

18th Annual International Leadership Conference

SOUTH AMERICA

Lima, Buenos Aires, Rio de Janeiro, Santiago, Bogota, Lima, Lathropus, Horuca P., Santiago

Introductions

Please give your name and level of experience
with the strengths philosophy and the
StrengthsFinder tool

What are the questions you
came with that you hope
will be addressed?



My Assumptions

Basics



Expert



Overview of the Presentation

- Strengths Overview and Research
- Harper College Case Study
- Experience-based Suggestions
- Question and Answers



Two Basic Premises of the Strengths Philosophy

You already have within yourself what you need to succeed!

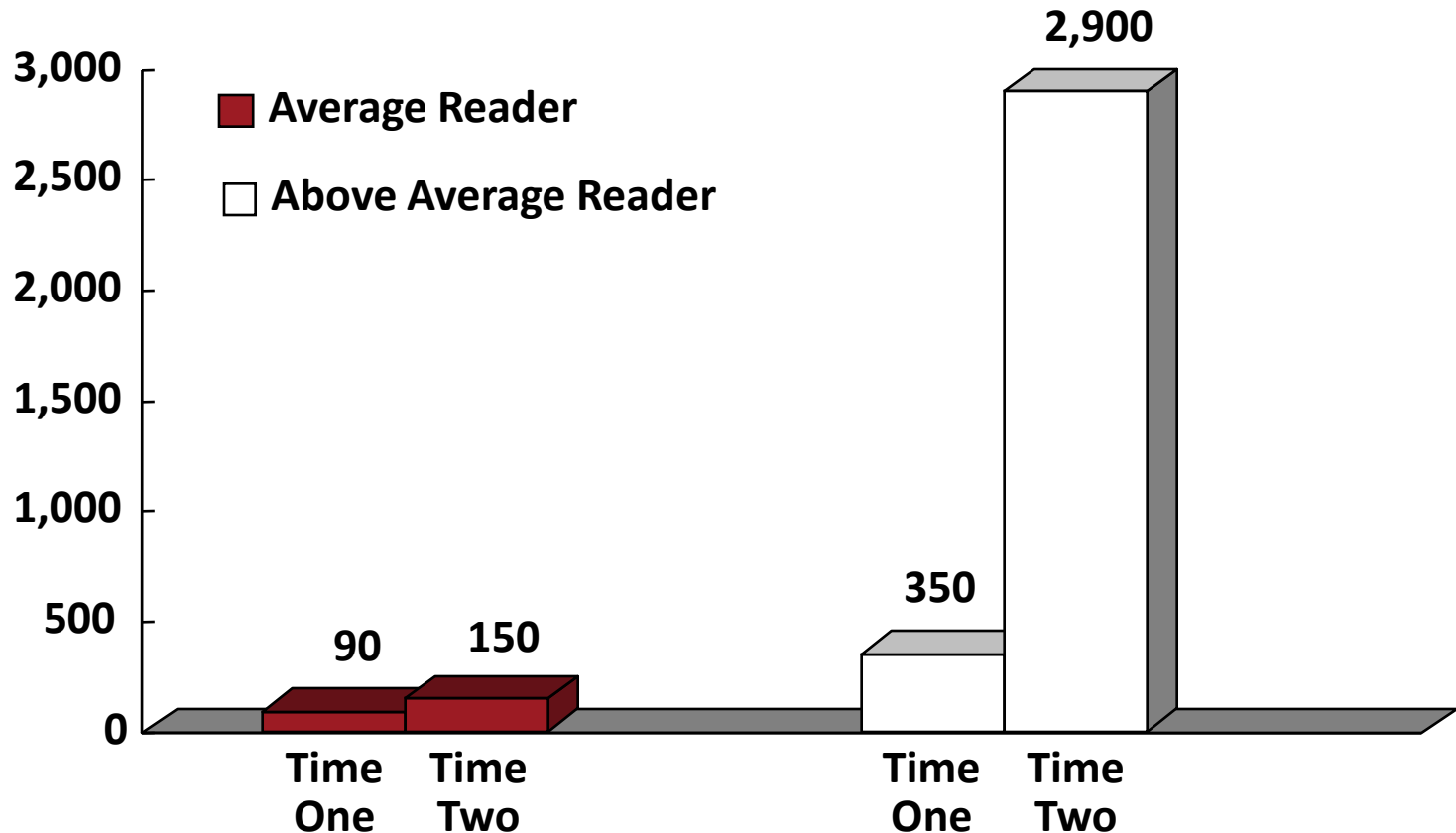
“Individuals gain more when they build on their talents, than when they make comparable efforts to improve their areas of weakness.”

