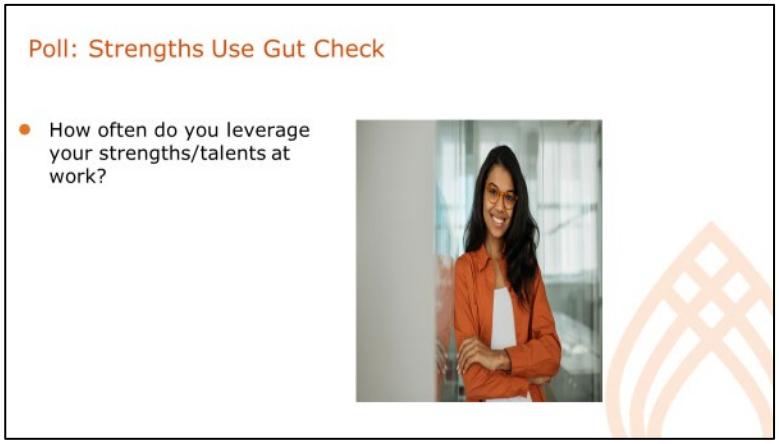


Share According to a 2005 Gallup study:

- If your manager primarily ignores you, the chances of you being actively disengaged are 40%
- If your manager primarily focuses on your weaknesses, the chances of you being actively disengaged are 22%
- If your manager primarily focuses on your strengths, the chances of you being activity disengaged are only 1%

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Slide #20: Poll: Strengths Use Gut Check



Trainer note: This activity allows you to conduct a poll. The questions animated are on the slide and replace if desired to use a polling option. Consider if an anonymous or general polling modality is needed as well as the available technology for participants, (eg.: Zoom poll, Mentimeter, Slido, etc.) Insert the type of technology you plan on using below.

Activity: Your Use of Strengths at Work (5 minutes)

Individual

Explain you're going to ask a question regarding your use of strengths at work (insert technology). **Share** if poll will be anonymous or not.

1) How often do you leverage your strengths at work?
   a) Frequently. My work allows me to leverage my strengths everyday/almost every day.
   b) Sometimes. My role gives me opportunities to exercise my strengths about half the time.
   c) Rarely. I don't really get to use my strengths in my role. Work is a constant struggle.

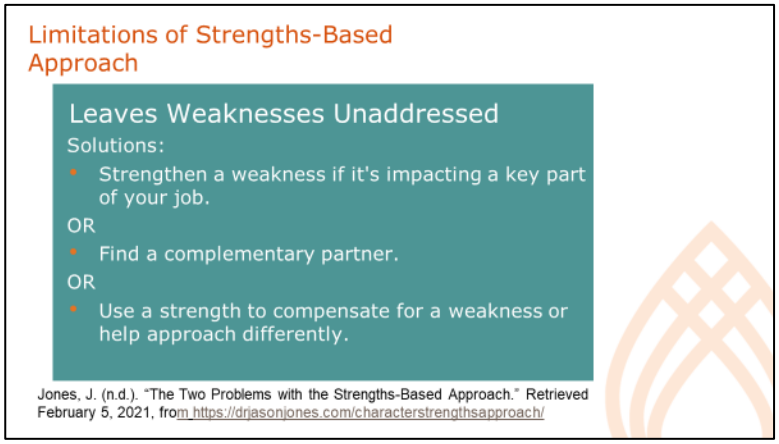
Trainer note: Read the results out loud.

Share wherever you are, I would like everyone to set a goal of moving from where you are to the next level. For example, if you selected "Sometimes," focus on increasing your use of strengths to "Frequently." If you selected "Frequently," congratulations! Look for ways to keep developing and using your strengths.

To help you upgrade your use of strengths, later in this training I will be asking everyone to create 30-day action items related to the strengths-based approach and your top strengths.

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Slide #21: Limitations of Strengths-Based Approach



Trainer Note: Consider using yourself as an example to make it relatable

Share before we dive into your strengths, let's take a look at some cautionary notes that critics of the strengths-based approach have that we should keep in mind for ourselves and our staff:

First, some say that it's not a good idea to ignore weaknesses (or non-strengths) and other performance issues (e.g., low self-esteem) completely because weaknesses, if not addressed, may negatively impact work performance and career progression.

It's suggested to try to strengthen a weakness if it's impacting a key component of your job or seek partnership with someone who can support you in that area.

Actually, another benefit of the strengths-based approach is that it makes it more palatable to talk about weaknesses because we know that everyone has unique strengths, and this approach encourages people to partner with others who have complementary strengths. The efforts to collaborate ultimately support a robust team culture.

Additionally, see whether one of your strengths can help compensate for a weakness or help you look at things or approach the situation in a different

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Slide #22: Limitations of Strengths-Based Approach



Share another cautionary note is:

Overusing strengths or using them inappropriately (e.g., at the wrong moment) may hinder performance or achievement of ideal outcomes. What counts as "strength" in one context/culture may be seen as weakness in another.

I am going to give you a couple of examples. See if any of them apply to you:

- Being creative when there are existing, effective or "common sense" solutions
- Being compassionate when being direct is actually called for in the situation
- Going overboard with details leads to perfectionism and being stuck.

Trainer note: Engage the learners by asking them to raise their hand virtually or type a response in the chat box regarding the following question.

Have you ever experienced a situation with being overly creative, or compassionate, when you should have been direct. Or have been perfectionistic?

