

Strengthen Your Advising



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THE PURSUIT OF EXCELLENCE

- “What would happen if we studied what was RIGHT with people?” (*Don Clifton*)
- By focusing on what is working, you will get stronger. By focusing on fixing weaknesses, you will only get a little better and will never be all that you can be.
- The greatest opportunities lie in improving areas of strengths rather than fixing areas of weakness.
- To produce excellence, study excellence.

FINDINGS

TOP ACHIEVERS:

- Fully recognize their talents and build on them to develop strengths
- Use their talents as the foundation/starting point of strengths development, and then apply those strengths to produce excellence
- Build their careers and lives around what they do best by using their natural talents to help them achieve their goals
- Invent ways to apply their greatest talents to their achievement tasks
- Capitalize on their own personal uniqueness
- Manage their weaknesses by using their strengths

Defining Strengths



- Your pathways to success, excellence & accomplishment
- Your ability to consistently produce a positive outcome through near-perfect performance in a specific task
- Your most natural ways of thinking, behaving & performing

WHEN AN INDIVIDUAL FOCUSES ON STRENGTHS



- 3x more LIKELY HAPPY LIFE
- 6x more SUCCESSFUL
- 8.9x more PROFITABLE
- 12.5x more PRODUCTIVE

LET'S TALK: DEFINING ENGAGEMENT

Think about a time in your professional/personal life when you were really **AT YOUR BEST!** A time when you showed excellence in your performance. A time when you were proud of your accomplishment.

- What was the situation/project?
- How would you describe yourself during this moment?
- How would a colleague describe you during this moment?

National Engagement Levels



30% Engaged

52% Not Engaged

18% Actively Disengaged



Engaged

These educators are involved in, enthusiastic about, and committed to their work.

Not Engaged

These educators may be productive and satisfied with their jobs, but they are not emotionally connected to their organization.

Actively Disengaged

These educators are physically present but emotionally absent. They are unhappy with their work situation

EFFECT OF ADVISER ENGAGEMENT

Engaged

Pays close attention to and actively pursues her own professional development in the service of her work with students

Not Engaged

Gets by doing the minimum that he is required to do to get paid; is present but does not participate during meetings

Actively Disengaged

Finds ways to get out of attending meetings and contributing to projects

ENGAGEMENT OUTCOMES

- An engaged adviser is involved in, enthusiastic about, and committed to their work.

An engaged adviser has:

- higher motivation to succeed
- increased energy, insight, and resilience
- the ability to build positive, caring relationships with students better attendance
- improved performance and productivity
- a higher likelihood of bringing about growth in their students
- a higher likelihood of helping students become engaged



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STRENGTHS DEVELOPMENT: THE BIG PICTURE

- You have a group of talents within you that you are born with.
- Your greatest talents hold the key to your achievement, success, and personal excellence.
- To unlock the potential of those talents, you must develop them into strengths by investing knowledge and skills.
- You can apply your strengths in many areas including relationships, learning, academics, leadership, and career.
- Applying your strengths results in reaching levels of personal excellence and launches you into becoming the person whom you have the
- potential to be.
- Strengths development is a performance optimization strategy for adults and students.
- When we operate from strengths, we reach our full potential.

OUR EXCELLENT ADVISERS

- Characteristics that describe why this adviser is one of the best:



Executing	Influencing	Relationship Building	Strategic Thinking
<i>Makes things happen</i>	<i>Take charge speak up types; advocates</i>	<i>Hold teams together; reach out</i>	<i>Information Analyzers; visionaries</i>
Achiever Arranger Belief Consistency Deliberative Discipline Focus Responsibility Restorative	Activator Command Communication Competition Maximizer Self-Assurance Significance Woo	Adaptability Connectedness Developer Empathy Harmony Includer Individualization Positivity Relator	Analytical Context Futuristic Ideation Input Intellection Learner Strategic

DIFFERENT PATHS: SAME DESTINATION

RESPONSIBILITY

People especially talented in the Responsibility theme take psychological ownership of what they say they will do. They are committed to stable values such as honesty and loyalty.

- What needs to be done?
- Do you have an example of another project I could look at so I get this one exactly right?
- Help me understand everything you need.
- What is the deadline?