Clifton & Harter, 2003, p. 112



“greatness” comes from building on natural talents

Speed-Reading Course Illustration

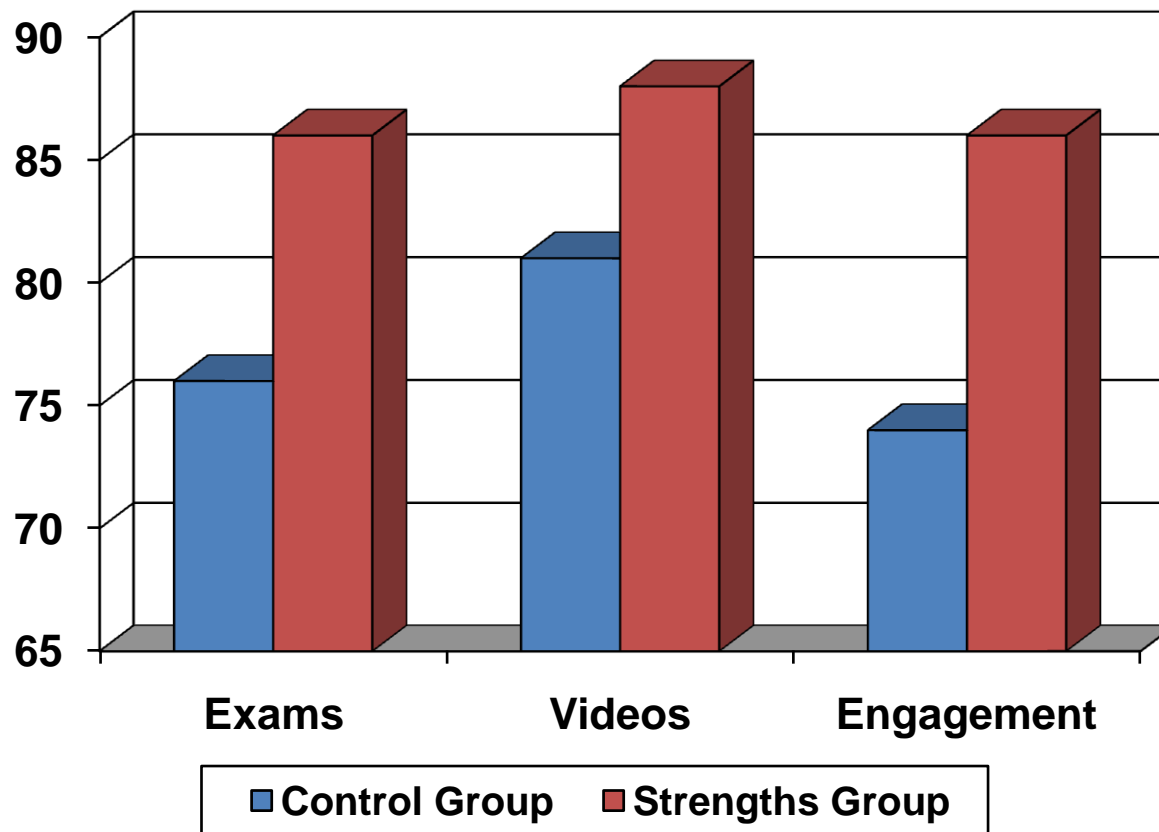


Can you prove
a strengths
approach
works in higher
education?



Strengths-Based Learning

Cantwell, 2005

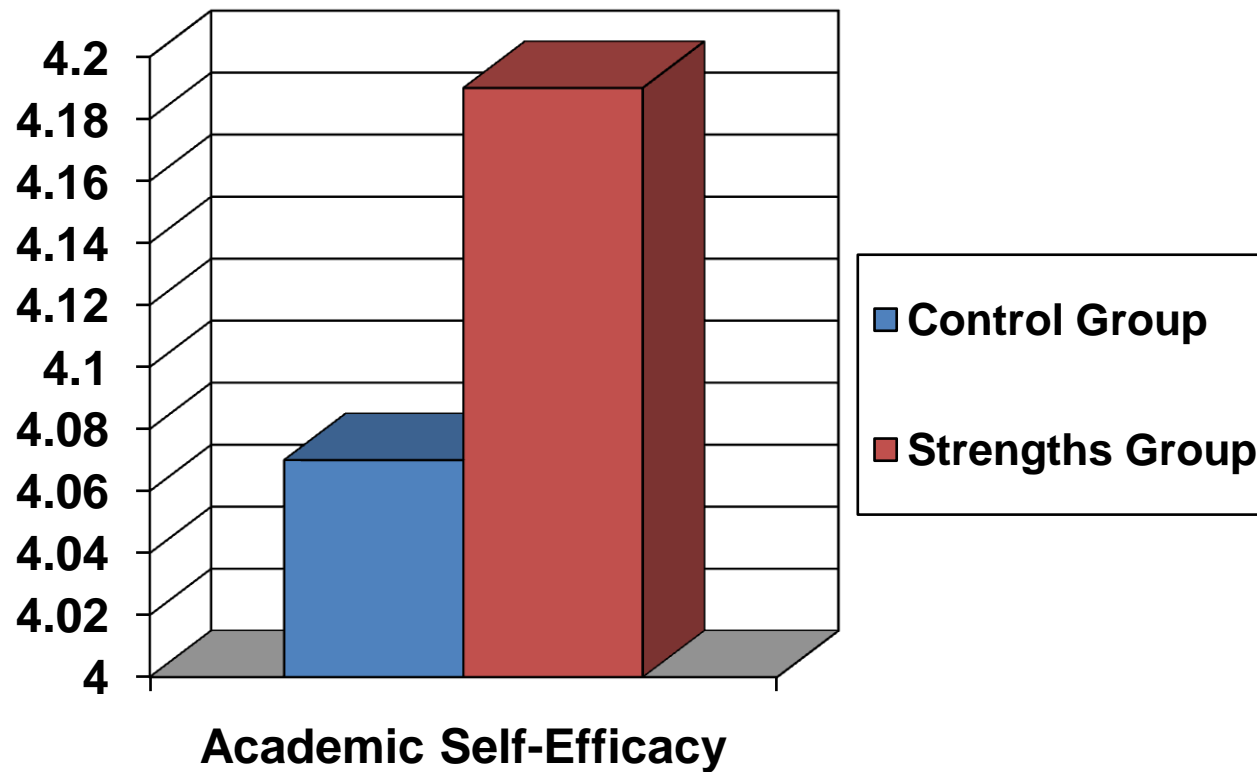


Academic Self-Efficacy

- Students' perception that they are capable of achieving academic success
- Significantly related to GPA, persistence, and personal adjustment

