

Strengths in the Workplace

B I R D V I L L E I S D

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- Teach With Your Strengths by Liesveld & Miller
- StrengthsQuest by Clifton & Anderson
- How Full is Your Bucket by Rath & Clifton

SPOTLIGHT ON: RELATOR

The strength of Relator allows a person to develop strong friendships and partnerships. Those with the theme of Relator enjoy solidifying relationships with people so that trust, caring, and intimacy is developed. Relators form close connections that often last years.

In the workplace, relators are sought after for their ability to bring an interpersonal connection to group structures. While most relators enjoy spending time with close friends, they use their talents at work to strengthen the bonds of co-workers. Relators are often known for their ability to show interest in needs of others. In

the educational setting, relators are often found in extra-curricular activities. At fine arts and sporting events, relator



attributes when found in teachers. As faculty members, relators are often caretakers, and assist each other in times of celebration and crisis. In this way, relators are integral to maintaining high morale and productivity on a campus.

Words that describe those with the strength of Relator: caretaker, friend, nurturer, buddy, and mentor.

teachers are often able to work closely with students to help develop their talents over several years. Relators tend to be nurturing as well as good listeners, which are positive

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WHAT DO YOU EXPECT FROM STUDENTS?

In the classroom, your personal strengths and talents blend to make you a unique teacher. Liesveld and Miller (2005) say, “when you teach with talent, knowledge, and skill—when you teach with your strengths—you have what you need to be a remarkably

effective educator.” The question becomes, how do your strengths influence your expectations from your students?

To answer this question effectively, a teacher must know his or her own strengths. Then he

or she must examine what they expect in return from students. For example, Achievers are driven to accomplish tasks quickly and efficiently. They must complete something every day, even if it is a small piece of a larger task. Given this view of the

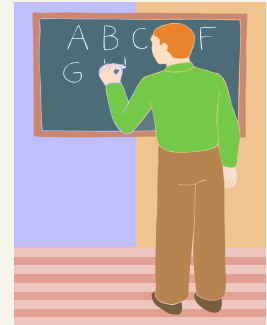
STUDENT EXPECTATIONS (CONT'D)

(cont'd from page one) the world, Achievers may expect students to feel this same desire. Achiever teachers may expect that students will complete assignments within a short time period or set short term goals for long term projects. Likewise, teachers who value Consistency strive for balance and equity. These teachers expect students to adhere to classroom rules and policies.

When individual situations arise, a teacher strong in Consistency may have trouble making adjustments to benefit a student.

However, the strengths philosophy instructs us to look more deeply into the classroom relationship. Teachers need to look beyond their own strengths and take into consideration the strengths and needs of their students. As you learn more about your

own strengths, start to celebrate both students and co-workers who have different strengths. Use your own talents to inspire students. As an achiever, use your talents to help students track their own achievement and help them to accomplish more. For the consistent teacher, bending a rule may help to equalize the situation for a student with special needs. For more information, see



Teach With Your Strengths, Liesveld & Miller, 2005.

THE BISD STORY

“It is only when talent, knowledge and skill are combined that they become Strengths.”

Thanks to the support of BISD, Strengths is becoming part of the culture of our district. The more we know about ourselves and our talents, the stronger we will be as educators.

Any employee is eligible to take part in the assessment and training. New teachers

receive training at the beginning of their service in the district. Veteran teachers and staff are taking part in the assessment and receiving coaching during staff development. The district has several Strengths Coaches available to assist individuals and groups understand the assessment and how to apply it in the workplace.

If you need further information, contact Jennifer Gotuaco via email.

THE MORE PRAISE, THE BETTER

In 1925, Dr. Elizabeth Hurlock performed research on students and praise. In her study, she divided a group of students into four groups. For the next five days, the students completed mathematics tests.

The first group, A, were called

by name and praised publicly for their good work the day before. The second group, B, were also called my name, however, they were criticized publicly for their poor achievement. The third group, C, was given neither praise nor criticism, however they witnessed the treat-

ments given to groups A and B. The last group, D, was the control group. After the five days of testing, the results indicated that Groups A & B did improve, while Groups C & D showed no improvement. But the remarkable part—Group A's scores increased every day, with a 71%



increase in scores over the five days. This study shows the importance of specific and public praise. For more information, see Teach With Your Strengths, 2005.