

# APS Supervisor Core: Strengths-Based Development/ Supervision

INSTRUCTOR LED TRAINING (VIRTUAL)

TRAINER MANUAL



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, with funding from the California Department of Social Services, Adult Programs Division.**

**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) Education Committee
- 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)

## Partner Organizations

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Academy for Professional Excellence

<https://theacademy.sdsu.edu/programs/apswi/>

**Megan Juring, APS Leaders Institute Program Coordinator, APSWI**

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**Jennifer Spoeri, Executive Director, National Adult Protective Services (NAPSA)**

<https://napsa-now.org>

**Paul Needham, Chair, NAPSA Education Committee**

<https://napsa-now.org>

**James Treggiari, Adult Protective Services Liaison, Adult Protective Services Division**

California Dept. of Public Social Services

<https://cdss.ca.gov/Adult-Protective-Service>

**Chris Alire and Francisco Wong, Co-Chairs, Protective Services Operations Committee of the County Welfare Director's Association**

<https://cwda.org/about-cwda>

## Acknowledgements

This training is the result of a collaborative effort between Adult Protective Services administrators, supervisors, staff development officers and workers 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 Programs Division

Arizona Department of Economic Security, DAAS-Adult Protective Services

National Adult Protective Services Association

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# Table of Contents

## GENERAL INFORMATION

Introduction.....	2
Partner Organizations.....	3
Acknowledgements.....	4
Table of Contents.....	6
How to Use this Manual .....	9
Trainer Guidelines .....	10
Virtual Training Tips .....	12
Executive Summary .....	14
Course Outline .....	16

## WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Welcome and Introductions .....	20
Overview of Technology .....	22
Breakout Groups .....	23
Introduction of Trainer .....	24
Learning Objectives .....	25
Group Agreements .....	26

## STRENGTHS-BASED APPROACH

What is Strength? .....	29
Who Represents Strength? .....	30
Deficit Model .....	31
Discover Your Strengths .....	32
Benefits of Strengths-Based Approach .....	33

Poll #1: Strengths Use Gut Check ..... 39

Limitations of Strengths-Based Approach ..... 40

**STRENGTHS ASSESSMENTS**

Strengths Assessments ..... 45

Your Pre-work Part 1 ..... 47

Your Pre-work Part 2. Reflection Questions ..... 48

Solo Work – Matching ..... 49

Solo Work – Action Planning ..... 50

Small Group Discussion Questions ..... 51

Large Group Discussion ..... 52

**STRENGTHS-BASED SUPERVISION**

Strengths-Based Supervision ..... 54

Strengths-Based Supervisor Examples ..... 55

Strengths-Based Supervision ..... 56

Poll #2: Strengths-Based Supervision ..... 57

Solo Activity – Self-Assessment ..... 58

Tools: Strengths-Based Questions ..... 59

Small Group Work: APS Scenario ..... 60

Small Group Work: APS Scenario #2..... 61

Large Group Debrief ..... 62

What Are You Committed To? ..... 63

**CLOSING AND EVALUATION**

Thank You ..... 65

References ..... 66



Appendix A: Handout #1-Strengths-Based Development/Supervision of Staff Self-Assessment ..... 68

Appendix A: Your Top Strengths Worksheet..... 72

Appendix B: Handout #2- Strengths-Based Coaching Questions for Supervisors..... 75

## How to Use This Manual

This curriculum was developed as a virtual 150-minute workshop 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 Pre-Training Assignment (*See separate Pre-work Supplemental Manual*) and instructions should be sent via email at least one-week prior to the training date. It will take approximately 60-75 minutes. This must be completed prior to attending the training.

The Participant Manual should also 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 are written in **bold**.

**Trainer and Moderator Notes are written entirely in bold in the text box and are provided as helpful hints.**

- When there are both Trainer and Moderator notes on same page, Trainer and Moderator is **underlined**.

**Use of language:** Throughout the manual, staff is used most often to describe supervisees or units/teams. The broader term (APS) professional is also 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/background material is on the same page as the accompanying PowerPoint slide.

### **Hide a slide instructions:**

1. On the Slides tab in normal view, select the slide you want to hide.
2. On the Slide Show menu, click Hide Slide.

The slide number will have a line through it to show you have hidden it.

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.