Chemers, Hu, & Garcia, 2001

First-Year Students at Azusa Pacific University

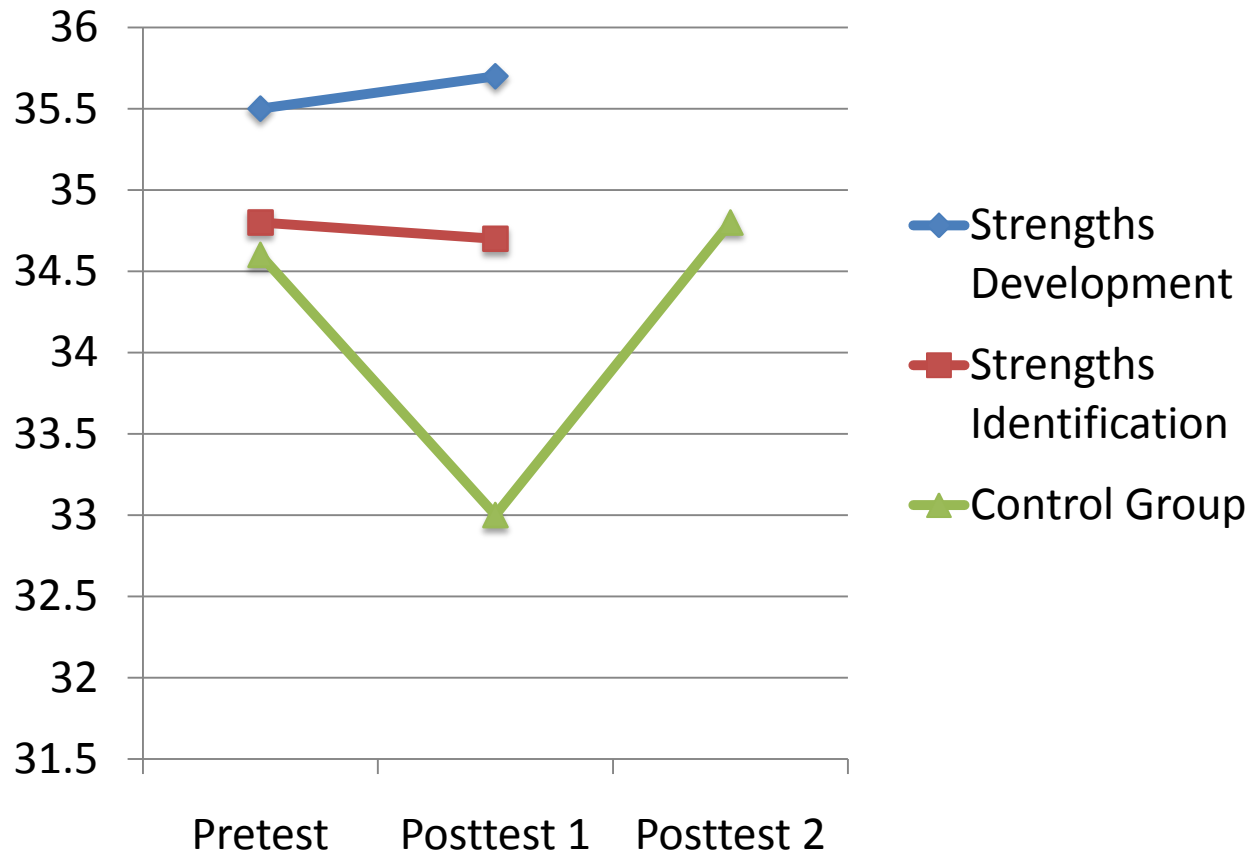


Perceived Academic Control

- Do I know what it takes to succeed here?
- Predictive of quality and duration of effort, academic engagement, GPA, and retention
- Particularly important during major transitions – and typically decreases during the first year of college

Perceived Academic Control

(Louis, 2008)

