

Team Strengths - 004

Narrator will do all VO. BRoll will be of actors. No audio will be recorded in BRoll.

There is a popular children's game that starts like this: "One of these things is not like the other." The challenge is to look at several objects and pick out which one doesn't fit in with the rest. (b-roll that shows 5 images and one that is clearly different)

Pretty painless, right?

But sometimes, we find ourselves playing that game as adults, on our teams. And it doesn't always feel so painless.

That was the case for **Ivy**. (b-roll of a woman and her team sitting down together with papers in front of them) She and her team had gathered to review and discuss their team and individual strengths portraits. (b-roll of team strengths portrait paper). As they discussed what strengths they most valued and how they could leverage those strengths, Ivy noticed something. Her top strengths weren't being discussed... because her top strengths all fell on the bottom half of the team's portrait. For example, methodical, her top strength; she used it daily and considered it imperative for her job. If the team didn't follow clear process, they could face performance, or even legal risks.

Ivy sat quietly as her teammates discussed the *team's* top strengths, which was a pretty good picture of the team's culture. She realized most of them had ranked methodical as one of their lowest strengths. As the conversation swirled around her, she felt more and more isolated and alone. She was not like the others. She recalled some past crucial conversations and wondered if her coworkers saw her as a *process* nuisance, an impediment?

Then something really important happened. **Juan**, looking at the team's bottom strengths, noticed methodical and said, "Wow, this is really low, especially considering how important it is that our data is secure. It's a good thing we have Ivy to keep us honest." (said earnestly, not sarcastically) All eyes turned to Ivy, expectantly. She confirmed what they already knew, that methodical was her top strength.

Then **Georgia** spoke up, saying: "Ivy, I'm probably guilty of not saying this out loud before, but every time you catch me in an error, I get embarrassed for having made the error and I silently thank-you in my head. You've saved us from ourselves so many times, and I just want you know how much I appreciate you."

She wasn't a process *nuisance* but actually a "process *hero*" in the eyes of the team.

There were many times the team would get themselves into trouble by moving a little too fast, taking shortcuts, and she was their process conscience—their check to make sure things were done right.

Ivy felt valued for her unique contribution, and she saw how it helped others. She more fully embraced her role especially in moments when the team needed to follow the processes THEY had agreed on together, to help achieve the results THEY all wanted. Instead of her coming off as the annoying person who is always seemingly whining, “**hey guys, what about rules!?!**” Everyone saw her in a new light. They committed to appreciating her role and being held accountable by her. Their commitment changed the team for good.

Think about your team: What does your team need more of? What do you need less of? Who can bring a strength that will help you do what you need to do?

Understanding your behaviors in the context of your team strengths can help each person know how and when to contribute in the most meaningful ways.

(Notes for Ivy: Please act out the scenarios of sitting with others as the team discusses the team and their individual strengths. We are looking for your natural reactions. Ivy makes a shift in her demeanor as she listens to the comments from Juan and Georgia. Then says the line “hey guys, what about the rules!?!”)