## 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 20-25 participants.

<b>Teaching Strategies</b>	The following instructional strategies are used: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Lecture segments</li> <li>○ Interactive exercises (e.g., breakout groups, chat box discussion, polling activities)</li> <li>○ Question/answer periods</li> <li>○ PowerPoint Slides</li> </ul>
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<b>Materials and Equipment</b>	<p><b>The following materials are provided and/or recommended:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Trainer Manual</li> <li>○ Participant Manual (fillable PDF)</li> <li>○ PowerPoint Slides</li> <li>○ Headset with microphone</li> <li>○ Computer</li> </ul>
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### 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](#) videos 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 \(contains sample profile on pg. 2\)](#)
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

### 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](#)
4. Review [How Do CliftonStrengths and the StandOut Assessment Compare?](#)

Note: Additional resources, including sample reports, technical manuals, and descriptions can be found in [this folder](#).

## 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, 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 for 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 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.
- Are there objects in your background that can symbolize status, privilege and/or power? If so, consider removing them to dismantle any added power dynamics that already exist with you as the Trainer.
- Unknowingly, objects can come across as offensive or can activate unpleasant or traumatic memories, and can instantly discredit your rapport building. Think of neutral backgrounds that are not distracting and allow you to be the focus of what learners see.

## Executive Summary

### ***APS Supervisor Core: Strengths-Based Development/Supervision***

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.

#### **Virtual 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 role-playing/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 a fillable PDF if using Adobe Acrobat. Participants are encouraged to either print a hard copy or ensure access to Adobe Acrobat to allow for highlighting, typing in comments and filling out worksheets.

#### **Course Requirements:**

- Pre-Training Assignment: Prior to the training, participants will be sent a Pework 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.

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

**Outcome Objectives for Participants:**

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

- 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.



## Course Outline

CONTENT	MATERIALS	TIME
<b>WELCOME, HOUSEKEEPING AND INTRODUCTIONS</b>		10 minutes
Display Name Change Instructions	Slide 1	
Welcome, Housekeeping and Introductions	Slides 2	
Technology Overview	Slide 3-4	
Introduction of Trainer	Slide 5	
Learning Objectives	Slide 6	
Group Agreements	Slides 7-8	
<b>STRENGTHS-BASED APPROACH</b>		20 minutes
What Is Strength?	Slide 9 Chat Box Activity	
Who Represents Strength?	Slide 10 Chat Box Activity	
Deficit Model	Slides 11	
Benefits of Strengths-Based Approach	Slides 13-18	
Poll: Strengths Use Gut Check	Slide 19	
Limitations of Strengths-Based Approach	Slides 20-23	
<b>STRENGTHS ASSESSMENTS</b>		50 minutes

Strengths Assessments	Slide 24-25	
Your Top Strengths	Slides 26-31 Your Pre-work Solo Work: Matching and Action Planning Small Group Discussion Large Group Debrief <i>Pre-work Handout: "Your Top Strengths"</i>	
	<b>BREAK</b>	10 minutes
<b>STRENGTHS-BASED SUPERVISION</b>		55 minutes
Strengths-Based Supervision	Slides 32-34	
Poll: Strengths-Based Supervision	Slide 35	
Strengths-Based Supervision Self Assessment	Slides 36 Solo Activity Handout #1: "Strengths-Based Supervision Self-Assessment"	
Tool: Strengths-Based Questions	Slide 37 Handout #2: Strengths-Based Coaching Questions for Supervisors	
APS Scenario	Slides 38-40 Small Group Work Large Group Debrief	

What Are You Committed To?	Slide 41 Chat Box Activity	
<b>CLOSING AND EVALUATION</b>		5 minutes
Evaluation		
Thank You	Slide 42	
References		
Pre-Work: Your Signature (Top) Strengths or Strengths Roles		
<b>TOTAL TIME</b>		<b>150 MINUTES</b>

## Welcome, Introductions and Course Overview

Time Allotted: 10 minutes.

Associated Objective(s):

Method:

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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.

**Moderator:** Welcome everyone and introduce yourself. Explain you will be going over some housekeeping before introducing and handing it over to our trainer.

1. Today's training will take place from XX:XX to XX:XX
2. Please stay for the entire duration of the training to receive full credit
3. Introduce/orient participants to participant manual/materials

We will be taking some time at the end of training for your evaluation feedback – both verbal and an end-of-training evaluation.

