VIP Conversation Starters:

Spotlight on Natural Talents and Strengths

This particular exercise is designed to explore the range of strengths an individual has. It aims to help identify their areas of natural talent and explore how these strengths can be stretched and showcased within the working environment. This exercise is suitable for all employees.

Exercise Part 1: Taking stock of your strengths

Strengths are not just areas that you are good at, but areas you are great at and/or naturally enjoy doing. They are the types of things you find easy and can get easily absorbed in. When individuals engage in activities that complement their strengths, they are much more likely to perform well, be intrinsically motivated and have a better quality of life.

1. Use 2 blank sheets of paper or print out 2 copies of the strength assessment table below; one for the individual and one for their line manager.
2. Individually, employee and line manager should now write down the skills, knowledge and personal styles they feel the individual has a particular strength or natural talent.
3. Both manager and employee should now reveal their results to each other and discuss as below:

**CONFIRMED STRENGTHS:**

Firstly, look to see if there are any common strengths that were recognised by both the individual and the manager. These are likely to be the individual’s strongest areas given that they are strengths that have been confidently recognised by both parties.

Work based tasks where individuals are able to utilise these skills and natural talents are likely to be the ones where they are most productive and effective.

Explore these strengths by discussing the following:

1. What opportunities do you have to use these strengths and natural talents at work?
2. Where do these strengths work really well?
3. Are there any circumstances where these strengths work less well? Explore why.
4. How can you / what opportunities are there to use these strengths in the future to enhance the performance of the service / team? E.g. mentoring/ sharing skills with others
5. Are there any barriers, further skills that can be developed or working opportunities that would help enhance your natural talent in this area?
6. Set any goals where appropriate

**HIDDEN STRENGTHS**

Hidden strengths are areas of strength or natural talent that the individual knows about themselves, but that are not identified by others. If these apply, the individual will have identified this strength, but the manager will not have.

Explore these hidden strengths by discussing and considering the following:

1. Explore why both manager and employee did not align in this area?
2. Explore anything that could be acting as a barrier / holding back performance in this area.
3. Explore ways the individual can showcase this talent and be known for this strength in the future. E.g. gain more exposure in these areas, opportunities to showcase their talents or develop them further.
4. Set any goals where appropriate

**BLIND SPOTS**

Blind Spots are areas of strength that the manager recognised in the individual, but that the individual didn’t immediately recognise in themselves. If these apply;

1. The manager should provide feedback, recognition and examples on why the individual is strong in this area. They should explore why the individual did not recognise these strengths when others have. Explore if anything is holding the individual back in this area and encourage confidence in these areas.
2. Set any goals where appropriate.

# Strength Assessment

# NAME:

# COMPLETED BY:

Use the space below to identify the personal strengths

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Knowledge | Skills | Personal Styles / Attributes |