Self-awareness is key here. The assessment reports talk about hindering behaviors, or blind spots, when you are overusing strengths or using them inappropriately. You can create an action item to watch yourself for one of these hindering behaviors and use tips provided by the reports.

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Slide #23: Limitations of Strengths-Based Approach



Share another limitation is that the strengths-based approach focuses on individual strengths (the idea that "everyone is talented in their own way") and how these strengths compare with one another within the individual, as opposed to measuring individual strengths against some sort of performance benchmark (e.g., how does that person's strength compare to that same strength in others? Do they truly have the ability we need to achieve the desired outcomes?) or in the context of organizational goals.

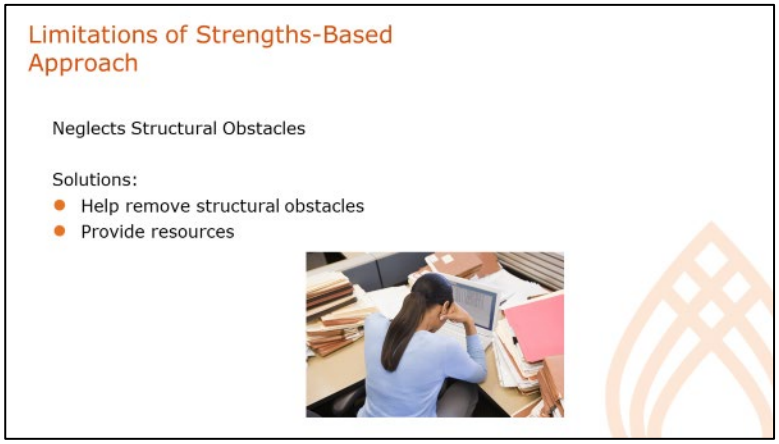
I have a couple of suggestions to help alleviate these concerns. I would like to invite you to go beyond the assessment reports and ask the following questions when considering employees for assignments. Ask yourself:

- What outcomes are desired? (this question will help you set a performance benchmark)
- Among those who have the desired strengths, who can best help achieve those outcomes?
- What developmental support does a particular direct report need to further strengthen their top strengths and meet the performance benchmark? You can identify promising candidates and help them close the gap with custom-tailored developmental plans.

It is suggested by a writer of a Harvard Business Review article that "individual qualities should be considered strengths if they align not only with the individual's role or job, but also with the organization's goals or competency framework."

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Slide #24: Limitations of Strengths-Based Approach



Share one other critique is that this approach does not take into account the impact of the social structure, but places responsibility on the person for performance.

We need to recognize what's within our employees' control/sphere of influence and help remove structural obstacles (e.g., structural inequities that hinder development, inequitable policies, processes, environmental factors) and provide them with the resources that they need.

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Strengths Assessment

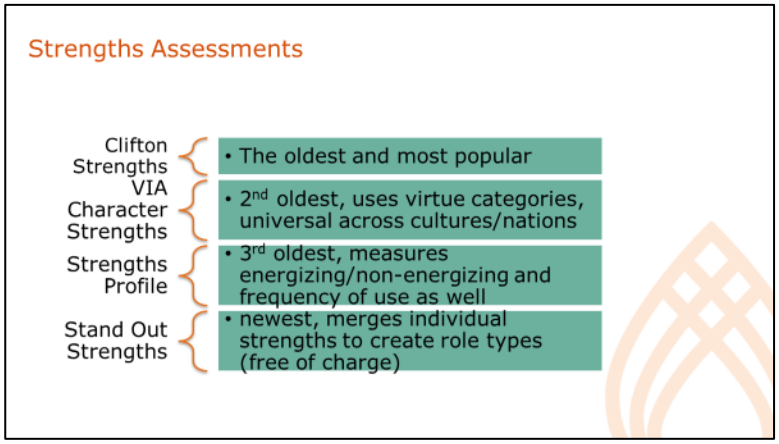
Time Allotted: 50 minutes

Associated Objective(s): Identify how your top strengths/talents (as described in your strength/roles assessment report have contributed to your role/career.

Method: Lecture, individual activity, small and large group discussion

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Slide #25: Strengths Assessments



Share during the first part of this training, we spent time looking at what a strength is, looked at the difference between the deficit model and the strengths-based approach, and discussed the benefits and limitations of the latter approach.

Now we're going to talk about the four research-based strengths assessments which you took for pre-work.

On the spreadsheet you received for pre-work, the assessments were listed according to popularity and years in existence. Let's quickly review:

- Gallup, publisher of the Clifton Strengths Assessment, offers the most resources. It is also the oldest and most popular assessment here, started in 1949.

The publishers of other assessments also offer a combination of free resources (such as YouTube videos, blog posts, podcasts) and paid resources (e.g., book, courses, certification)

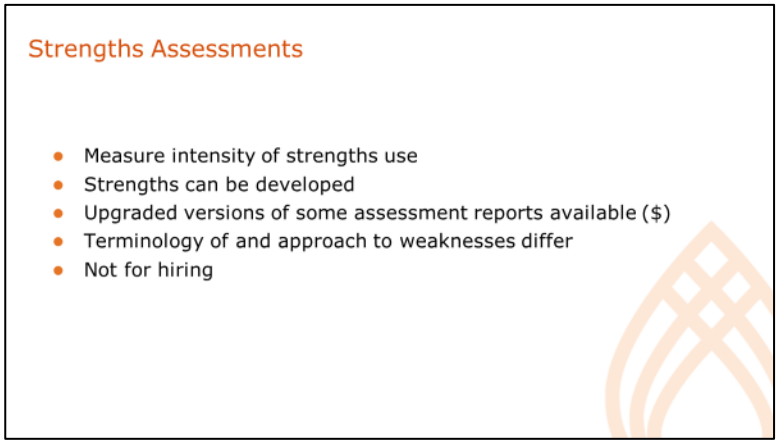
- VIA Character Strengths is second oldest and uses virtue categories, universal across cultures/nations.

