Strengths at Work

Dr. Susan Martin
Program Director
PhD Career Development
Introductions

Name

Program & Year in the program

Postdocs- where did you earn your PhD? Briefly describe your current position

What type of position or career will you pursue after graduation?
Career Self-Management Competencies

1. **Know yourself** (interests, skills, and values). Communicate convincingly about your transferable skills and strengths.

2. Able to **name the specific type of jobs** you are looking for within specific **industries** and understand the qualifications and typical career paths.

3. **Keep up with discipline/industry trends. Continue to develop required skills.**

4. **Effectively build, maintain and utilize your professional network at all stages of your career.** Use it for gaining information, job search assistance, and identifying opportunities.

5. Manage a professionally branded and **effective online presence.**

6. **Know sources of postings.** Understand application processes & timelines.

7. **Able to draft, edit and tailor documents** (CV, resume, cover letters, email correspondence, letters of acceptance and decline...).

8. Master the art of **effective interviewing.**

9. **Able to effectively negotiate and accept/decline offers.**

10. **Accepts responsibility** for ongoing career and professional development. Maintains **positive mindset and demonstrates resilience.**
Why do self-assessment?

- You have a unique combination of interests, skills, values and strengths
- Enables you to explore career options for fit with interests, values, strengths.
- Allows you to identify and address “skills gaps” and professional development targets for IDP
- Important foundation for effective interviewing
- Strengths express themselves throughout your life and leveraging these contribute to success and satisfaction
- Re-focus on who you are outside of the PhD
Strengths Demonstration

The Writing Challenge

- Write down numbers 1-5 left hand side of paper
- Write full name on each line quickly
- Write the numbers 1-5 down right side of paper
- Write full name on each line using OTHER hand
https://youtu.be/FQHPSRLt32k
Just to recap: CliftonStrengths

- Formerly known as StrengthsQuest. 2001 Book. Used in education.
- Each of us has within us a range of talents, abilities, capabilities, and strengths.
- Our talents can be applied in many areas, including relationships with others, learning, academic studies, leadership, service, and careers.
- Each of us can find joy, meaning, and success in using our talents and strengths in our lives and our work.

- Developing our strengths rather than our weaknesses will result in a more productive and meaningful life.

What do you think of this approach?
What is a strength?

STRENGTH = The ability to provide consistent, near-perfect performance in a given activity.

Talent = raw material and source of potential strengths

Talent + Skill & Knowledge (gained through experience) = STRENGTH
Activity: Signature Theme Report

- Pick one of your themes and underline the words and phrases that really resonate with you.

Group Discussion

- Which descriptive phrases really resonate with you?
- What was your first reaction to your 5 signature themes?
- What did you learn about yourself by reviewing your Signature Theme Report?
How have your strengths led to success?
Other uses...

CAREER EXPLORATION

- Ask questions in informational interviews that uncover if/how your strengths might be of value to particular career paths.
- When evaluating career paths you can ask yourself how your strengths would be used and or valued.

JOB SEARCH

- Review job descriptions and think about how strengths are aligned (or not!)
- Ask questions during interviews about tasks and environment
- Use specific examples of time you used your strengths during interviews
Strengths and interviewing

Pick one of your signature themes. Think about a specific example of a time when you used this strength. Jot down some notes using the STAR format.

1. **SITUATION** - be specific to create a firm set up and context
2. **TASK and ACTION** - what was the goal and what did you do specifically?
3. **RESULTS** - describe positive results, the outcome, value added by your actions
Next Steps with Strengths

LEARN MORE, OBSERVE, INTENTIONALLY USE YOUR STRENGTHS

● Notice when you are frustrated and stressed out. How could the situation be interpreted through the lense of strengths?
● Use the e-books on the website to read more about your themes and career planning, relationships, leadership, etc.
● Watch the videos on the website.