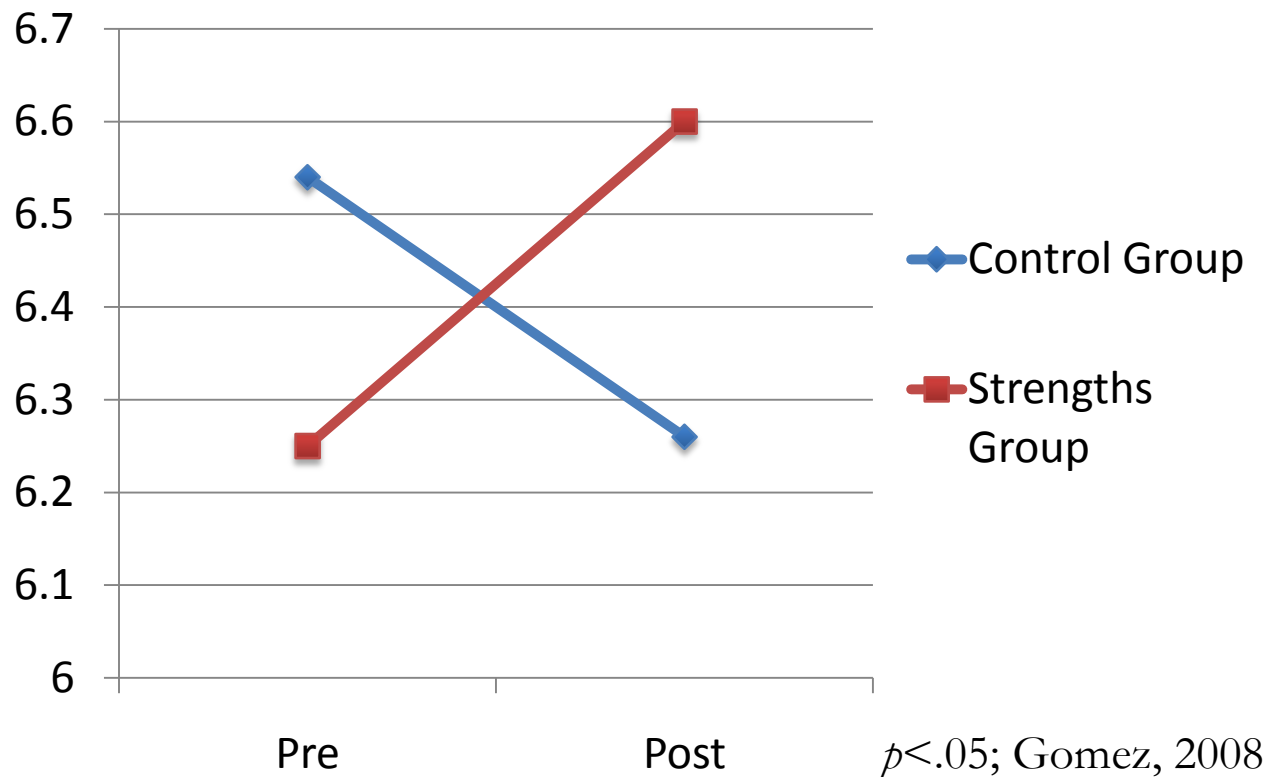


Hope

- GPA = Goals + Pathways + Agency
- Students with high hope are more likely to graduate from college and to get better grades
- An individual strengths-based intervention can have a positive effect on students' levels of hope (Lopez, 2005)



Hope Scores in At-Risk Students





Strengths Matter @ Harper College

To provide a highly personalized and
student-focused method for motivating
and encouraging students at an open-
door institution.

1989 Student Success Philosophy



Mandatory Assessment



Mandatory Placement into Developmental Courses



Required Orientation



Onset of Success Courses



Mandatory Advising for those At-Risk

Harper became very organized at diagnosing and treating weaknesses.

But.....what were faculty asking?

Why are students so unmotivated?

We have all these support services, tutoring, special courses, required interventions and why wasn't it working?



Start with an Identification of “Needs”



What if we started with a Base of Strength?



“I have talents. I have what it takes. I believe I can do this.”

How do we systematize this? We needed to flip our thinking about students.

Summer 2006

Strengths model selected to provide balance to the typical community college approach of assessing students' academic deficiencies.

Two Primary Objectives

Student
Engagement

Change Campus
Culture



Student Engagement

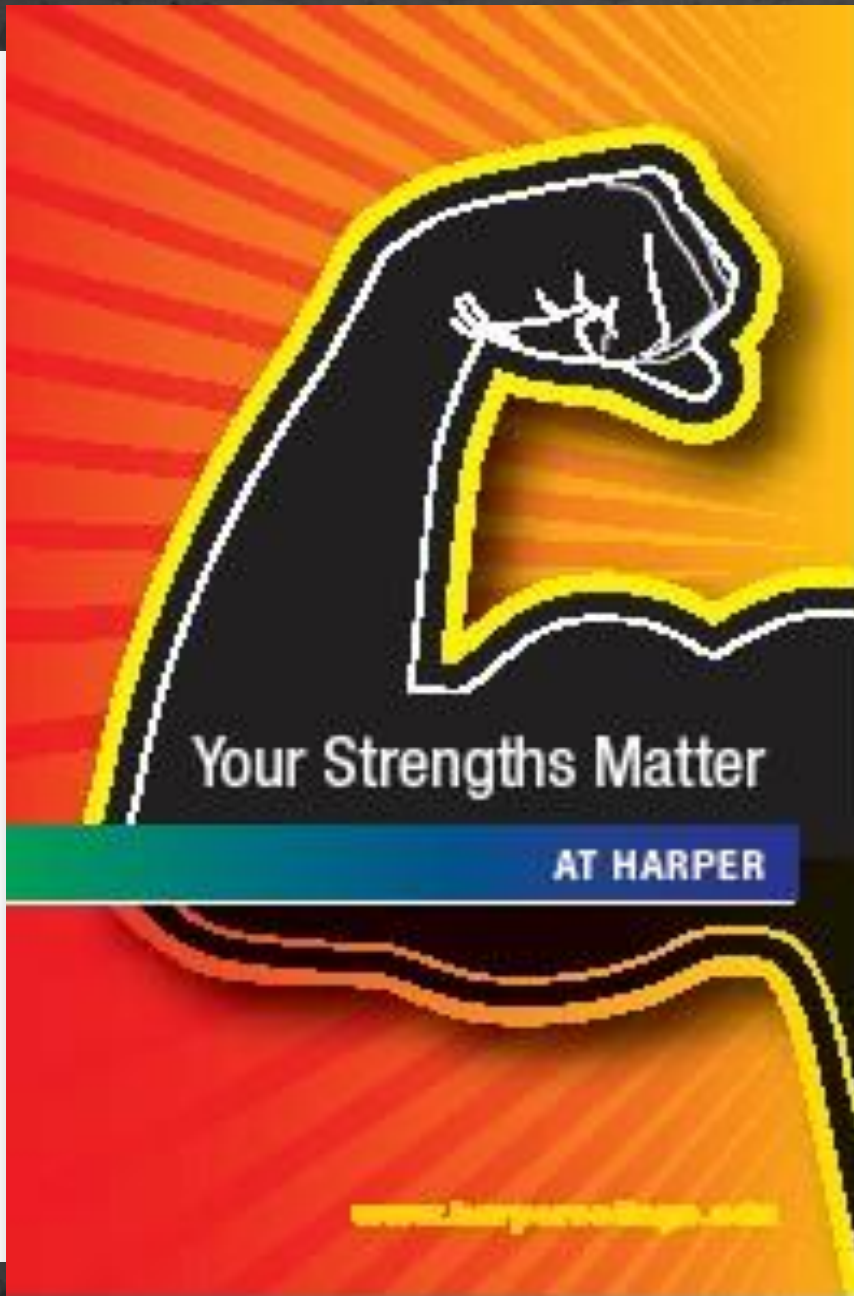
To enhance students' self-knowledge of their unique talents and learning styles to potentially increase motivation, success, and satisfaction