- Strengths Profile is third oldest and measures whether a strength is energizing/non-energizing and frequency of use as well.

- StandOut Strengths is the newest and merges individual strengths to create role types, it's free of charge.

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Slide #26: Strengths Assessments



Share these assessments measure how intensely you lean into different strengths in everyday life and/or at work. The developers of these assessments advocate that strengths can be developed further, although their recommendation of which ones to focus on differ. Reports from all assessments include tips to exercise and develop your Top Strengths, although they differ in the number of Top Strengths or Roles that you can focus on.

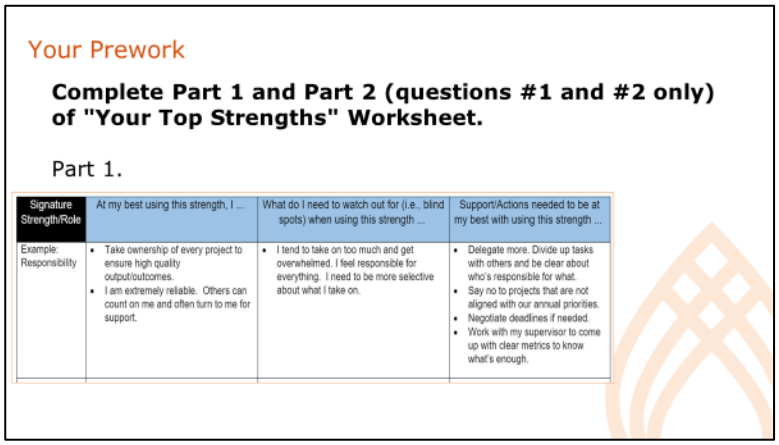
All assessments, except the StandOut Strengths Assessment, are paid and have upgraded versions of reports that you can purchase to unlock all strengths measured.

The treatment of "weaknesses" differs among the assessments. Some of the assessments call them "lesser strengths" instead of "weaknesses."

One common caution raised with the creators of these assessments is: Don't use these reports/assessments for hiring purposes since people bring different strengths to different roles. Whatever strengths our staff bring, we should help them develop and use their strengths more.

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Slide #27: Your Pre-Work Part 1



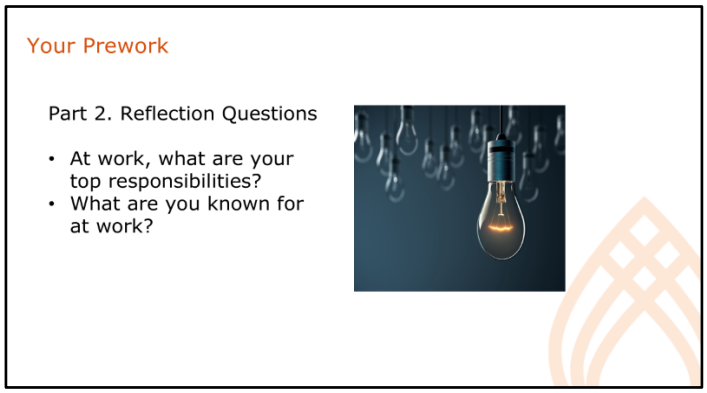
Trainer Note: Prior to training, review Pre-work Supplemental Manual and have available. Refer Participants to Prework – Your Top Strengths Worksheet. You don't need to review the example because they are supposed have already read it while completing pre-work. A copy has been included in the Participant Manual in case pre-work was not received/completed.

Share now we're going to give everyone some time to delve into the impact of their strengths.

For pre-work, you were asked to complete Part 1 and Part 2 (Questions #1 and #2 only) of "Your Top Strengths" Worksheet. Part 1 consisted of completing this table with your Top 5 Strengths or Top 2 StandOut Roles from the assessment you took and insights from the assessment report and your own reflection. ("At my best using this strength, I … "What do I need to watch out for (i.e., blind spots) when using this strength …" and ideas on "Support/Actions needed to be at my best with using this strength").

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Slide #28: Your Pre-Work Part 2



Explain for Part 2, you completed the first two reflection questions, which are:

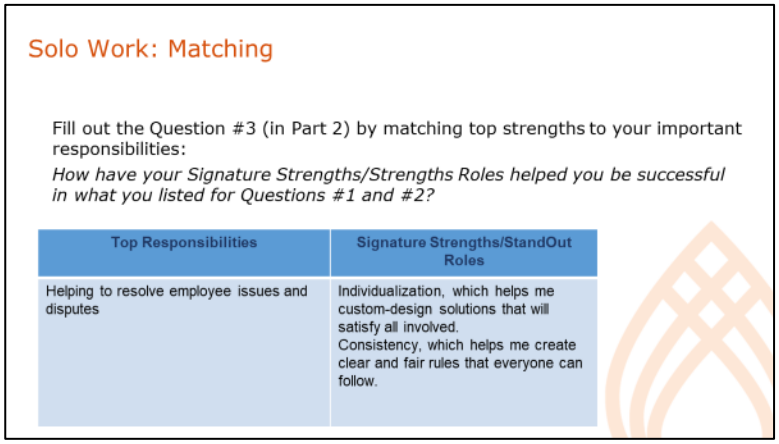
1. At work, what are your top responsibilities?

