

Transforming Our Work Through Strengths- Based Leadership

November 17, 2013

*There are three things that are extremely hard –
steel, a diamond, and to know one's self.
Benjamin Franklin, Poor Richard's Almanac, 1750*



- Introduction
- Leadership Overview
- Strengths-Based Leadership
- Discussion of Strengths/Large Group Debrief
- Feedforward Exercise
- Discussion of Leadership Domains/Large Group Debrief
- Quick look of group strengths/gaps
- Conclusion

Assumptions

- 1. None of what I am sharing is necessarily new or complicated but the practice of talking about and leading with strengths is life-long and improves with time for reflection.**
- 2. Actual integration of learning takes place through practice/exercises/experiences.**
- 3. Each of you has a lot of wisdom to share about leading from strengths – please share it!**
- 4. You can't help but transform your work the more you lead from your strengths.**

Leadership Models/Theories

- Leadership From the Inside Out (Kevin Cashman)
- Primal Leadership: Learning to Lead with Emotional Intelligence (Daniel Goleman)
- The Leadership Challenge (Kouzes and Posner)
- Strengths-Based Leadership (Tom Rath and Barrie Conchie)



Authenticity



Authenticity (Kevin Cashman)

- ‘Leadership is not simply something we do. It comes from a deeper reality within us; it comes from our values, principles, life experiences, and essence. Leadership is a process, an intimate expression of who we are.’ The essence of leadership is about offering oneself and one’s spirit. From this perspective, leadership is not viewed as hierarchical- it exists everywhere in organizations.’