## Slide #2: About the Academy and APSWI



**Academy for Professional Excellence** | **APSWI**  
Adult Protective Services Workforce Innovations

### 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

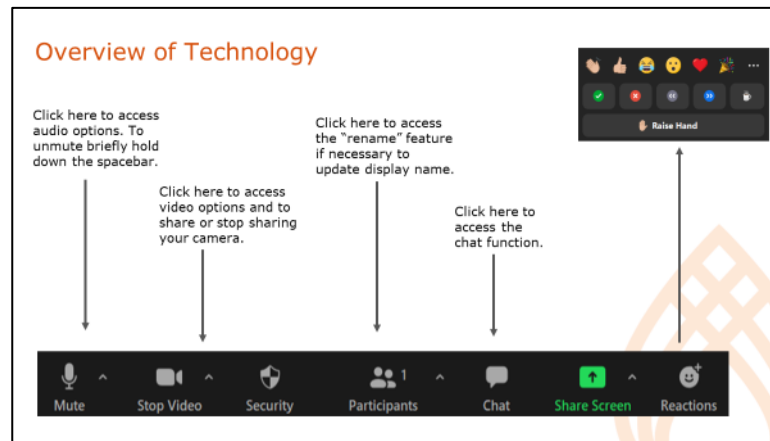
ACADEMY PROGRAMS

**APEX** | **APSWI** | **CWDS** | **LIA** | **SACHS**

**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.

## Slide #3: Overview of Technology



**Explain:** Many of you are pros at navigating through a virtual learning course like this one, while this may be less familiar for some. Therefore, we will review the various functions we will use during this course.

**Video Camera:** when you find, turn off/on.

**Mute:** Everyone locate it, mute and unmute yourself. While you are listening or others are speaking, please mute yourself. Unmute if you are about to speak or while in break-out rooms.

**Chat box:** Ask participants to type "Got it" once they've located the chat box.

**Hand clap/thumbs up:** Ask participants to press the hand clap icon or give thumbs up when you've found it. There are other icons in the same area.

- **Explain** that you will ask participants to use any of these reactions in place of the raising hand feature as participants cannot see all see the raise hand feature. You may need to remind them of this a few times.

**Icons to facilitator:** Raise hand, slow down, need a break, stepping away.

**Remind** participants they are expected to attend the entire course, but if they need to leave, they should type BRB (be right back) in chat box and then "I'm back" on return.

**Trainer/ Moderator Note:** In Zoom, certain icons are only visible to the Host/Co-Host of Zoom, not the participants. If no Moderator is available, these will be very hard to keep track of, so encourage participants to give a different reaction like clap, thumbs up or heart to get your attention.

## Slide #4: Breakout Groups

### Breakout Groups

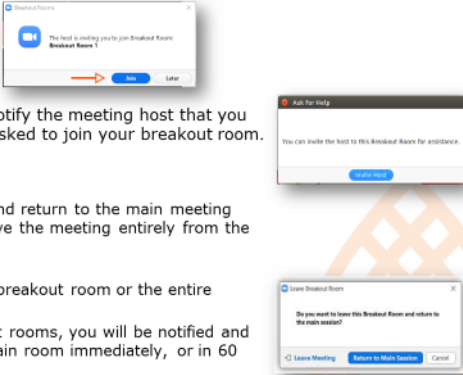
**Joining the breakout group:**

- Click **join**

**Asking for help:**  
If you click **Ask for Help**, it will notify the meeting host that you need assistance and they will be asked to join your breakout room.

**Leaving the breakout group:**  
You can leave the breakout room and return to the main meeting session at any time, or you can leave the meeting entirely from the breakout room.

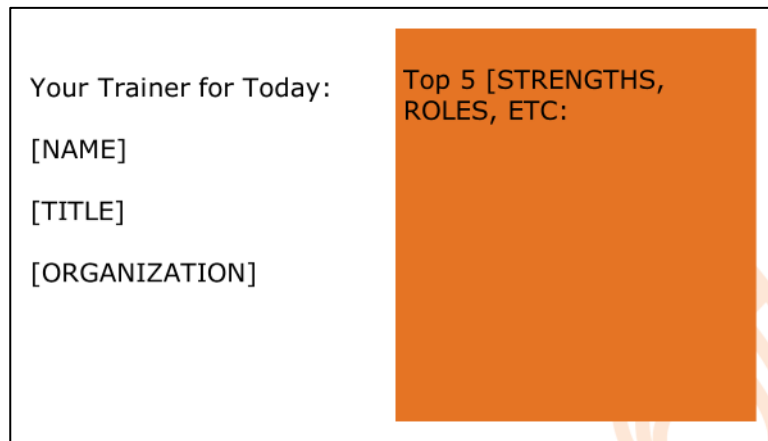
1. Click **Leave Breakout Room**.
2. Choose if you want to leave the breakout room or the entire meeting.
3. When the host ends the breakout rooms, you will be notified and given the option to return to the main room immediately, or in 60 seconds.