2. What are you known for at work?

You may notice that parts of the answers to these two questions overlap.

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Slide #29: Solo Work: Matching



Trainer Note: Read aloud the example in the table.

Explain now we're going to have you take a look at what strengths you bring to help you be successful in your role. I'm going to give everyone time to fill out Question #3 (in Part 2 of the worksheet), which will match your top strengths to your top responsibilities.

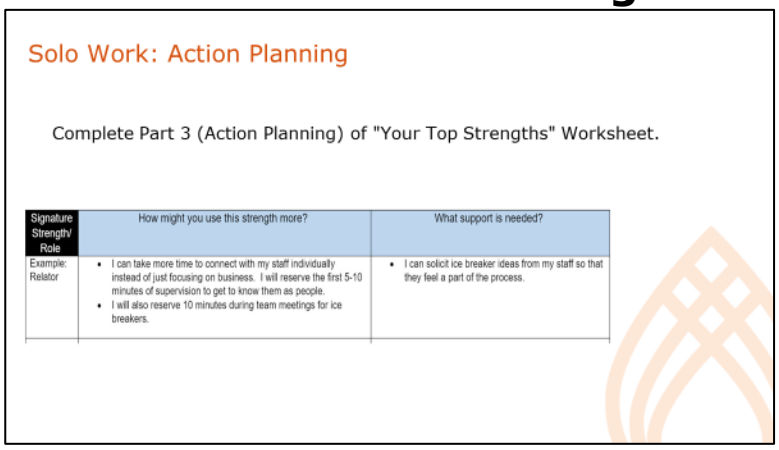
The question is: "How have your Signature Strengths/Strengths Roles helped you be successful in what you listed for Questions #1 and #2?"

Here is an example.

Does anyone have any questions about this example or what they're supposed to do?

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Slide #30: Solo Work: Action Planning



Explain I'm also going ask everyone to complete Part 3 (Action Planning) of the worksheet. Be as specific as possible.

We will give you 6 minutes to complete these exercises. We will then put everyone in small groups with people so that you can discuss your answers.

Trainer Note: Ask people if they have any questions about tying their top responsibilities with their Signature Strengths or StandOut Roles. Go over implications whether they are using a lot or a few of their Top Strengths/Strength Roles, including: They may find that tasks that involve lesser strengths or learned behaviors are more taxing to do.

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Slide #31: Small Group Discussion Questions



Trainer/Moderator Note: You will need to create break-out groups of 3-4 people, Copy and paste questions into the chat box. They have about 15 minutes total.

Welcome back! We're now going to put you all in small groups. Designate a spokesperson in your group to share any a-ha's and patterns in your responses when we come back to the large group.

Here are the discussion questions (most of which were given to you as pre-work):

1. First, introduce yourself and mention your Top 5 Strengths or Top 2 StandOut Roles.

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

3. How have your top strengths (as indicated by your report) helped or hindered you in your current role as supervisor and past roles? Consider: When you use your top strengths, what kind(s) of feedback have you received from your supervisor and direct reports?

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

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Slide #32: Large Group Discussion



Encourage group spokesperson to share. Provide about 5-8 minutes for discussion, more or less depending on time.

Ask near the end of the debrief: Would you use this assessment with your employees - whether individually or on your team? Why or why not?

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Strengths-Based Supervision

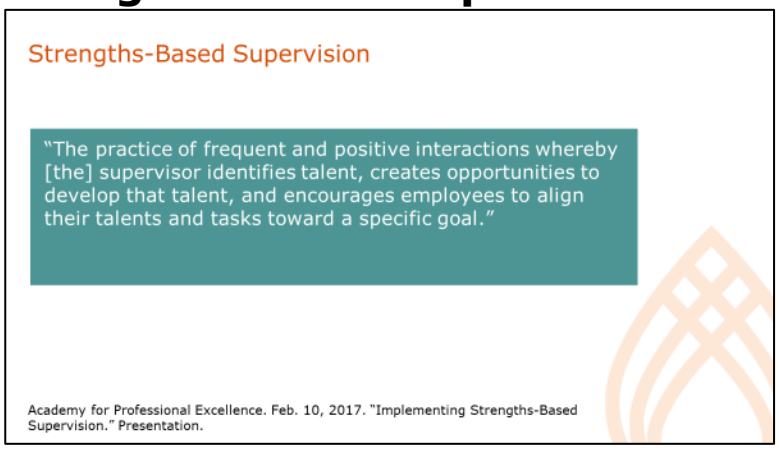
Time Allotted: 55 minutes

Associated Objective(s): Discuss how you might approach supervising staff in an APS case study using a strength-based approach and your top strengths/talents

Method: Lecture, polling activity, individual activities, and small group case study activity

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Slide #33: Strengths-Based Supervision