Campus Climate Goals

- To create a campus climate that is strengths-based, positive, and highly student focused
- To enhance employee satisfaction by acknowledging their unique contributions and positive assets to the College

Five Teams Were Launched

- Initial Student Experience
- Classroom Infusion
- Strength-Based Advising
- Positive Psychology Course
- Human Resources/Professional Development



First Year Students and Orientation

Nearly 4,000 new
students take
StrengthsFinder

Orientation Leaders as Strengths Advocates



Peer-facilitated workshop

Your Strengths Matter

Signature Themes

Achiever People especially talented in the Achiever theme have a great deal of stamina and work hard. They take great satisfaction from being busy and productive.	Connectedness People especially talented in the Connectedness theme have faith in the links between all things. They believe there are few coincidences and that almost every event has a reason.	Harmony People especially talented in the Harmony theme look for consensus. They don't enjoy conflict; rather, they seek areas of agreement.	Relator People who are especially talented in the Relator theme enjoy close relationships with others. They find deep satisfaction in working hard with friends to achieve a goal.
Activator People especially talented in the Activator theme can make things happen by turning thoughts into action. They are often impatient.	Consistency People especially talented in the Consistency theme are keenly aware of the need to treat people the same. They try to treat everyone in the world with consistency by setting up clear rules and adhering to them.	Ideation People especially talented in the Ideation theme are fascinated by ideas. They are able to find connections between seemingly disparate phenomena.	Responsibility People especially talented in the Responsibility theme take psychological ownership of what they say they will do. They are committed to stable values such as honesty and loyalty.
Adaptability People especially talented in the Adaptability theme prefer to "go with the flow." They tend to be "now" people who take things as they come and discover the future one day at a time.	Context People especially talented in the Context theme enjoy thinking about the past. They understand the present by researching its history.	Includer People especially talented in the Includer theme are accepting of others. They show awareness of those who feel left out, and make an effort to include them.	Restorative People especially talented in the Restorative theme are adept at dealing with problems. They are good at figuring out what is wrong and resolving it.
Analytical People especially talented in the Analytical theme search for reasons and causes. They have the ability to think about all the factors that might affect a situation.	Deliberative People especially talented in the Deliberative theme are best described by the serious care they take in making decisions or choices. They anticipate the obstacles.	Individualization People especially talented in the Individualization theme are intrigued with the unique qualities of each person. They have a gift for figuring out how people who are different can work together productively.	Self-Assurance People especially talented in the Self-Assurance theme feel confident in their ability to manage their own lives. They possess an inner compass that gives them confidence that their decisions are right.
Arranger People especially talented in the Arranger theme can organize, but they also have a flexibility that complements this ability. They like to figure out how all of the pieces and resources can be arranged for maximum productivity.	Developer People especially talented in the Developer theme recognize and cultivate the potential in others. They spot the signs of each small improvement and derive satisfaction from these improvements.	Input People especially talented in the Input theme have a craving to know more. Often they like to collect and archive all kinds of information.	Significance People especially talented in the Significance theme want to be very important in the eyes of others. They are independent and want to be recognized.
Belief People especially talented in the Belief theme have certain core values that are unchanging. Out of these values emerges a defined purpose for their life.	Discipline People especially talented in the Discipline theme enjoy routine and structure. Their world is best described by the order they create.	Intellection People especially talented in the Intellection theme are characterized by their intellectual activity. They are introspective and appreciate intellectual discussions.	Strategic People especially talented in the Strategic theme create alternative ways to proceed. Faced with any given scenario, they can quickly spot the relevant patterns and issues.
Command People especially talented in the Command theme have presence. They can take control of a situation and make decisions.	Empathy People especially talented in the Empathy theme can sense the feelings of other people by imagining themselves in others' lives or others' situations.	Learner People especially talented in the Learner theme have a great desire to learn and want to continuously improve. In particular, the process of learning, rather than the outcome, excites them.	Woo People especially talented in the Woo theme love the challenge of meeting new people and winning them over. They derive satisfaction from breaking the ice and making a connection with another person.
Communication People especially talented in the Communication theme generally find it easy to put their thoughts into words. They are good conversationalists and presenters.	Focus People especially talented in the Focus theme can take a direction, follow through, and make the corrections necessary to stay on track. They prioritize, then act.	Maximizer People especially talented in the Maximizer theme focus on strengths as a way to stimulate personal and group excellence. They seek to transform something especially talented into something superb.	Remember, your strengths matter at Harper!
Competition People especially talented in the Competition theme measure their progress against the performance of others. They strive to win first place and revel in contests.	Futuristic People especially talented in the Futuristic theme are inspired by the future and what could be. They inspire others with their visions of the future.	Positivity People especially talented in the Positivity theme have an enthusiasm that is contagious. They are upbeat and can get others excited about what they are going to do.	

