

In our book, *The Strengths-Focused Guide to Leadership*, we offer you a simple framework for a two and a half hour session that will enable you to introduce a strengths focus to your team or group in a lively and interactive way. We are confident that individual leaders, not just skilled trainers or facilitators, will be able to lead this session.

If you are not an experienced facilitator or would appreciate some further guidance on how to run the session, we provide here some more detailed facilitator notes.

Introducing a Strengths Focus		
Timing – minutes	Content	Detailed facilitator notes
15	Introduction	<p>Why we are here – provide the background and context for why you are running this session with the team now</p> <p>Aims of the session - present the aims of the session:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand what is meant by a ‘strength’ • Understand what is meant by a strengths focus • Have identified some of your own strengths in a ‘strengths spotting exercise’ • Know how teams can make the most of a strengths approach • Share what you like about the strengths approach and share your concerns • Get answers to any questions you have <p>Content of the session - present the agenda:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction • What are strengths? • What is a strengths focus? • Strengths spotting exercise • Benefits of a strengths approach for teams • Likes and concerns • Questions and next steps

15	What are strengths	<p>Exercise</p> <p>Ask people to divide into pairs and discuss for a few minutes: <i>‘One thing that I am not good at, that I don’t enjoy, and that drains me’</i> <i>‘One thing that I am good at, that I love doing, and that energises me’</i></p> <p>Debrief the exercise, asking: What did you notice? From doing that exercise, how would you define a strength? (Hear ideas)</p> <p>Offer a definition of a strength: ‘A strength is something that you are good at, that energises and motivates you and gives you great results.’</p> <p>Show the 3 circles model: Success = L+G+R (See Introduction)</p>
30	What is a strengths focus?	<p>Ask: Why focus on strengths? (Refer to Chapter 1)</p> <p>Explain that research shows that individuals who play to their strengths are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. More engaged at work 2. Experience less stress 3. Are more resilient 4. Are more likely to achieve their goals 5. Perform better at work 6. Are more effective at developing themselves and growing as individuals <p>Share information about a strengths approach, using information provided in the book. Choose from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence to support a strengths focus. E.g. Corporate Leadership council, 2002; Rath and Conchie, 2008 (Chapter 1) • The benefits of a strengths approach (Chapter 1): • The business case (Chapter 1) • What a strengths focus is linked to (Chapter 1) • Mindset of a strengths focus (Chapter 2)

30	Strengths spotting Exercise:	<p>Explain that there are on-line tools to help people identify their strengths, but how useful would it be to be able to do it every day conversation as well? Explain that is what we'll do now.</p> <p>Exercise Introduce the exercise by asking people to: <i>'Write down 3 occasions when you did something well and really enjoyed doing it.'</i></p> <p>In groups of 3, people take turns to talk about their situations whilst others listen and note the strengths they see/hear. (They can use our dictionary of strengths if they wish) Each individual hears feedback from their colleagues on the strengths that have been spotted</p> <p>Allow 15 minutes to do the exercise</p> <p>Debrief in the main group – Ask: <i>What was useful about that exercise?</i></p>
30	How can teams make the most of a strengths approach?	<p>Small groups discussion</p> <p>Invite people to work in groups to generate their ideas on: <i>'How can we adopt a strengths approach within our team?'</i></p> <p>20 minutes for the discussion</p> <p>Debrief ideas - 10 minutes</p>
20	A strengths focus: what do we like?	<p>Divide into small groups to discuss the following:</p> <p><i>'What do we like?'</i> <i>'What are our concerns?'</i></p> <p>Hear ideas in the main group</p>
10	Final questions and next steps	<p>Take any final questions</p> <p>Agree some next steps for the team to take</p>