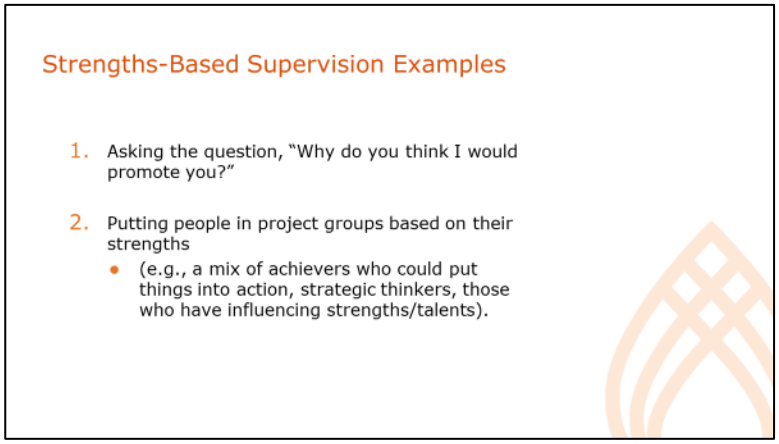


Share Now that we've spent time looking at how you can develop your own strengths so that you can be more impactful in your roles, let's turn our attention to how we can apply strengths principles to one of your key responsibilities, which is the supervision of your staff.

Here we have a definition of 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."

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Slide #34: Strengths-Based Supervision Examples



Share Here are two examples of Strengths-Based Supervision by an actual APS supervisor:

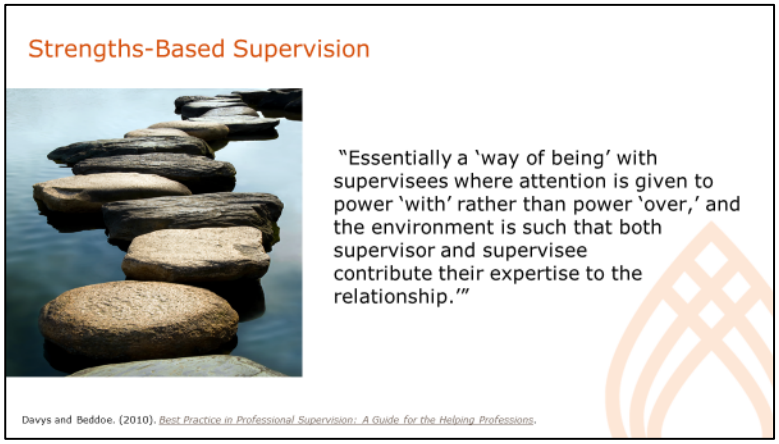
• In one case, these questions were asked by an APS supervisor of a direct report:

"Why do you think I would promote you?" and "Why wouldn't I promote you?" The supervisor then focused on helping the direct report keep building on qualities that came up for question #1 with the belief that strengths will squash out weaknesses.

- In another case, an APS supervisor put 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). This supervisor noted that there was a tendency for people to concentrate on what was wrong. By focusing on what they could do and their strengths, the supervisor engaged these APS professionals, some of whom had experienced secondary trauma on the job, and helped them manage work pressure, perform at their best, and have a common language to speak effectively and constructively with their supervisors

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Slide #35: Strengths-Based Supervision



Share Another way to look at strengths-based supervision is the following:

- "Essentially [it is] a 'way of being' with supervisee 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'"

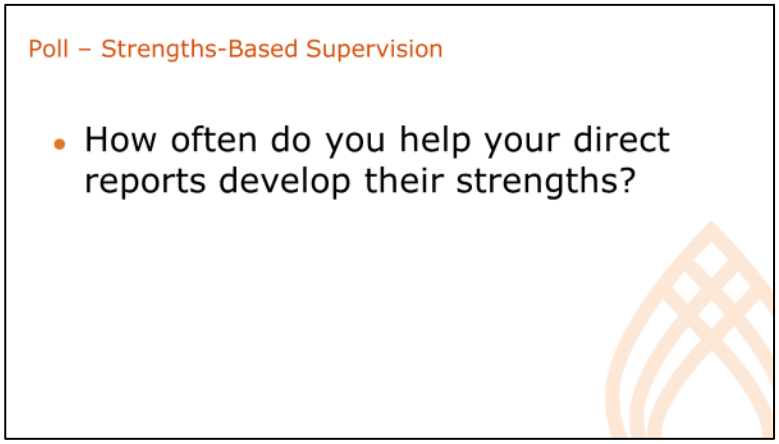
What are called out in this description are the principles of:

- Shared responsibility
- Shared learning
- Shared leadership

The case study in the exercise that we will be looking at and discussing later in this training is an example of these principles.

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Slide #36: Poll – Strengths-Based Supervision



Explain we're going to do another gut check, this time of your practice of Strengths Based Supervision. "How often do you help your direct reports develop their strengths?"

Trainer note: This activity allows you to conduct a poll. The questions animated are on the slide and replace if desired to use a polling option. Consider if an anonymous or general polling modality is needed as well as the available technology for participants, (eg.: Zoom poll, Mentimeter, Slido, etc.) Insert the type of technology you plan on using below.

Activity: Your Use of Strengths at Work (5 minutes)

Individual

Explain you're going to ask a question regarding your use of strengths at work (insert technology). **Share** if poll will be anonymous or not.

1) How often do you help your direct reports develop their strengths?
   a) Always/Almost Always. I integrate Strengths-Based Supervision in every/almost all my individual meetings with staff.
   b) Frequently. I practice Strengths-Based Supervision often/consistently (at least weekly), but I know that I can do better.
   c) Sometimes. I practice Strengths-Based Supervision about maybe half the time or less, or not consistently.
   d) Rarely. I rarely or don't practice Strengths-Based Supervision in my role.

Explain I'm going to give everyone about 15 sec to pick your best answer. Again, try not to overthink it. Okay, I'm going to close the poll. Let's see where everyone is at this time.