Academic Advising and Counseling

- Using top 5 strengths in advising, course selection and career planning
- Providing professional development to counselors and advisors (required readings, self-discovery, team building)
- Integrating strengths into advising and career counseling protocols

Special Populations

- FYE groups for L. D. Students
- Summer Bridge for At-Risk
- Distinguished Scholars



Student Leadership and Organizations

Students presented

"Building Your Board Through the Power of Strengths"

National Association for
Campus Activities

Mid America Regional
Conference in Fall 2007



200 Student Leaders

Teaching and Learning

**Systematize
strengths infusion
into the classroom**

- Classroom Modules
- Curriculum Infusion
- Faculty Development/
Human Resources



Classroom Modules

- Classroom modules presented to over 3,500 students in 129 classes
- Across the curriculum in Astronomy, Geology, Math, Psychology, Chemistry, Economics, Nursing, Music, Hospitality, and Radiological Technology

Curriculum Infusion

Success courses:

Orientation 101

Psychology 106 – Study Skills

Psychology 107 – Humanistic
Psychology

Career Development 110



Teaching and Learning

- New Course -

A positive psychology course, modeled after the Harvard course by Dr. Tal Ben-Shahar was developed and taught in Spring 2008



Student Engagement Success and Learnings

Classroom Modules

- 94% - I see the potential that a strengths-based approach can help me to achieve my goals
- 96% - I have a greater understanding of my unique strengths
- 84% - I understand myself better now that I know my strengths
- 87% - I have a greater understanding of the unique strengths of others
- 93% - I intend to find ways to use my strengths more often

Student Engagement Success and Learnings

Orientation, Advising

- 92% - Reported an increase in identifying ways to utilize strengths for academic success
- 100% - Reported that they are more aware of their strengths
- 72% - Cited examples of their strengths in action; in goal setting

Changing the Campus Culture

Create a campus culture
that is strength-based,
positive, and highly
student focused



Institutional Commitment

VP SA + VP AA → President = All Campus

- We were in search of something to bring us together to build a positive community
- StrengthsFinder was used to begin dialogue and to launch a common language

All Campus Meetings (2007-08)

- Fall - What are strengths and how do they apply to me, our team, our students?
- Spring - How do knowing strengths contribute to a Psychology of Hope?

Faculty Skepticism

All faculty meeting

Presenter was faculty who “spoke faculty”

Volunteers led the way

Faculty Development

- Key to faculty buy-in is to speak to them “faculty-to-faculty”
- Annual Faculty Retreat (half day) 2009

Faculty Experts Brought to Campus

- **Eileen Hulme**, Executive Director, Noel Academy for Strengths-Based Leadership and Education; Associate Professor, Department of Doctoral Higher Education, Azusa Pacific University (2007, 2008, 2009)
- **Shane Lopez**, Associate Professor, University of Kansas, (2008)
- **Laurie Schreiner**, Chair and Professor, Department of Doctoral Higher Education, Azusa Pacific University (2009)

Strengths A Priority

- Keynote Presentations on Strengths at Academic Affairs All Faculty Meetings
- Unit on Strengths in the New Faculty Course with VPSA and VPAA
- Theme at three Faculty/Administrator Retreats
- Faculty Brown Bag Sharing on Strengths in the Classroom
- Prominent Positioning of Strengths on the Campus Portal

Campus-wide ~ Cultural Shift

- Over 225 faculty have taken the StrengthsFinder and attended programs designed to familiarize them with strength-based approaches to teaching and learning
- Professor promotions presentations
- Administrative Councils
- Faculty Experts are beginning to emerge

Human Resources

- 150 staff from all employee groups have taken StrengthsFinder
- All new employees have sessions about how their strengths will help them to be successful at Harper
- Common language has contributed to team building among multiple groups

Creating a strength-based campus is a journey

- Symbols - signs on doors, email signatures, desks, “tchotzkes”
- Contributed to a positive climate on campus, common language, sense of humor, and sometimes good-natured teasing

Small Group Discussions



- What would be your goals for a strengths program on your campus?
- What might be the barriers to your success?
- Who are the strengths advocates on your campus?



Five Suggestions to Consider While Seeking to Start or Improve a Strengths Program

Begin with a personal understanding and the development of those around you.



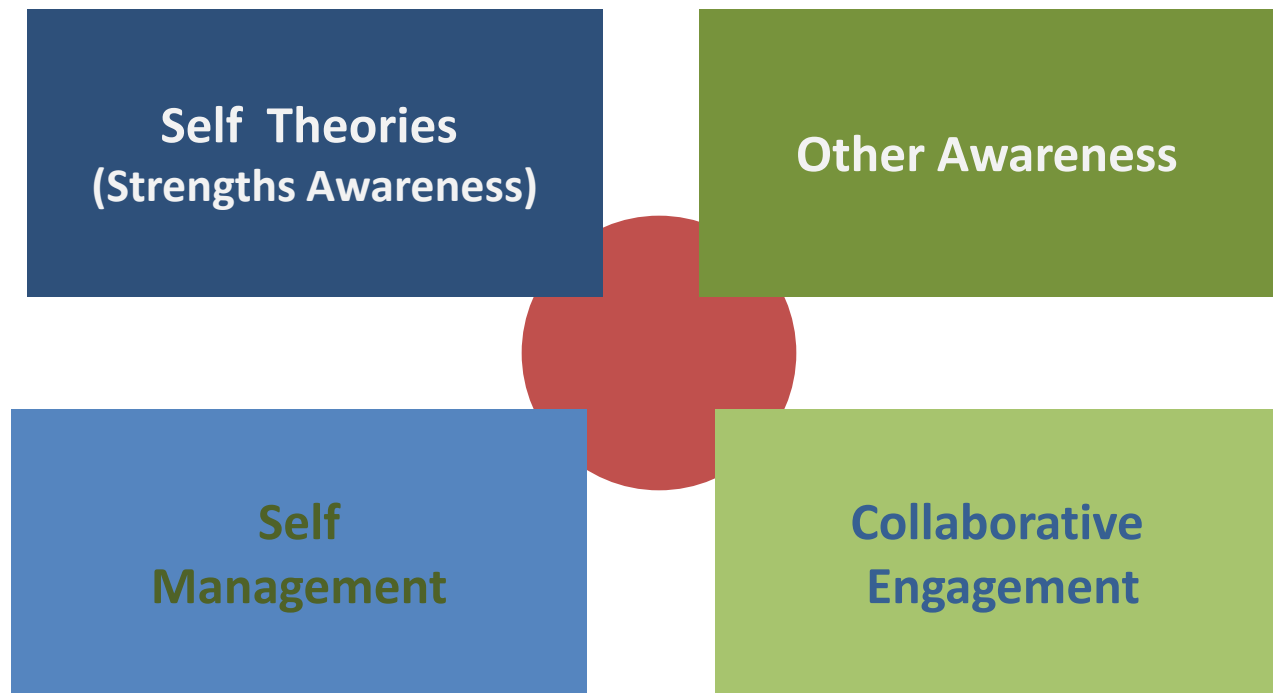
Know the goal!