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



## Slide #5: Introduction of Trainer



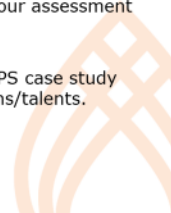
**Moderator: Introduce** the trainer and hand it over to them.

**Trainer:** As you can see on the slide, my Top 5...

## Slide #6: Learning Objectives

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.



**Trainer:** Briefly review learning objectives.

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 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.

## Slide #7: Group Agreements

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

**Trainer:** 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.

## Slide #8: Group Agreements (Quote)

**Trainer Note:**  
Read the  
Academy's  
Confidentiality  
Statement

### 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."



"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."

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

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

Thank everyone for upholding these agreements.

## Strengths-Based Approach

Time Allotted: 20 minutes

Associated Objective(s):

Method:

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## Slide #9: What is Strength?

**Trainer Note:** Bullet points are 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.

### 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



**Trainer:** 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

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

*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

**Slide #10: Who Represents Strength?**

**Trainer Note:** Images are animated.

First, ask who comes to mind, read answers and then click 3 times on the slide to share the people graphics.



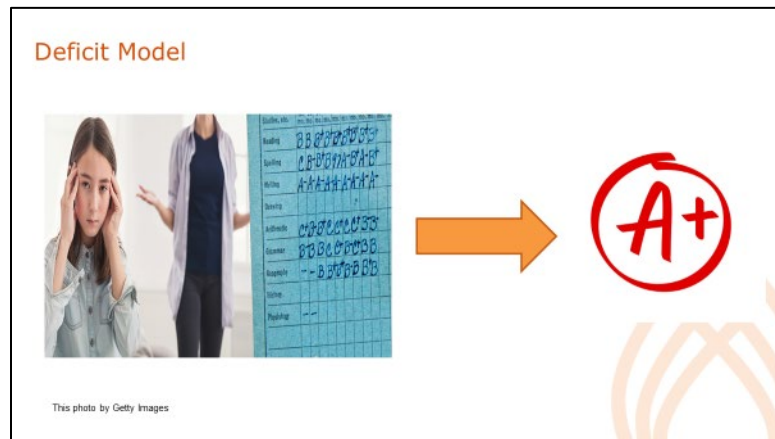
**Trainer: Ask:** "Who comes to mind when you think of the word 'Strength'?" Go ahead and share in the chat box and press "Enter."

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

**Trainer:** 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.

## Slide #11: 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+



**Trainer:** 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, young man/young lady! 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?

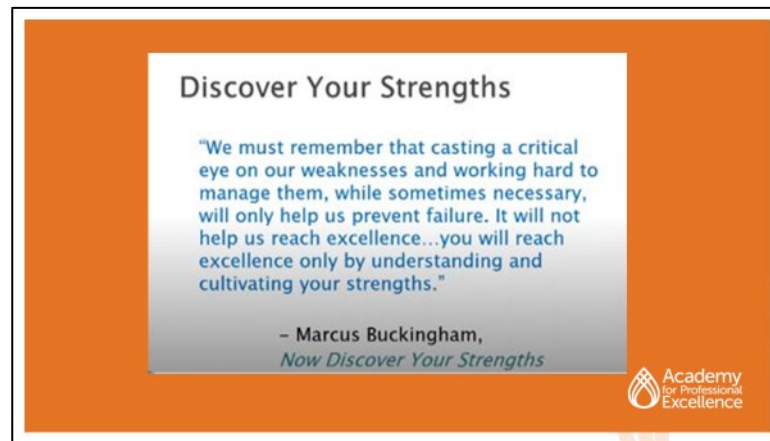
**Click** on the screen twice to reveal the arrow and the A+.

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.



