

We thought it would be useful for you to see the action points from the end of each chapter all in one place. You can use this to plan your own and your team's development over the medium to longer term.

## **Ch2 The mindset of a strengths-focused leader**

1. Do the 5 Day challenge and take the time to notice the impact of these strengths-focused habits.
2. Continue using the ones that are making a difference.
3. Notice the impact of these habits on your mindset as a leader.
4. Generally pay more attention to the way you talk about yourself and your team members. Raising your awareness of this will highlight your current mindset, affirm where it is already strong, and show you the opportunities to 'strengthen' it.

## **Ch3 Identifying My own strengths**

1. Use one or more of our 5 methods to get very familiar with your strengths, untapped strengths, overplayed strengths, learned behaviours and weaknesses.
2. Look for opportunities to use your strengths more.
3. Consider how significant your weaknesses are to your performance.
4. Go on and work with the development tools in Chapter 4. These will show you how to optimise your development.

## **Ch4 Developing My strengths and managing My weaknesses**

1. Choose 3 – 5 strengths that you would like to develop and stand out for.
2. Create a strategy for developing these strengths and identify some actions you want to take. Use the R5 Action Plan.
3. Notice the impact on your energy and performance as you work on developing these strengths.
4. Identify any significant weaknesses that need to be addressed.
5. Create a strategy for responding to the area(s) of weakness.
6. Notice the impact on your performance as you work on improving the weakness.

## **Ch5 Aligning My goals & objectives with My strengths**

1. If you already have business goals, go back and look at how you are playing to your strengths in the achievement of these goals. What more can you do to ensure that you are drawing on your strengths?
2. If you do not have business goals in place, use the template provided (Appendix 1) to design some SMARTIE goals that are aligned with your strengths.
3. If you already have some development goals, check how much these goals are focused developing your strengths rather than your weaknesses. What can you do to make your development goals more focused on developing your strengths and only addressing significant weaknesses?
4. Use the template provided (Appendix 2) to design some new development goals that focus on developing your strengths and responding only to significant weaknesses.

## **Ch6 Introducing a strengths focus to Others**

1. Introduce the concept of a strengths focus at a team event and see whether this is something the team would like to explore more (a suggested process for this is offered below).
2. Invite your team members to identify their strengths using one of the many methods outlined in Chapter 3 and offer them feedback/individual one-to-one coaching.
3. Hold a one-day event where people are introduced to strengths and can find out about their own strengths, having previously completed a strengths assessment.
4. Hold a further one day event where the team can understand each others' strengths and explore the strengths of the team as a whole.
5. Develop a common vocabulary around strengths – start using the language of strengths.
6. Focus on strengths when agreeing business and development objectives (see Chapters 5 and 13).
7. Include a focus on strengths in recruitment processes (see Chapter 14)

8. Include a focus on strengths in performance management processes such as performance reviews/appraisals (see Chapter 12).
9. Build a team that focuses on strengths (see Chapter 15).
10. Introduce a strengths focus to a team that is managing a specific change (see Chapter 16) or developing strategy (Chapter 17).

### Ch7 Identifying & developing strengths in others

1. Ensure that your team are open to exploring their strengths.
2. Ensure that there is a high level of trust and rapport between you and your team members. If not, think about what you need to do to build this trust.
3. Revisit what you know about a coaching approach – you will need to draw on these skills to explore people's strengths with them.
4. Decide on the approach you want to take to help your team members identify their strengths, using one of the methods described in Chapter 3.
5. Set aside time to have conversations with each of your team members about how they can develop their strengths. Start by using the *R5 Action Plan* (See Chapter 4) and if needed, explore some of the other options for developing strengths.
6. Remember to always take a coaching approach!

### Ch8 Supporting others to Manage Their Weaknesses

1. Take some time to consider each of your team members. In your view, what are their strengths and do they have any significant weaknesses? What is the impact of these significant weaknesses?
2. Consider how aware each team member is of any significant weaknesses. Dependent on their current level of awareness, decide on the most appropriate way to discuss these weaknesses and create a plan to address them.
3. Work with each team member to create a plan to address any significant weaknesses.
4. Check in regularly with your direct report and offer feedback on progress and changes that you have observed.

