

Q03. At work, I have the opportunity to do what I do best every day.

Know Me

The most powerful benefit a manager can provide employees is to place them in roles that allow them to apply the best of their natural selves — their talents — as well as their skills and knowledge every day.

Regardless of role, having the opportunity to develop one's strengths is more important to success than the description of the role, a title or even pay. Managers whose employees' talents are aligned with their job demands have more sales, greater profits, fewer unscheduled absences and lower employee turnover.

People who focus on using their strengths are six times as likely to be engaged in their jobs.

People who receive feedback on their strengths have 7.8% greater productivity.



Employees want to maximize their contributions. To do this, managers need to put them in roles in which they can do what they do best. When employees have an opportunity to do what they do best, they act with more confidence, direction and hope — an attitude that every employee needs to be successful.

About **one in three** employees can strongly agree that they have the opportunity to do what they do best every day.

Outstanding performance is a result of each person knowing what they do best and having the opportunity to do it in the role every day.

The best managers build an environment where there is ongoing dialogue and an awareness of talents. They routinely recognize the unique contribution each individual makes using their strengths, while making regular adjustments to help align work with team members' talents.

As a manager, you should routinely ask yourself:

- ✓ Do I know what each individual enjoys most about their work every day?
- ✓ Are there things that are keeping or distracting individuals from being as productive as they could be?
- ✓ Have I aligned each person to do what they do best in the role every day?
- ✓ What can I do to make it easier for individuals to do what they do best every day?

Three Ways to Help an Employee Appreciate and Use Their Strengths

- 1 **Name It!** Help each person gain awareness of and keep in mind their individual talents and strengths.
- 2 **Claim It!** Help each team member appreciate the value and opportunities their talents and strengths offer.
- 3 **Aim It!** Help each team member intentionally invest in the development of their talents and strengths.

Helping Your Employees Maximize Their Contributions

Helping people get into roles in which they can most fully use their inherent talents and strengths is the ongoing work of great managers. Learning about individual differences through experience and insight can help a manager position people efficiently within and across roles and remove barriers to high performance.

Engaging Conversations

The team's ability to achieve excellence and get the most out of each team member's natural talents is connected to the extent to which the manager and team understand, appreciate and start to use this information in a meaningful way. Asking your employees the following questions can help ensure that they understand and appreciate how each person contributes to the team's success:

- What do you do best in your role?
- What do you enjoy most about the work you get to do every day?
- What aspects of your work do you think you do really well?
- What do you look forward to doing at work each day?
- Are there things that keep you or distract you from being as productive as you expect to be?
- Are there parts of your role you find difficult?
- What do you enjoy the most about your work? Which parts of your current job bring you the most satisfaction or greatest sense of accomplishment?
- What could I do to make it easier for you to do what you do best every day?
- How do you use your team members' strengths to accomplish goals?

Best Practices

The most effective managers recognize that one of their most important roles as a manager is to help each employee appreciate and claim the particular genius of their most dominant talents and strengths. The best managers incorporate the following behaviors into their management style and approach:

- Reaffirm others' strengths. Look for activities that employees are drawn to, activities that come naturally to them, tasks that they pick up quickly, or glimpses of excellence into those things that they do brilliantly.
- Individualize your approach. Learn as much as you can about the talents and strengths of each employee you work with. The best managers can provide a detailed description about the unique talents and strengths of each of their employees, including what drives each one; how each one naturally thinks, feels and behaves; and how each one builds relationships. Great managers then use this information to enhance each person's work experience.
- Set employees up for success. Organize tasks and activities based on each employee's talents and strengths.
- Help your employees (individually and collectively) identify specific ways that they can use their talents and strengths to improve the ways they interact, coordinate and collaborate with one another.
- Celebrate your employees' strengths. When you glimpse moments of success and strength, provide recognition and look for more opportunities in which this person can use these strengths.
- Incorporate the language of strengths into describing and discussing each person's talents.