## Slide 12: Discover Your Strengths



**Trainer:** 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."

## Slide #13: Benefits of Strengths-Based Approach

**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.

**Trainer:** 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.

(Source: Miglianico, Marine & Dubreuil, Philippe & Miquelon, Paule & Bakker, Arnold &

Martin-Krumm, Charles. (2020). "Strength Use in the Workplace: A Literature Review." *Journal of Happiness Studies*. 21. 10.1007/s10902-019-00095-w.)

## Slide #14: Benefits of Strengths-Based Approach

Benefits of Strengths-Based Approach

- Well-being
  - "Satisfaction, pleasure, commitment, and meaning"

A photograph of a woman with glasses and a grey blazer sitting at a desk. She is smiling and talking on a mobile phone held to her ear. In front of her is a laptop. The background shows a modern office environment with shelves and a plant.

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

## Slide #15: Benefits of Strengths-Based Approach

**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>

**Trainer:** 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."


(Source: Gallup. "2015 Strengths Meta-Analysis Report.")

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

## #16: Benefits of Strengths-Based Approach

**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>

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

(Source: Gallup. "2015 Strengths Meta-Analysis Report.")

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

## #17: Benefits of Strengths-Based Approach

Benefits of Strengths-Based Approach

- “Vitality, flow, passion and engagement”

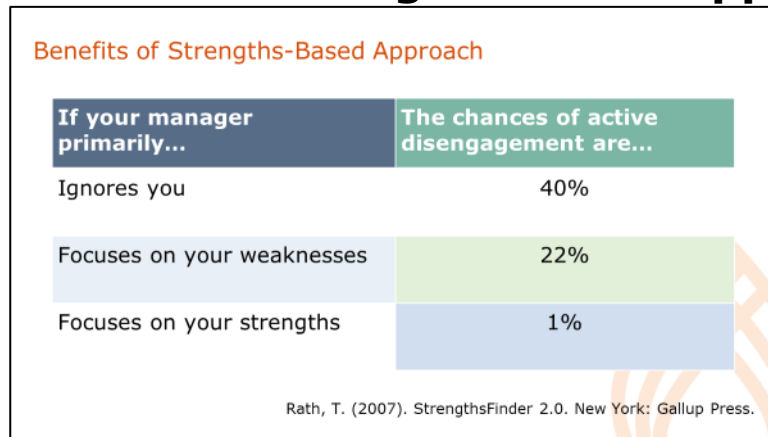


**Trainer:** “Vitality, flow, passion and engagement” are also benefits, according to the literature.

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.”**

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

## Slide #18: Benefits of Strengths-Based Approach



**Trainer:** 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 activity disengaged are 22%
- If your manager primarily focuses on your strengths, the chances of you being activity disengaged are only 1%

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

## Slide #19: Poll: Strengths Use Gut Check

Poll: Strengths Use Gut Check

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



**Trainer:** Let's do a quick gut check here of your use of your strengths at work. We're going to conduct a totally anonymous poll. The question is: "How often do you leverage your strengths at work?" I'm going to give everyone about 15 seconds to pick your best answer. Try not to overthink it.

**Trainer:** Okay, I'm going to close the poll. Let's see where everyone is at this time.

*Read the results out loud.*

**Trainer:** 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.

**Note to Moderator:** You will need to program the poll in Zoom with the following question and answers:

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

Frequently. My work allows me to exercise my strengths every day/almost every day.

Sometimes. My role gives me opportunities to exercise my strengths about half the time.

Rarely. I don't really get to use my strengths in my role. Work is a constant struggle.



## Slide #20: Limitations of Strengths-Based Approach

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

### 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.

**Trainer:** 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 employees:

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.

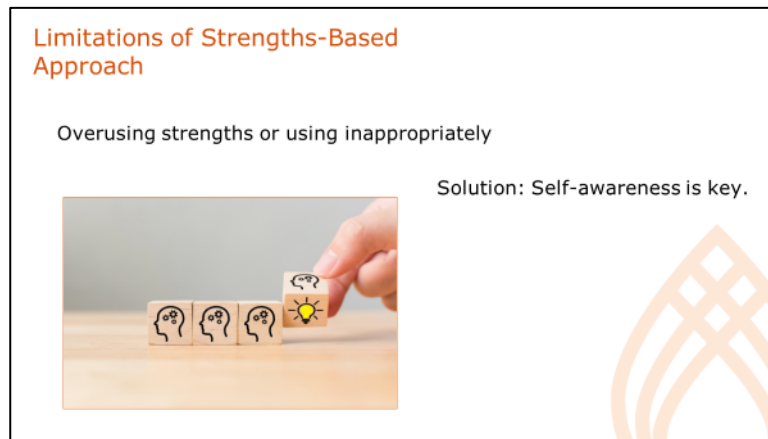
It's suggested to try to strengthen a weakness if it's impacting a key component of your job or seek partnership with someone who can support you in that area.