LEARNER

People especially talented in the Learner theme have a great desire to learn and want to continuously improve. In particular, the process of learning, rather than the outcome, excites them.

- What training is available?
- Are there any materials I can read or look at to learn more?
- Who knows a lot about this project?
- Who else should I be talking to?

COMMAND

People especially talented in the Command theme have presence. They can take control of a situation and make decisions.

- When do I actually get to meet with key stakeholders? They won't be a problem.
- Whom do I talk to if I need something?
- Whom did you say I'm in charge of?
- What needs to be done first?

MY STRENGTHS IN ACTION

One Key Strength	Input
I'm an adviser who uses this strength to:	Gather as much information as possible to share with students
How this strength helps me:	Keep up to date on latest career and employment trends
How this strength hinders:	Can prohibit me from just getting on with tasks
You get the best out of me when:	I am given time to prepare and research
The value I bring to the group is:	Knowledge ^_^

COMMON BARRIER LABELS

<u>Strength</u>	<u>Barrier Label</u>
<i>Command</i>	<i>Bossy</i>
<i>Communicator</i>	<i>Chatterbox</i>
<i>Harmony</i>	
<i>Positivity</i>	
<i>Intellection</i>	

WHAT ABOUT WEAKNESSES?

A NON-TALENT:

- The absence of talent
- Something that is not present

A WEAKNESS:

- Something that gets in your way
- Impedes your productivity

LEVERAGING YOUR STRENGTHS TO MANAGE WEAKNESSES

1. Open communication/Transparency
2. Get the right training
3. Leverage other talents
4. Use support systems
5. Form complementary partnerships
6. Adjust/Change role & responsibilities

BUILDING ENGAGEMENT

- What do you do to contribute to building an engaging, productive work environment, classroom, school, or department?
- What changes can you make in your workday to help increase your engagement?
- Which of your strengths could you use to help you increase your engagement?

Joanna has been working as a career adviser for over 15 years. She was recently passed over for the job of department head. Someone younger with less experience, but with many new ideas and a lot of energy, got the position instead. Typically, Joanna produced consistent work and met with students regularly during her office hours.

Recently, however, she has closed her office door during the day and hung up a “Do not disturb” sign. She has stopped showing up to department meetings, but when she does attend, she is tardy and is visibly unhappy about being there. Her contributions during the meetings are often disgruntled complaints, and she offers no constructive solutions. A few students have made formal requests to change counselors.

Top five strengths: Discipline, Futuristic, Input, Developer, and Consistency



- What would your students gain from becoming aware of their strengths?
- How would knowing your students' strengths change your approach as an educator?

THE STRENGTHS MINDSET

- Strengths initiatives must start with a mindset that EVERY
- STUDENT:
- – has potential, abilities, and strengths
- – can achieve
- – can contribute positively
- – wants to learn and succeed
- – wants to be recognized

STRENGTHS-BASED EDUCATION

- Uses strategies to help students identify, develop and apply individual strengths
- Honors the potential in every student
- Capitalizes on what students are good at
- Uses strengths development as a pathway to compensate and manage deficits
- Uses strengths development as a performance enhancing mechanism aimed at improving student outcomes

STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

Engaged

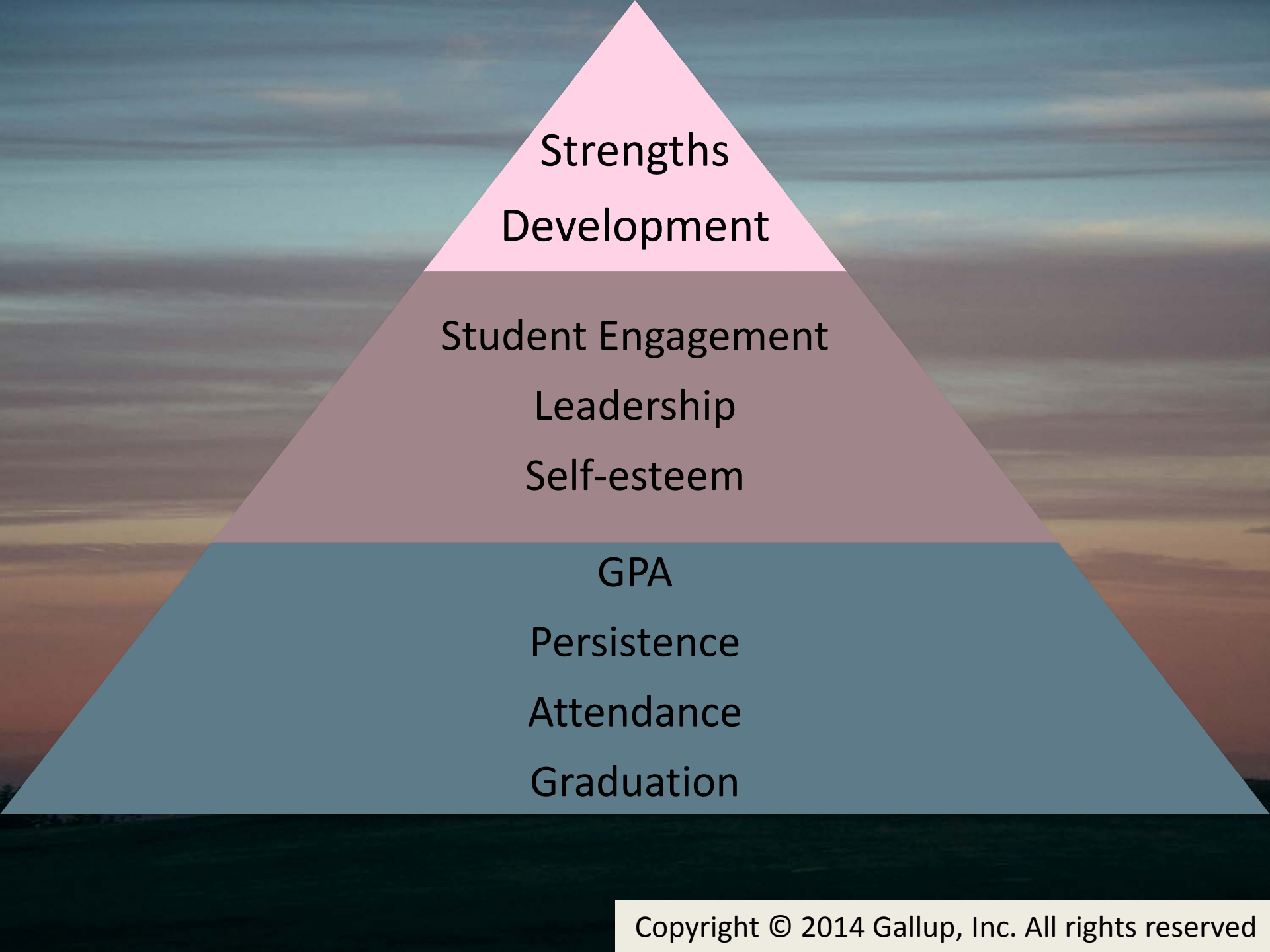
Emotionally engaged and present in her education. Looks for ways to get involved and improve herself.

Not Engaged

Gets by doing the minimum that he is required to do to get a decent grade; present but not participative.

Actively Disengaged

Often neglects to attend classes or complete projects. Easily shares their unhappiness with others.



Strengths
Development

Student Engagement
Leadership
Self-esteem

GPA
Persistence
Attendance
Graduation

WHAT DOES THE RESEARCH SAY?

- High school students who learned their strengths and used them showed significant increases in self-efficacy, empowerment, and self-perception. (Austin, 2006)
- College students who learned their strengths and how to use them showed increased self-confidence, direction, hope, and altruism. (Hodges & Clifton, 2002)
- Students learn more from strengths-based teaching strategies. It increases their levels of academic engagement, objective test scores, and quality of a public speech. (Cantwell, 2008)
- Students whose strengths and talents were identified perceived they had more control of their academic futures than students who did not know their strengths or talents. In addition, students who actively developed their strengths are more likely to set learning goals and have a growth mindset than students whose talents are identified but not developed. (Louis, 2008)

Julie has always been a top student. She has succeeded in balancing her social and academic lives well during her college years.

Toward the end of the fall semester of her senior year, Julie's academic adviser noticed she had become more withdrawn. Julie stopped showing up for advising meetings and missed an appointment to work on her resume in preparation for a job search.

Top five strengths: Context, Achiever, Includer, Belief, and Woo