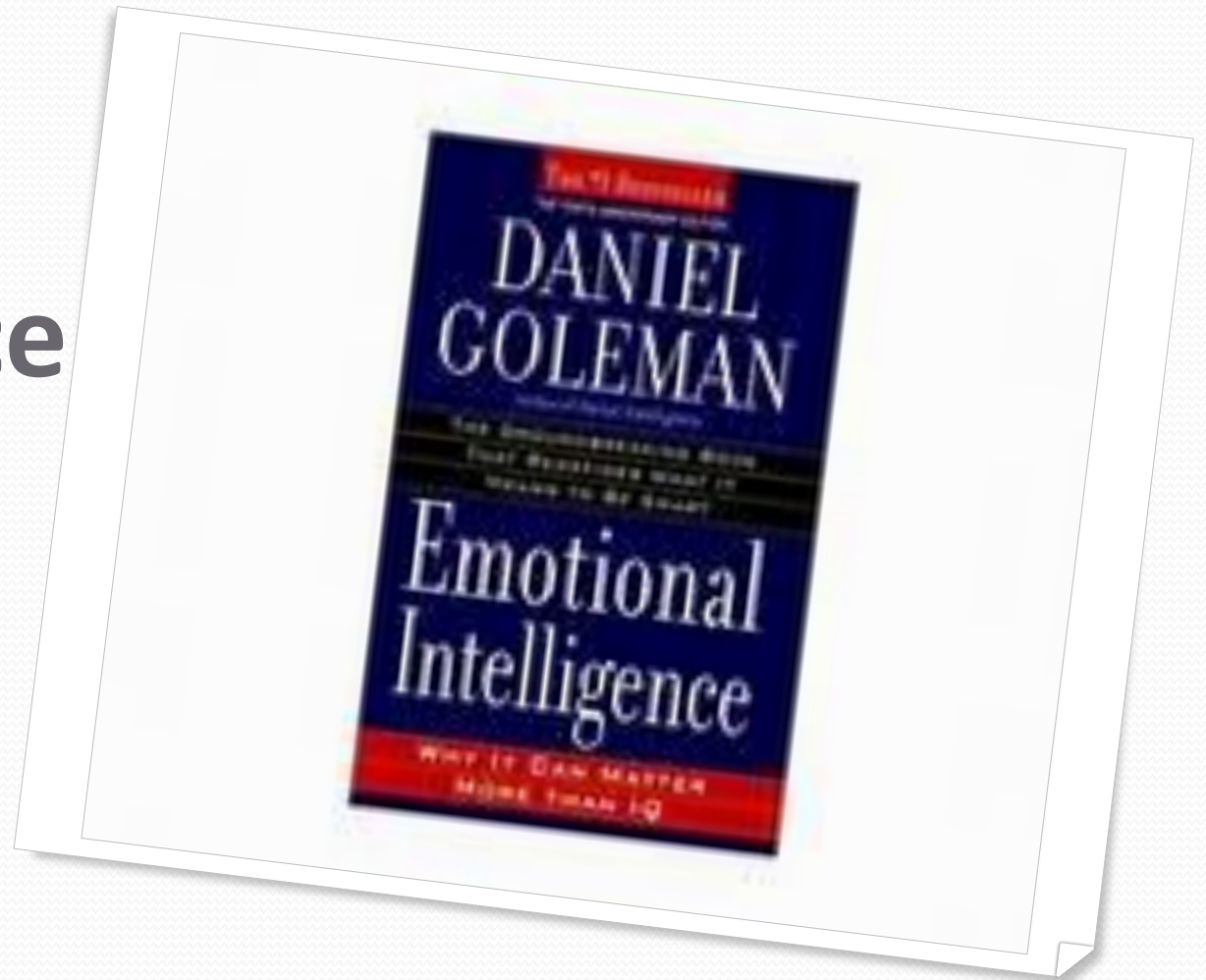
Authenticity Continued

- ‘As leaders, the more we can unleash our whole capabilities – mind, body, spirit – the more value we can create within and outside of our organizations.’
- As the person grows, the leader grows.
- Helping people connect to their core talents, values, and beliefs (central to effective leadership development)
- People who learn to bring their core talents, values, and purpose to conscious awareness experience dramatic, quantum increases in energy and effectiveness.
- People who work to connect their values with their actions are more energetic, resilient, effective and interpersonally connected.

Authenticity Cont

- What is really important to me?
- Is this the life I want to live?
- How do I really want to live my life?
- What gives passion, meaning and purpose to my life?
- How can I make even more of a difference?
- How can I live connected to my inner values?
- What are my strengths?
- How do I express my strengths?

Emotional Intelligence



Emotional Intelligence (Daniel Golman)

- The range of non-cognitive (interpersonal skills, empathy, verbal/non-verbal communication) that influence how well we succeed in coping with everyday demands and pressures.
- EI Vs. IQ
 - Good predictor of school grades
 - Non-predictor of life success
 - Predicts 6% of job success
 - Peaks in late teens and varies +/- 10 points over a lifetime.
 - EI – No peak. Can be continually improved.