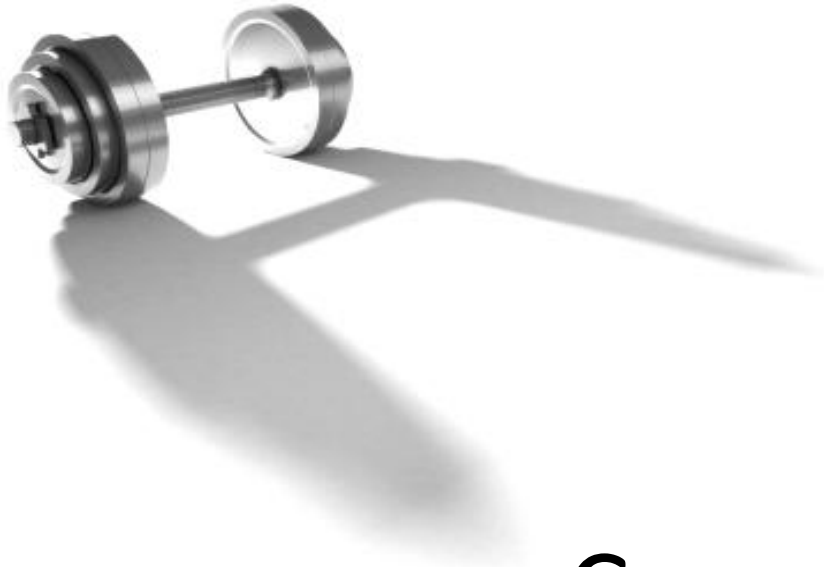




Focus on
Development

Strengths Development Cycle

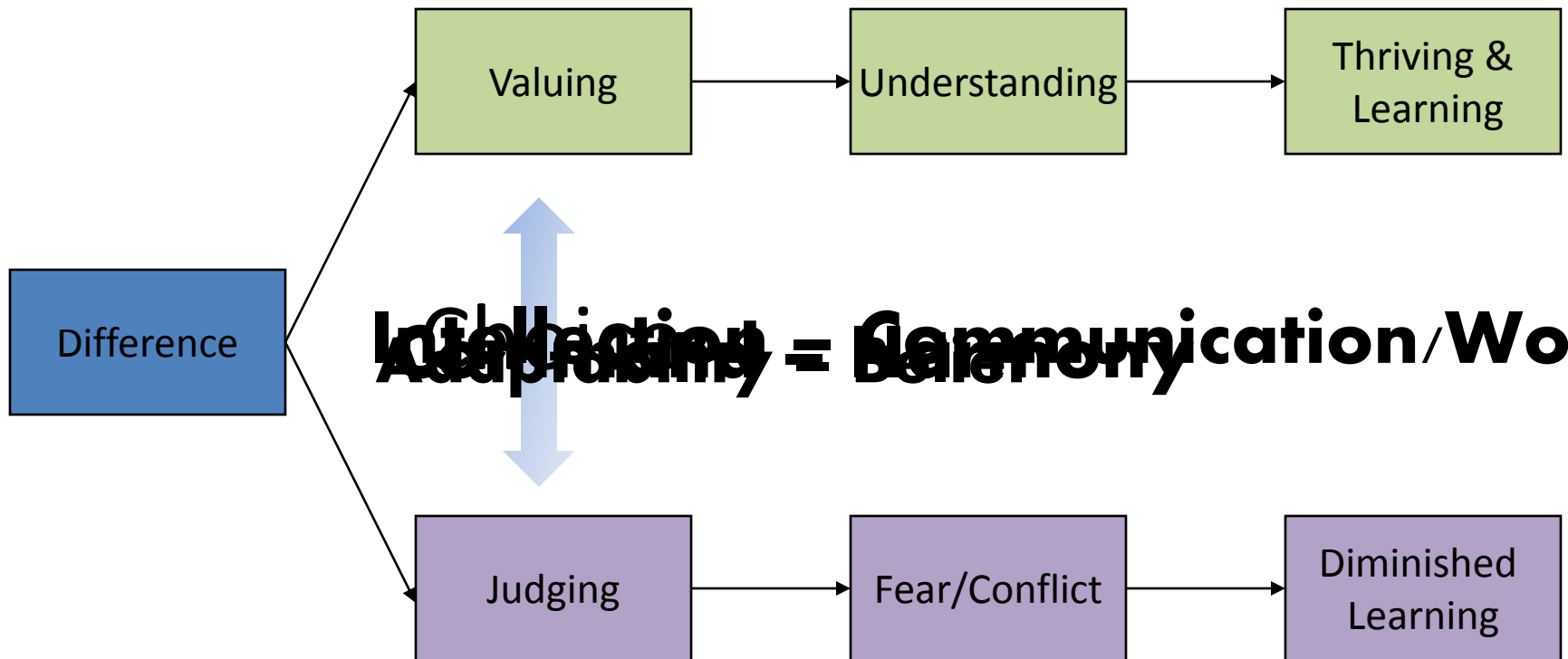




Courage

Recklessness

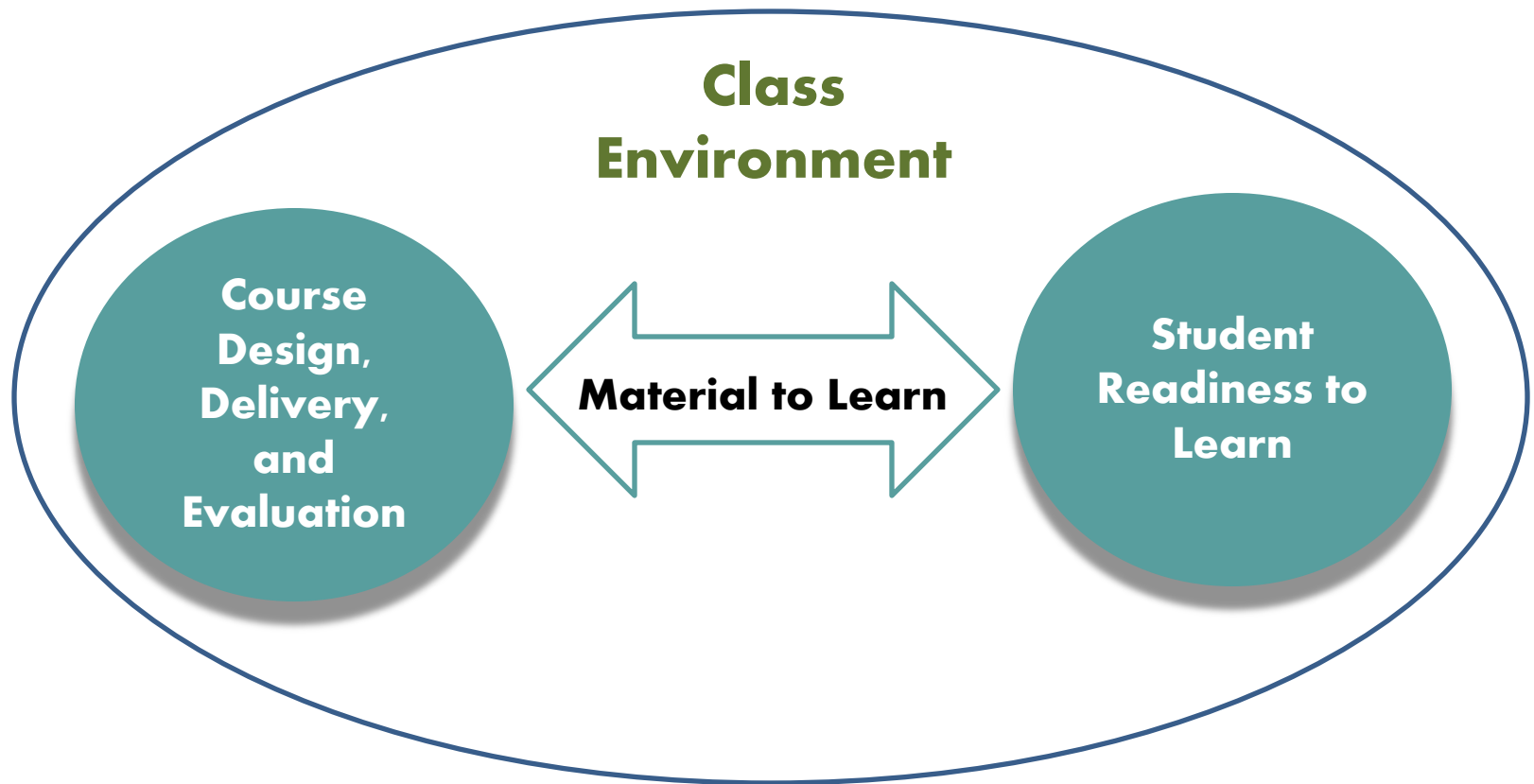
Timidity, Fearfulness



Focus on
Curricular
Interventions in
a Holistic Way



Curricular: Faculty Development



Strengths-Oriented Course Design & Delivery

Covert
Integration



Overt Integration

Overt Integration: Utilizing Strengths in Group Projects

Strengths Formula:

Identify Everyone's Strengths

Discuss the Values of Each Strength

Discuss Possible Strength Conflicts

Discuss How To Navigate Through Those Conflicts

Create a Group Project Creed



Don't let funding issues
stop you completely!



How can we afford to do this?

- 1) Pass on the costs to students
- 2) Use the strengths approach without a specific tool
- 3) STOP doing something
- 4) Start small, just start



How can the Noel Strengths Academy help you?

- Strengths-Oriented Higher Education Certification
- Faculty Development Workshops
- First Year Experience Curriculum
- Strengths and Team Building Resources and Presentations
- Strengths-Oriented Student Organizations Resources
- The Student Athlete and Strengths – Coaching Clinic

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