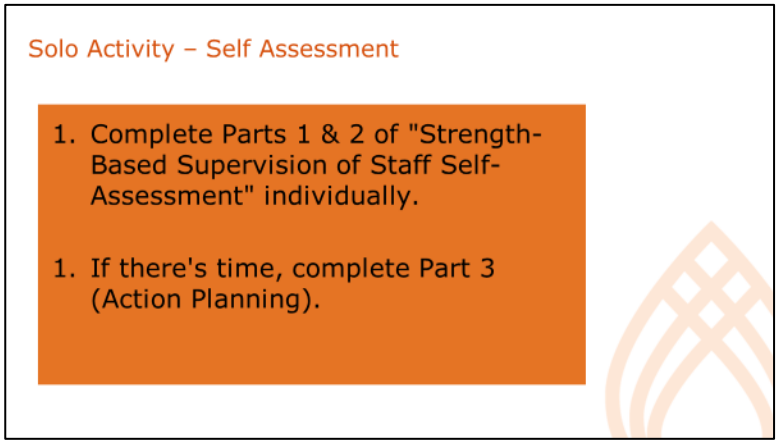
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Read the results out loud.

Share of course, there's always room for improvement, right?

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Slide #37: Solo Activity – Self-Assessment



Trainer note: You will find Handout: Strengths-Based Development/Supervision of Staff Self-Assessment in Appendix A. Refer Participants to Handout. This exercise will take them about 8 minutes to do (3 minutes just to fill out the table).

Explain our next activity will give you an opportunity to evaluate and remind yourself of specific strengths-based supervision practices. This activity will also prepare us to evaluate the case study exercise later in this training.

Complete Parts 1 and 2 of the "Strength-Based Supervision of Staff Self-Assessment" tool individually. If there's time, complete Part 3 (Action Planning). I will give everyone a couple of minutes to do this activity.

Ask people if they have any questions. You have about 8 minutes to complete it.

After the time is up, **Ask** people to share any major takeaways. **Ask** them whether their own gut check aligns with the results of the self-assessment.

Let them know that subsequent modules will go into depth with cultivating the strengths of your employees using feedback, coaching, and other developmental opportunities.

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Slide #38: Tools: Strengths-Based Questions

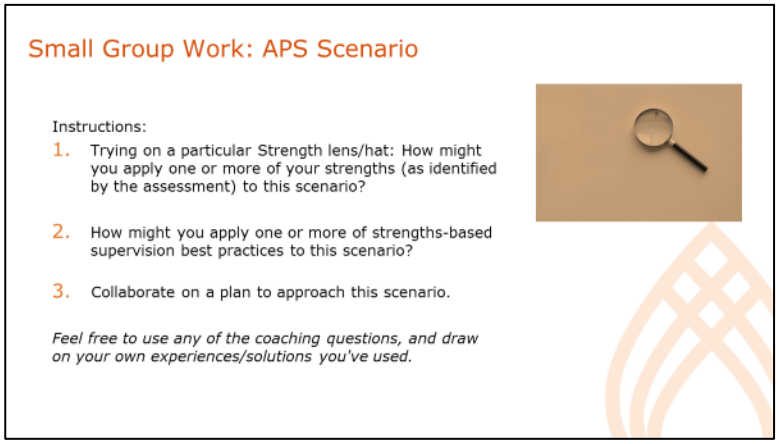


Trainer Note: you will find Handout: Strengths-Based Coaching for Supervisors in Appendix B. Refer participants to the Handout.

Share this handout contains 9 powerful coaching questions that you can use with their staff. These questions will draw out their staff members' resourcefulness, as well as help them feel a sense of accomplishment.

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Slide #39: Small Group Work: APS Scenario



Trainer/Moderator Note: You can use the previously assigned small groups for this activity. Copy and paste the case scenario and questions into the chat box. They have about 15 minutes total.

Explain We're now going to help you integrate what we've learned about strengths-based development and supervision and about your own strengths in this case study activity where you will work together in small groups. I will share the actual resolution of the case study after we come back into the large group.

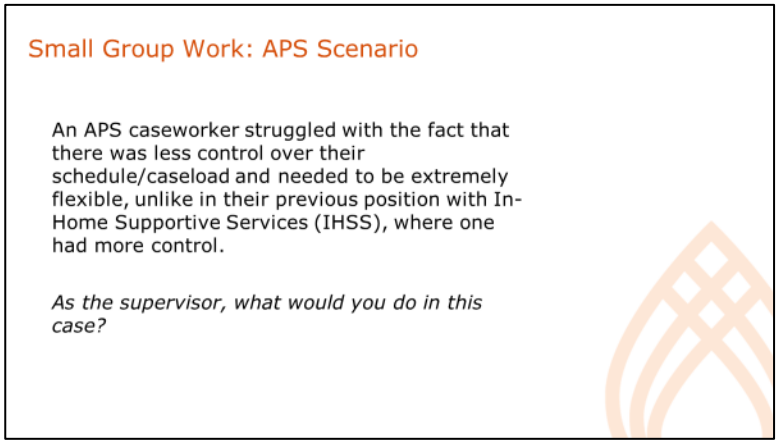
In consideration of your Signature/Top Strengths and the "Strength-Based Supervision of Staff Self-Assessment" that you completed:

- Try on a particular Strength lens/hat: How might you apply one or more of your strengths (as identified by the assessment) to this scenario?
- How might you apply one or more of the strengths-based supervision best practices that you read in the self-assessment to this scenario?
- With your group members, come up with a plan to approach this scenario and be prepared to share in the large group.