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 way.

(Sources: <https://drjasonjones.com/characterstrengthsapproach/>  
<https://www.strengthscope.com/strengths-based-programs-cant-ignore-weaknesses/>)

## Slide #21: Limitations of Strengths-Based Approach



**Trainer:** 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.

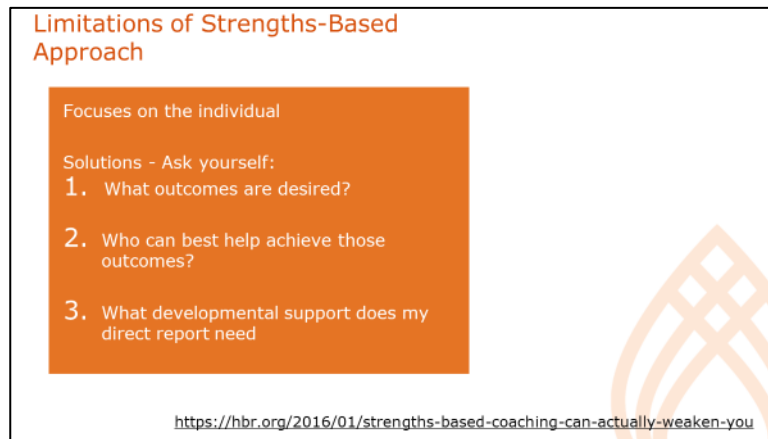
**Trainer Note:** Engage the learners now by asking them to click on “Raise your hand” or type in the chat box for the following:

-Which one of you has gotten into trouble with being overly creative, being compassionate when you should be direct, and being a perfectionistic? Raise your hand.

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.

(Source: [Zhang, Liguu](https://www.grin.com/document/341879). 2014. “Reflections on the strength based perspective of a social worker.” Munich, GRIN Verlag, <https://www.grin.com/document/341879>)

## Slide #22: Limitations of Strengths-Based Approach



**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>

**Trainer:** 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 (I.e., 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.”

(Source: <https://hbr.org/2016/01/strengths-based-coaching-can-actually-weaken-you>)


## Slide #23: Limitations of Strengths-Based Approach

**Limitations of Strengths-Based Approach**

Neglects Structural Obstacles

Solutions:

- Help remove structural obstacles
- Provide resources



**Trainer:** 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.

(Sources: [Zhang, Ligu](#). 2014. "Reflections on the strength based perspective of a social worker." Munich, GRIN Verlag, <https://www.grin.com/document/341879>

<https://www.researchgate.net/publication/274821656> Back to Basics A Critique of the Strengths Perspective in Social Work)

## **STRENGTHS ASSESSMENTS with Time**

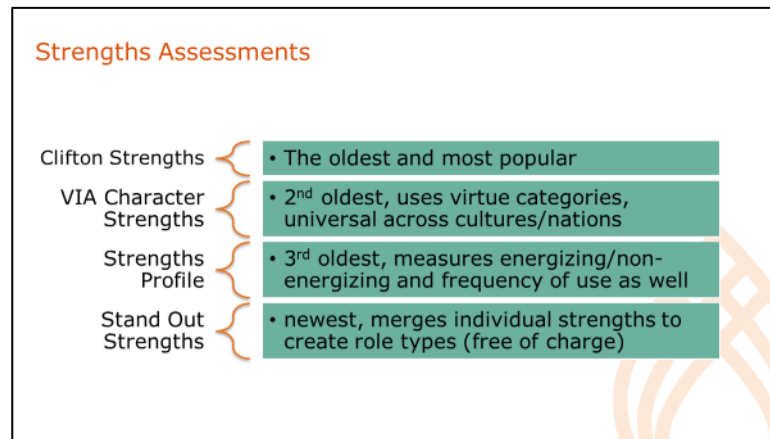
Time Allotted: 40 minutes

Associated Objective(s):

Method:

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## Slide #24: Strengths Assessments



**Trainer:** 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.

## Slide #25: Strengths Assessment

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



**Trainer:** 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.

## Slide #26: Your Pre-Work Part 1

**Trainer Note:** Prior to training, review *Pre-work Supplemental Manual* and have available.

Refer Participants to Pework – 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.

