

A TEAM BUILDING EXERCISE: SURVEY YOUR STRENGTHS

The purpose of this survey is three-fold:

- A chance to reflect on your group experience in light of the eight indicators of extraordinary groups.
- To set the stage for your group to talk about your collective experience
- To decide whether or not to make shifts in how you go about working together.

Directions: Review the definitions of each indicator of an extraordinary group. Place a check in the appropriate boxes to indicate which items you:

- Currently see as strengths of your group
- Believe your group should attend to as you move forward

Any item can receive two check marks. Some items may not receive any marks at all

Indicators of an Extraordinary Group	Current Strength	Attend To
1. <u>Compelling Purpose:</u> An inspiring and shared understanding of why group members come together.		
2. <u>Shared Leadership:</u> Members lead the group together, taking mutual responsibility for outcomes and the way in which the group works.		
3. <u>Just-Enough Structure:</u> Members develop only the plans, systems, roles, and agreements necessary to help them move forward—but not so much as to become bureaucratic or burdensome.		
4. <u>Full Engagement:</u> Members enthusiastically participate in the group’s work.		
5. <u>Embracing Differences:</u> Group members see, value, and use their diversity as a strength.		
6. <u>Unexpected Learning:</u> Individual and collective learning exceeds expectations, reaching beyond the work at hand to members’ careers and lives.		
7. <u>Strengthened Relationships:</u> Trust, respect, collegiality, and often friendships grow among group members.		
8. <u>Great Results:</u> Tangible and intangible outcomes surpass members’ expectations.		

How to Use This Survey

Use: with a group of up to 12 people; if more than 12, allow for more time

Time required: 1 hour (or more if people really want or need to talk)

Best use: not in a regular meeting but in a time set aside for team development

1. Explain the purpose of this exercise: determine the strengths of this group when it comes to how members work together; identify the elements that are important to pay attention to in the future to increase group effectiveness. (5 minutes)
2. Ask each member of your group to fill out the survey. (5-7 minutes)
3. On a white board or flip chart, duplicate the essence of the survey (don't need definitions of eight indicators)
4. Poll the group to find out what items people see as strengths and which need attention moving forward. Put numbers or check marks in appropriate boxes. (10 minutes)
5. Discuss for 15 minutes:
 - a. What of these Indicators do we see as strengths of our group?
 - b. What behaviors illustrate these strengths?
6. Discuss for 25 minutes:
 - a. What Indicators do we want to pay attention to as we move ahead?
 - b. Given these Indicators, what possible actions could we take to positively impact our teamwork?
 - c. What 1-3 changes will we commit to in order to improve our effectiveness?
7. Make sure that your group follows through on implementing you collective commitments.
8. Three months after this discussion, bring the group together to talk about how well you are doing. Use these questions to guide your discussion:
 - a. Have the changes made a difference?
 - b. If yes, why? If not, why not?
 - c. What can be learned from our experience?
 - d. What next steps should we take to increase the effectiveness of our group?

For more information and ideas about creating extraordinary groups, go to www.extraordinarygroups.com