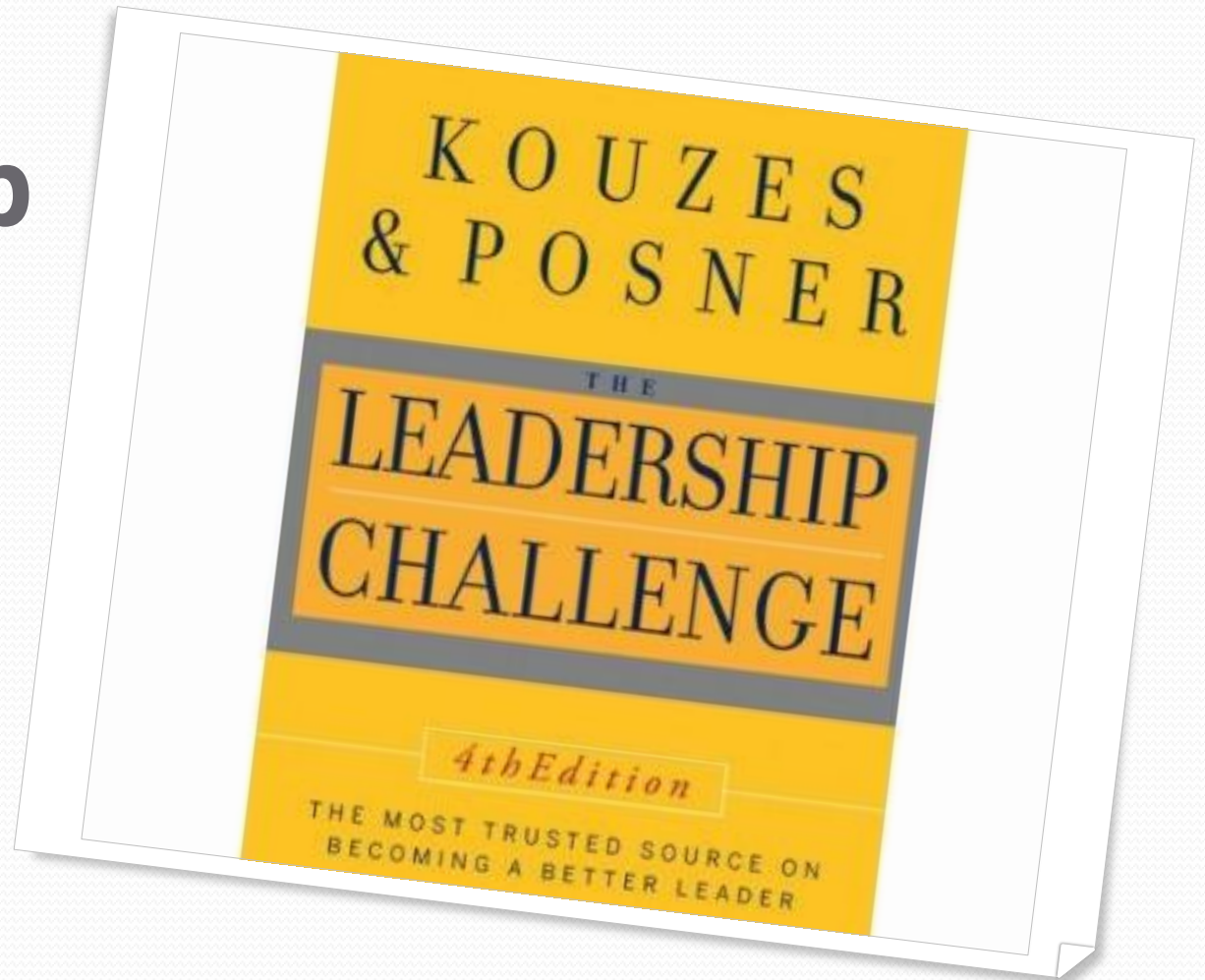
EI Leadership Competencies

- PERSONAL COMPETENCE
 - Self-Awareness
 - Foundation to Strong Emotional Intelligence
 - How well do you know yourself?
 - The ability to monitor feelings moment-to-moment
 - >certainty about feelings, greater life pilot, surer sense about all decisions
 - Self-Management
 - How well are you able to manage your emotions?
- SOCIAL COMPETENCE
 - Relationship Awareness
 - Empathy – foundation to having people skills.
 - Relationship Management
 - How well are you able to manage the emotions of others?

EI Continued

- Deficits in EI are a primary cause of ineffective leadership.
 - Difficulty handling change.
 - Inability to work in a team.
 - Poor interpersonal relations.

Leadership Challenge



The 5 Exemplary Practices of Leadership

(Kouzes and Posner)

- Model the Way
- Inspire a Shared Vision
- Challenge the Process
- Enable Others to Act
- Encourage the Heart

Model the Way

- Know yourself. Be a good example. Live what you say.
- Know your strengths. Use them in all of your communications and interactions.
- Clarify and live your values.
- People follow the person first and then the plan.

Strengths- Based Leadership



Strengths Based Leadership

- Strengths Finder 2.0. What is It?
- History
- Why Strengths-Based Leadership?

Strengths

- Talents
 - Called 'strengths' however they are really talents
 - natural ways of thinking, feeling, or behaving which we can apply in our lives to support our work and personal efforts.
 - Innate gifts that serve as the foundation of strengths
- Talents become Strengths When we....
 - Spend a significant amount of time practicing, studying, developing our talents.
 - 'Outliers' by Malcolm Gladwell suggests we become experts at something when we spend 10,000 hours on that something.
- Counter-Intuitive?
- Research

Strengths-Based Report

- Online Assessment
- 2 Reports Generated
 - Strengths-Based Leadership Report
 - Generates your top 5 strengths and plots them in the 4 leadership domains.
 - Generates a description of each of your strengths which is unique to you based on your strengths, the order of your strengths, and your individual responses to survey items. No 2 reports are identical.
 - Strengths-Based Leadership Guide
 - Teaches you about the 4 leadership domains
 - Describes what all people want in a leader
 - Build Trust, Show Compassion, Provide Stability, and Create Hope
 - How to use your particular strengths to build trust, show compassion, provide stability, and create hope.
 - How to Lead others who are strong in your particular strengths
 - Examples of each strength in action.
- Strengths-Finder 2.0 (book)
 - Provides 'Action' ideas to practice applying your strengths (if you find it a challenge to use a particular strength, this will be helpful)

Online Survey Process

- How was the assessment process?
- How well do the results reflect what you already know about yourself?



Strength Discussion

- Interviewer:
 - What are your top 5 strengths?
 - Was there any particular strength that surprised you? That you found curious/interesting?
 - What about this strength do you find surprising/curious/interesting?
 - What could be possible for you/your school/your work if you engaged this strength more than you currently are doing?

Large Group Debrief

- What are you discovering about leading with strengths?