### Your Pework

**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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Take ownership of every project to ensure high quality output/outcomes.</li> <li>I am extremely reliable. Others can count on me and often turn to me for support.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Delegate more. Divide up tasks with others and be clear about who's responsible for what.</li> <li>Say no to projects that are not aligned with our annual priorities.</li> <li>Negotiate deadlines if needed.</li> <li>Work with my supervisor to come up with clear metrics to know what's enough.</li> </ul>

**Trainer:** 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").




## Slide #27: Your Pre-Work Part 2

Your Prework

Part 2. Reflection Questions

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



**Trainer:** 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.

## Slide #28: Solo Work: Matching

**Trainer Note:**  
Read aloud the example in the table.

### 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.

**Trainer:** 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?

## Slide #29: Solo Work: Action Planning

**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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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.</li> <li>I will also reserve 10 minutes during team meetings for ice breakers.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I can solicit ice breaker ideas from my staff so that they feel a part of the process.</li> </ul>

**Trainer:** 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.

## Slide #30: Small Group Discussion Questions

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

### 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?



**Trainer:** 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?

## Slide #31: Large Group Discussion

**Trainer Note:**

Encourage group spokesperson to share. Allot about 5-8 minutes for discussion, more or less depending on time. Turn off screen sharing once everyone is back from breakout rooms.

Large Group Discussion



Briefly, please share with us:

Any takeaways, discoveries, surprises?

**Trainer: 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?

## Strengths-Based Supervision

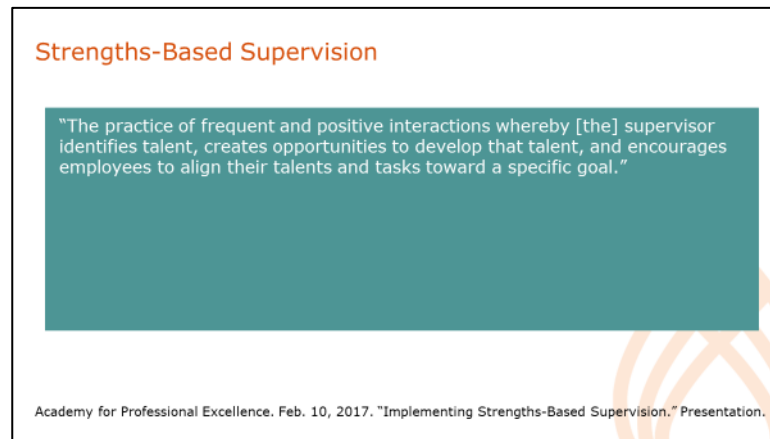
Time Allotted: 40 minutes

Associated Objective(s):

Method:

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## Slide #32: Strengths-Based Supervision



**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.


**Trainer:** 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."

## Slide #33: Strengths-Based Supervision Examples

**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).

A photograph showing three people in a professional setting. A woman in an orange blazer is on the left, a man in a dark suit is in the center, and another man in a blue shirt is on the right. They appear to be in a discussion or meeting.

**Trainer:** 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 intelligently and constructively with their supervisors



## Slide #34: Strengths-Based Supervision

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*.

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

- “Essentially [it is] 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” (p.38).

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.

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

## Slide #35: Poll – Strengths-Based Supervision

Poll – Strengths-Based Supervision

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



**Trainer:** We're going to do another gut check, this time of your practice of Strengths Based Supervision. Here's another totally anonymous poll and the question is: "How often do you help your direct reports develop their strengths?"

**Note to Moderator:** You will need to program the poll in Zoom with the question and the following answers:

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

**Trainer:** 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.

*Read the results out loud.*

**Trainer:** Of course, there's always room for improvement, right?

## Slide #36: Solo Activity – Self-Assessment

**Trainer Note:** You will find Handout #1 in Appendix A.

Refer Participants to Handout #1 Strength Based Supervision of Staff Self-Assessment. This exercise will take them about 8 minutes to do (3 minutes just to fill out the table).

