
DEVELOPING STRENGTHS-BASED PROJECT TEAMS by Martha Buel and Connie Plowman

High-Performing Strengths-Based Project Teams

The formation of project teams takes different avenues. Ideally, the project manager and team members are hand-selected by the project sponsor because of their extensive experience, unique skills, and valuable expertise. However, sometimes teams are “thrown together” because people are available. Or an individual might be selected for the team because he/she sits within 20 feet of the project manager’s desk! Regardless of how the project team comes together, it needs to get to the “performing” stage quickly – using the Tuckman model of group development of Forming, Storming, Norming, Performing. One of the best ways for project teams to become high performing is for each team member to put their strengths to work.

High performing strengths-based teams develop and apply their collective talents and strengths for successfully achieving their team and organization’s goals. Benefits realized from teams investing in strengths-based team development include increased productivity and profitability.*

Strengths-based project teams integrate their knowledge, skills and practice of strengths development with project management techniques, equipping the project team to apply and maximize their collective strengths to successfully complete the project on time, within budget, and according to the project objectives and specifications.

The first step for creating a strengths-based project team culture is for project managers to invest in and develop their own talents and strengths by using the StrengthsFinder® talent assessment and engaging in the strengths development process.

Once vested in strengths development, a project manager can be an effective strengths-based leader and role model for their project team, forming a strengths-based project team culture where team members develop an awareness of each other’s talents and can support each other in maximizing the collective strengths of the team. The strengths-based project manager and the project team can then integrate strengths-based team development with project management principles and techniques as they engage in the process of successfully completing the project.

As project team members use their talents and strengths, they become more adept at using, maximizing, and leveraging their talents and strengths personally and collectively, which not only benefits the team but also each team member and the team’s organization. As strengths-based project managers and project team members share strengths-based team development knowledge with their other project teams, they can influence an effective, productive, and profitable “strengths-based partnerships and teams” cultural shift within their organization.

Strength-Based Project Teams:

Greater productivity. Greater profitability. Greater results.

To continue the dialogue about Strength-Based Project Teams, please contact:

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**State of the American Manager: Analytics and Advice for Leaders*, Gallup, Inc., 2015.

