ACHIEVE
CENTRE FOR LEADERSHIP & WORKPLACE PERFORMANCE

STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES ASSESSMENT

Definitions

Relational Strengths and Weaknesses: How we interact with our peers and those we manage. This includes how we demonstrate skills like respect, empathy, listening, communication and supportiveness.

Operational Strengths and Weaknesses: How competent we are in the practical aspects of managing our organization. These are the areas related to things such as strategic planning, finance, human resources and marketing.

Using the questions below, please answer the following:

RELATIONAL STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES QUESTIONS

1. What interactions with staff bring you the most satisfaction?

2. What interactions with staff are you most prone to avoid?

3. What interactions or situations with staff cause them to distance themselves from you?

4. What is the most common positive feedback you receive?

5. What is the most common negative feedback you receive?

6. Why do people at work like you?

7. What do people at work dislike about you?

8. If you no longer worked in your organization, what would your team miss about you?

OPERATIONAL STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES QUESTIONS

1. What are the things you excel at in your current role?

2. What evidence do you have to support the notion that you excel at these things?

3. What are the things you defer or hand off to others to do?

4. What are the things you don't do well at in your current role?

5. What is the most common positive feedback you receive?

6. What is the most common negative feedback you receive?

7. If you no longer worked in your organization what would your team miss about your work?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What surprised you or made you think as you worked though the assessment?

2. How could you better utilize your areas of greatest strengths?

3. What are ways you can better mitigate areas of weaknesses?

4. How do other team members' strengths cover for your weaknesses?

5. How is the distinction between operational and relational strengths and weaknesses helpful?

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE

Facilitator's Role

As the facilitator of the *Strengths and Weaknesses Assessment* tool, your goal is to create a safe environment that provides for thoughtful responses and stimulates healthy discussion. The purpose of this tool is to have team members assess their own strengths and weaknesses, and to discuss how to improve strengths (our greatest potential for growth) and to mitigate and manage weaknesses that get in the way of good performance.

Administering the Assessment

The process begins with a short team meeting where the facilitator outlines the purpose and process for doing the assessment. The facilitator notes that the process will include personal reflection on strengths and weaknesses and a follow-up reporting and discussion session. The facilitator then asks participants to reflect and write responses to the questions listed in the assessment, followed by sharing and discussing those responses.

FACILITATING DISCUSSION

Unless the team is made up of five or less people, it is best to have discussions in small groups of 3-5 people initially. The facilitator will ask each individual to review the response to their questions in their small groups. After this initial process, the facilitator should have each group explore:

1. What surprised you or made you think as you worked though the assessment?
2. How could you better utilize your areas of greatest strengths?
3. What are ways you can better mitigate areas of weaknesses?
4. How do other team members' strengths complement your areas of strength and weakness?
5. How is the distinction between operational and relational strengths and weaknesses helpful?

If numerous small groups are a part of the process, the facilitator should bring everyone back to a large group discussion and explore general themes and insights.

SUGGESTED TIMEFRAMES

Unless the team is made up of five or less people, it is best to have discussions in small groups of 3-5 people initially. The facilitator will ask each individual to review the response to their questions in their small groups. After this initial process, the facilitator should have each group explore general themes and insights.

1. Facilitator introduces outline of the process: 5-10 minutes
2. Participants fill out questions individually: 15-25 minutes
3. Participants share their responses in small group: 20-30 minutes
4. Participants reflect on themes and insights as a large group: 10 minutes

FACILITATION CONSIDERATIONS

- Who is the best person to facilitate both the process and discussion? What is their role within the team, and what are the potential dynamics to be aware of related to this?
- Consider group size. The larger the group, the more time you will likely need. However, more voices may mean you don't miss important issues that only a few people raise.
- Consider group make-up. What are the positives and negatives of having people from loosely connected teams be a part of the same process? We strongly recommend that you break discussion up into small groups or teams.
- Set guidelines for discussion. How will you listen to each other? How will people be supportive and non-judgmental while listening and asking questions?

The Strengths and Weaknessess Assessment tool is intended as a guide to facilitate discussion.
This tool is not a scientifically validated instrument.