### Ch9 Day-to-day conversations

1. Strengthen your mindset by building the habit of:
  - i. *Start with an outcome focus*
  - ii. *Focus on what's working*
  - iii. *Manage weakness from strength*
2. If you think you are not already doing it, make a habit of focusing on what you want and what's working rather than what you don't want and what's not working.
3. To get the most from one-to-one conversations with your team members, use the 6 scripts until you can have these type of conversations without them. Download them from our website [www.sfleadership.co.uk](http://www.sfleadership.co.uk)

### Ch10 Strengths-focused meetings

1. Have a copy of the 10 features of strengths-focused meetings to hand at each team meeting:
  - i. Start on a positive
  - ii. Celebrate and explore successes
  - iii. Always have an outcome focus
  - iv. Focus on solution (as opposed to problem)
  - v. Get from solution to action
  - vi. Get a good balance. (Between appreciation versus criticism, between asking others for ideas versus telling them yours, and between an inward focus within the team versus an outward focus beyond the team).
  - vii. Listen fully (without interruption)
  - viii. Take turns
  - ix. End on a positive note and acknowledge contributions

- x. Evaluate
  - a. What was good about this meeting?
  - b. How could we make it even better next time?
2. Use the strengths-focused version of GROW model as an effective problem solving, or solution creating, tool.
3. Use ROW to review progress on previously set goals
4. Follow the suggestions for actions before and after the meeting.

### **Ch11 Strengths-focused coaching**

1. Create a regular diary slot for each member of your team. This will make coaching a regular habit and more strongly embed the tool and its behaviours.
2. Download our 2 coaching scripts (Strengths-focused GROW and Progress Review Coaching) from our website at [www.sfleadership.co.uk](http://www.sfleadership.co.uk) . Have these with you at each coaching session until you become so familiar with them that you don't need them anymore.

### **Ch12 Strengths-focused performance appraisals**

1. Take a look at your existing performance appraisal documentation. What opportunities do you have to introduce a strengths focus in to your existing documents and processes?
2. Decide how you want to incorporate a strengths focus into your appraisals and do the necessary preparation. For example revising the documentation, 'strengthening' the structure of your conversation, becoming familiar with how to use the *5 Step Strengths Map*
3. Ensure your team members are clear about what the 'new' approach to appraisals will look like and what benefits they will get from focusing more on their strengths than their weaknesses
4. Brief your team about how to prepare for their strengths-focused performance appraisal
5. Use the 10 tips provided in this chapter to bring a strengths-focused approach to your appraisal discussions. Download the template of questions from our website at [www.sfleadership.co.uk](http://www.sfleadership.co.uk)
6. Gather feedback from your team members about what they liked about the new approach to appraisal discussions. Ask them what suggestions they have for enhancing the process even further.

### **Ch13 Strengths-focused development discussions**

1. Take a look at your existing processes for identifying development needs and writing development plans. How strengths-focused are the existing processes?
2. Determine what you need to do to introduce more of a strengths approach to your development conversations.
3. Download the templates on our website for some useful guidance on structure and content of strengths-focused development discussions.
4. Plan in time with each of your team members to either review existing development plans or construct new ones, ensuring that the emphasis is on developing strengths and addressing only significant weaknesses.
5. Practise having some strengths-focused development conversations and notice the results.
6. Review development plans regularly with your team members, emphasising what has been achieved.

### **Ch14 Strengths-focused recruitment**

1. Take a look at your existing recruitment processes. How strengths-focused are they?
2. Determine what you need to do to introduce more of a strengths approach to your recruitment processes. Is this something you can do on your own, or do you need to enlist the help of your Human Resources team?
3. Download the templates on our website for some useful strengths-focused questions that you can use in the interview.
4. Liaise with your Human Resources team or those responsible for the organisation's recruitment processes and let them know what changes you would like to make.
5. Practise having some strengths-focused interviews and notice the results.

# Putting it all together

## Ch15 High Performing Teams

1. If they would be happy to do so, involve your team members in assessing how well the team has done each of the 6 steps.
2. For a more detailed assessment of the effectiveness of your team, visit our website at [www.sfleadership.co.uk](http://www.sfleadership.co.uk).
3. Involve your stakeholders in giving you 'team' feedback so that you have a more balanced external and internal view of your team's effectiveness.
4. To build higher performance in the team focus on each step sequentially, using our suggested activities.
5. Use all the suggestions of the book so far to 'strengthen' your team.

## Ch16 Leading Change

1. Follow our suggestions for:
  - i. Preparing yourself and your mindset
  - ii. Launching a change project
  - iii. Progress reviews
  - iv. Ending a change project
2. Build energy and involvement in the change by focusing on what's working and strengths. Use that energy and involvement to tackle what could be working better, as well as any significant weaknesses.

## Ch17 Developing Strategy

1. If developing strategy is your strength then play to it.
2. If developing strategy is not your strength, and is a significant weakness use our suggestions in Chapter 4 to manage it. This could be about tapping into your other strengths or the strengths of others that relate to strategy, eg Creativity, Analytical Thinking, Strategic Thinking, Planner, Common Sense, Detail Focus etc.
3. Use the assessment to highlight areas for action.
4. Follow our SPIRE process to build strategy around strengths.