### 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).

**Trainer:** 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.

**Trainer: 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.

## Slide #37: Tools: Strengths-Based Questions

**Trainer Note:** You will find Handout #2 in Appendix B.

Refer to Handout #2 – Strengths-Based Coaching for Supervisors.

### 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/>]



**Trainer:** 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.

## Slide #38: Small Group Work: APS Scenario

**Moderator Note:** Copy and paste questions into the chat box.

### 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.*



**Trainer:** 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.

## Slide #39: Small Group Work: APS Scenario

**Moderator Note:** Copy and paste the case study into the chat box. Put everyone in the same groups that they were in earlier. There is 15 minutes for discussion.

### 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?*

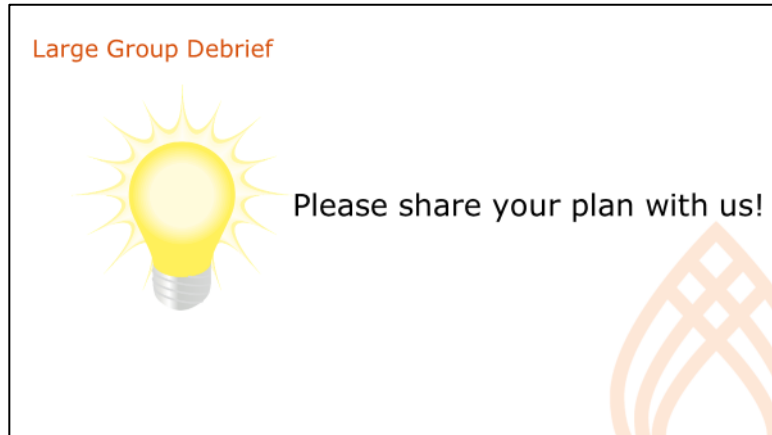


Scenario: An APS caseworker struggled with the fact that there was less control over their schedule/caseload and needed to be extremely flexible, unlike in their previous position with In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS), where one had more control.

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

## Slide #40: Large Group Debrief

**Trainer Note:** Turn off screen sharing once everyone is back from breakout rooms. 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.



**Trainer:** Resolution—This caseworker has taken the Clifton Strengths Assessment and discovered that she had Discipline and Focus as her Top Strengths. This worker’s supervisor assigned the exercise of researching and understanding the basement behaviors of these two Clifton Strengths. The worker 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 caseworker was able to catch herself 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]

## Slide #41: What Are You Committed to?

What Are You Committed to?

Please share one of your goals in the chat box.



**Trainer:** Thank you all for your participation. Hope these activities have helped formulate some aha's on your understanding of where you are at in terms of using your Top Strengths and strengths-based supervision best practices in your work.

We're going to end by having everyone share one goal specific to using one of your top strengths or a best practice more intentionally for the next 30 days.



## Closing

Time Allotted: 5 minutes

Associated Objective(s):

Method:

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## Slide #42: Thank You



**Moderator: Thank** participants for their time today and active participation.

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## Appendix A Handout #1

### 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.<sup>1</sup>

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 strengthbased 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.				

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<sup>1</sup> 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.

<p>6. I take time to learn about my staff members' lives to better understand their unique cultural values and strengths.</p>				
<p>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.</p>				
<p>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.</p>				
<p>9. I write employee performance reports that are strength-based; each item reflects a positive outcome (change) that is expected/desired.</p>				
<p>10. I work to create a positive environment for my unit.</p>				
<p>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.</p>				
<p>12. When mistakes occur, I avoid blame and, instead, work with the staff member to find ways to prevent similar problems in the future.</p>				

**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.*



## 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Take ownership of every project to ensure high quality output/outcomes.</li> <li>I am extremely reliable. Others can count on me and often turn to me for support.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Delegate more. Divide up tasks with others and be clear about who's responsible for what.</li> <li>Say no to projects that are not aligned with our annual priorities.</li> <li>Negotiate deadlines if needed.</li> <li>Work with my supervisor to come up with clear metrics to know what's enough.</li> </ul>


**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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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.</li> <li>I will also reserve 10 minutes during team meetings for ice breakers.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I can solicit ice breaker ideas from my staff so that they feel a part of the process.</li> </ul>

## **Appendix B Handout #2**

### **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: <https://positivepsychology.com/strengths-based-interventions/>)

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