Also, feel free to use any of the nine coaching questions, and draw on your own experiences and solutions that you've used.

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Slide #40: Small Group Work: APS Scenario

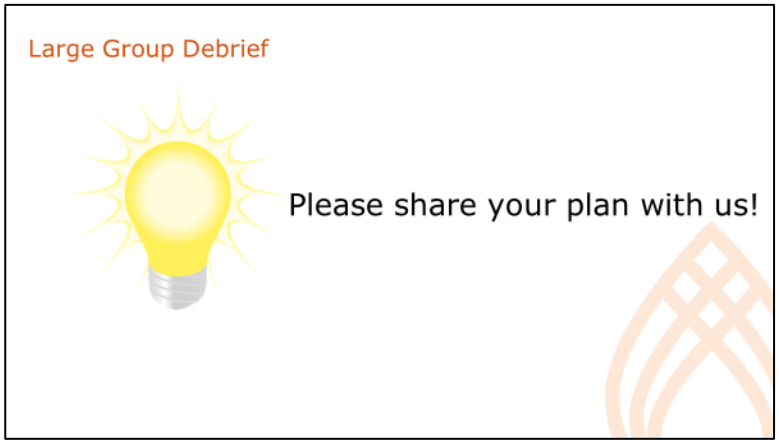


Review the scenario: An APS caseworker struggled with the fact that there was less control over their schedule/caseload and needed to be extremely flexible, unlike in their previous position with In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS), where one had more control.

Question: As their supervisor, what would you do in this case?

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Slide #41: Large Group Debrief



Trainer Note: Ask for volunteers to share. Plan on no more than 5-8 minutes for this portion of the training. Then take 1 min. to share the resolution.

Share the resolution–This APS professional has taken the Clifton Strengths Assessment and discovered that they had Discipline and Focus as their Top Strengths. The APS professional's supervisor assigned the activity of researching and understanding the basement behaviors of these two Clifton Strengths. The APS professional soon realized that there is a tendency for someone with Discipline as a top Clifton Strength to be too rigid and controlling. The supervisor and the employee discussed and looked at balcony behaviors for these two talent themes (i.e., what does it look like to engage in these behaviors in productive ways) so that the APS professional was able to catch themselves before slipping into rigidity and get support. The supervisor also provided the following tips, including:

- Acknowledge the frustration. Things get messed up.
- It's okay to be vulnerable.
- Allow yourself to re-group and restructure the plan to get a new plan.
- Leave more room in your schedule for the unexpected.

Ask yourself: How do I bring myself back to working with my talents/strengths in order to help my families and my organization? [this is a strengths-based question]

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Wrap-up and Evaluations

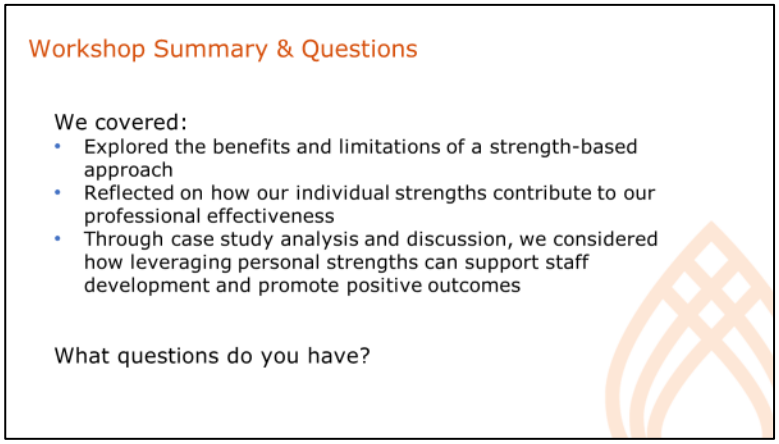
Time Allotted: 20 minutes

Associated Objective(s): N/A

Method: Individual reflection

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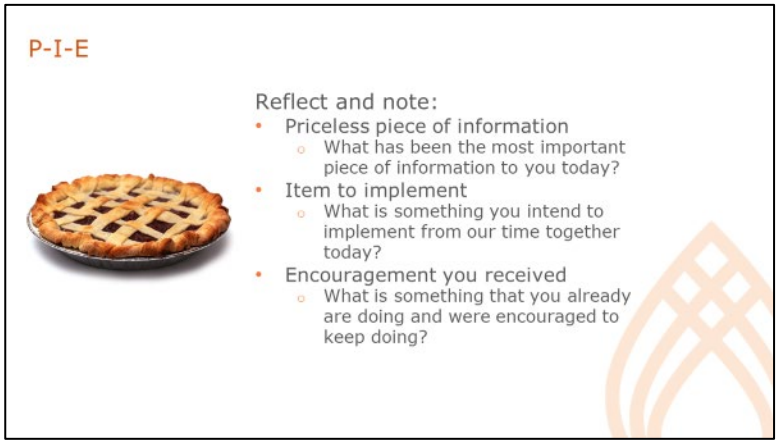
Slide #42: Workshop Summary & Questions



Explain during this training, we explored a strengths-based approach to supervision by examining its key benefits and limitations, reflecting on how our individual strengths and talents contribute to our professional effectiveness, and applying these insights to supervisory situations. Through discussion and case study analysis, we considered how leveraging personal strengths can strengthen relationships, support staff development, and promote positive outcomes in Adult Protective Services practice. As supervisors, intentionally recognizing and building strengths can help foster a culture of engagement, collaboration, and continuous growth.