Feedforward

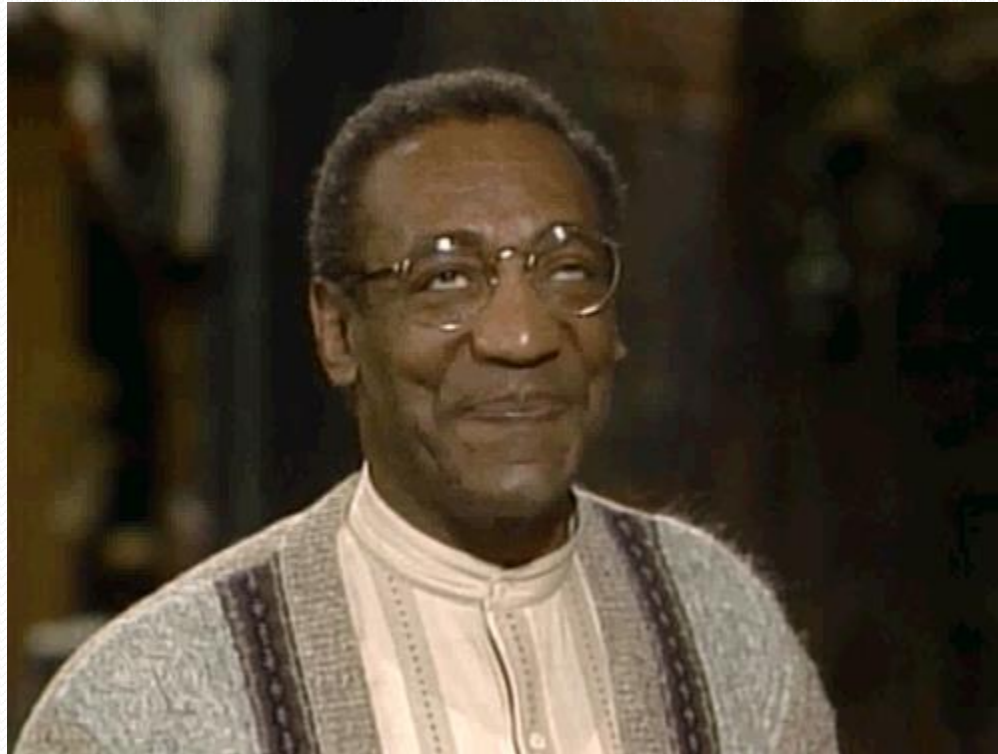
- Feedforward = soliciting suggestions for improvement going forward. (rather than looking back to what went wrong) – focus on future rather than past.



Feedforward Exercise

- Pick a strength that you would like to enhance/make stronger. *If* you enhanced this strength, it could result in a significant and positive difference in your life: ex = I want to be stronger at empathy....??
- Describe this strength to at least 6-7 people in this room (one at a time). Ask for feedforward: *two suggestions* for the future that might help you be stronger with this strength or lead more powerfully with this strength.
- Listen attentively to the suggestions – jot down if you like. Do not comment on the suggestions. Don't even say 'that's a good idea.'
- Thank person for the suggestions.
- Say 'you're welcome' to the person asking for feedforward.
- Find another person to ask the same question.

What is your one word reaction to this exercise?



Domain Strengths

- Executing
- Influencing
- Relationship Building
- Strategic Thinking

Common Domains

- **Executing:**
- **Influencing:**
- **Relationship Building:**
- **Strategic Thinking:**

Domain Discussion

- What was it like for you to see that this is a primary way in which you lead?
- What could be possible if you led from this domain?
- What holds you back (from leading with this domain)?
- What ideas do you have about leading more from this domain in your work?



Large Group Debrief

- What are you discovering/learning about leadership domains?

Take Out a Sheet of Paper and a Pen...



Personal Learning Assignment

- What do you want to remember from this workshop?
- What 1-3 action steps can you take (commit to) regarding your leadership strengths?
- What will help you live these strengths more in your life?
 - Personally:
 - Professionally:

Strengths Wrap-Up

- There are many ways to explore leadership development.
- A foundational approach to leadership development is a focus on self-awareness: assessing and building strengths.
- We have infinitely more strengths than what are identified by this tool. It's important to take the time to explore and build on these strengths.
- Explore and practice your strengths over the course of this year. Hold each other accountable to your strengths.
- Notice what happens or what is possible when you lead from your strengths. What is the impact on you? What is the impact on others? What is the impact the people you serve or care for or who care for you?