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Slide #43: P-I-E



Inform participants that we'll wrap up the day by reflecting on their experience.

Ask participants to silently take five (5) minutes to answer the following questions, on their own. Those who want to share can do so after everyone's had the time to individually answer.

1. P- Priceless piece of information. What has been the most important piece of information to you today?
2. I- Item to implement. What is something you intend to implement from our time today?
3. E- Encouragement I received. What is something that I am already doing that I was encouraged to keep on doing?

Once complete, **ask** for volunteers to share what they wrote down for each reflection.

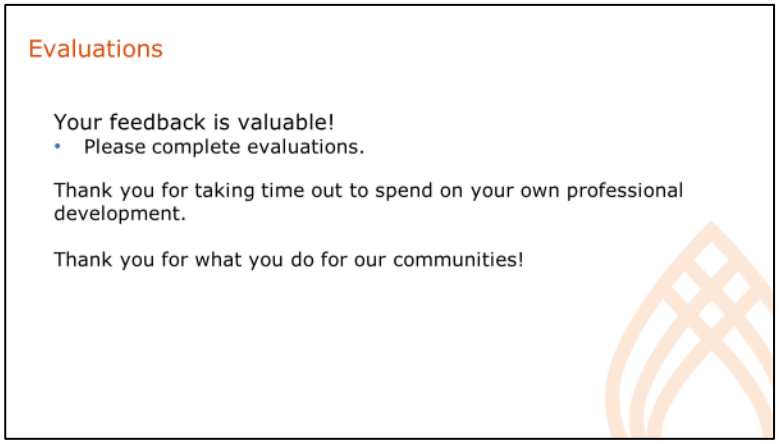
If time allows, **debrief** with the following questions:

- What are some of the key words that you heard while you shared?
- What were the common themes that kept coming up?
- What would it mean for APS if we implemented the things on your PIE?

What would it mean for APS if we did not implement the things on your PIE?

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Slide #44: Evaluation



Provide information on how to complete evaluations.

Thank participants for taking time out of their day for their own professional development and dedication to support older adults and adults with disabilities.

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Slide #45: Thank You!



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Appendix A Handout:
Strengths-Based Development/Supervision of Staff Self-Assessment

Part 1: Self Evaluation

Instructions: In the table below, indicate with an "X" how often you practice each of the following strength-based behaviors in supervision.[1]

Best Practice Behaviors	Always/ Almost Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
1. I spend at least one hour a month with my staff on identifying their strengths and weaknesses in performance.				
2. I give my staff specific, strength-based feedback.				
3. I make expectations and outcomes clear with my staff, and expectations and outcomes are stated in strength based language.				
4. I ask my staff for feedback on my supervision to learn about my strengths and areas for improvement.				
5. I celebrate with my staff when they meet professional goals.				

[1] Adapted from the work of Nora Gerber and Gil De Gibaja in "*Assessing My Own Strength Based Work,*" StrengthBased Family Centered Practice for CSWs. Training curriculum, Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services, 2004.

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6. I take time to learn about my staff members' lives to better understand their unique cultural values and strengths.				
7. I acknowledge - verbally and in writing - my staff members who are doing good work. I try to notice those who are doing the right things.				
8. I regularly ask my staff members for ideas on how to improve the operations of the agency, perform follow-up, and advocate for ideas that might work.				
9. I write employee performance reports that are strength-based; each item reflects a positive outcome (change) that is expected/desired.				
10. I work to create a positive environment for my unit.				
11. I demonstrate confidence in the ability of my staff to make good decisions and let them do the job in a way they think it should be done.				
12. When mistakes occur, I avoid blame and, instead, work with the staff member to find ways to prevent similar problems in the future.				

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Part 2. Summary

Instructions: In the text boxes below, summarize your strengths as a supervisor (i.e., behaviors indicated with an "Always/Almost Always" rating) and identify 3 areas for improvement.

My Strengths as a Supervisor: (Example: I make expectations and outcomes clear with my staff. I take time to learn about my staff members' lives to better understand their unique cultural values and strengths)

Potential Areas for Improvement: (Example: I need to celebrate with my staff more when they meet professional goals.)

Part 3. Action Planning

Instructions: Create a developmental plan for yourself in the form of goal statements (specifying when, where, and what) to strengthen those areas needing improvement.

Action Plan for Improvement: (Example: Starting in April, I will set aside 10 minutes at the beginning of every team meeting for reviewing and celebrating milestones and successes achieved by my staff during the previous month)

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Your Top Strengths Worksheet

Part 1. Your Signature (Top) Strengths or Strengths Roles

Instructions: Complete the table below with your Top Strengths or Top Strengths Roles (according to the assessment), as well as insights from your results report and your own reflection. If your report gives you more than 5 Top Strengths, pick 5 that you would like to focus on for this training.

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.

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Part 2. Reflection Questions

1. At work, what are your top responsibilities?

2. What are you known for at work?

3. How have your Signature Strengths supported you in your role, helped you be successful in the things you listed for Questions #1 and 2?

Part 3. Action Planning

Instructions: Select 1 or 2 Signature Strengths/Strengths Roles that you could lean into more to increase your effectiveness at work. Create an action plan using the table below. Be specific in what, where, when, and how you are going to use your strengths.

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.

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Appendix B Handout:
Strength-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: Positive Psychology Strengths Based Interventions).

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