



## Exploring Personal Strengths & Goals

November

'11

*With the new day comes new strength and new thoughts.  
~Eleanor Roosevelt~*

Everyone has them.

## What are your STRENGTHS?

When was the last time someone asked you what your strengths are? How did you respond? Did you respond? Review of literature shows that on average, women are less likely to talk about their personal strengths compared to men. This can have implications in the classroom, in the job search process, and in the workplace as our strengths often influence how we present ourselves to others. So why don't we talk more about our strengths? Perhaps we're afraid it will be seen as bragging or that we're prideful. Perhaps we compare ourselves to others and in the process, no longer feel we're as good at something as we thought we were. Maybe we just don't know what our strengths are. Your strengths are a piece of who you are and who you are becoming. They are a part of defining who you are as a student, as a professional, as a leader, and as a woman. Harriet Tubman is quoted as saying "Every great dream begins with a dreamer. Always remember, you have within you the strength, the patience, and the passion to reach for the stars to change the world." Everyone has strengths. So ask the question, "What are my strengths?", answer it, and own the response. In doing so, we take another step on the journey of advancing women. In doing so, we embrace Harriet's charge to change the world.



### UPCOMING EVENTS

- **November 9-** Improving Your Financial IQ: Supporting Yourself After Graduation, 4-5:30 PM, CE 405
- **November 10-** StrengthsQuest Workshop, 4-5 PM, CE 305
- **November 22-** Office for Women Book Club Discussion: *Career GPS, Strategies for Women Navigating the New Corporate Landscape* - 12-1 PM, CE 406

## The Value of "Getting to Know You"

By **Kathy Grove**, Director of the Office for Women

Businesses and organizations are managed by people. Work is accomplished through good relationships and connection to others in networks. Social scientists call this "social capital" where mutual obligation, support and teamwork are developed. The relationships you foster and build at work and at school are important.

In their book, "Through the Labyrinth, the truth about how women become leaders", authors Alice H. Eagly and Linda L. Carli, stress the importance for women of building this social capital and joining networks. They state that gender affects social capital and women usually have less of it for a variety of reasons including family responsibilities that preclude afterhours networking and the segregation of many networks by gender. Nevertheless, they say that such relationships "yield valuable information, access to help and resources, and career sponsorship."

From networks with other women, Eagly and Carli say women can gain social support, role modeling and information about overcoming discriminatory practices. They also advise that women join gender-integrated networks which are likely to "provide...contacts with clients, leads about job prospects, inside information, advice on work-related problems, and information about a wide range of job-related issues."

And even though good relationships with associates of authority and power can be advantageous to your career they stress that building good relationships with co-workers at every level can enrich your work life as well as support your quest for success.

You have taken a step in building social capital by joining the Advancing Women Mentoring program. We hope through the relationships you build in this network, you will find connection, resources and support.

"We gain strength, and courage, and confidence by each experience in which we really stop to look fear in the face... we must do that which we think we cannot."

*Eleanor Roosevelt*

## Mentor Discussion Guide: Expectations, Goal Setting, StrengthsQuest

Thanks again for your participation in the Advancing Women Mentoring Program! We hope that this month will be a positive start for you and your mentee. This document serves as a guide for you as you get started in conversation and covering the designated topics for October and November. Please feel free to use the discussion points and questions as you see fit.

Our focus for these months is on goal setting and strengths. We also acknowledge that there will be a “getting to know you” aspect in these relationships in October and November, so please take this time to get to know your mentee as you get into the deeper discussion points.

Hopefully you have gotten a chance to take the StrengthsQuest assessment. If you have not gotten a chance to take it, please take the time to do so. Additionally if you did not get a code to take the assessment, please email [dsimshar@iupui.edu](mailto:dsimshar@iupui.edu).

### Discussion Points:

#### • Introductions:

- Get to know each other during these first sessions
- Establish Goals: Share with each other what you both hope to achieve by the end of the year
- Establish Expectations: Determine the best form of communication for each of you, set up regular meeting time, what to do if one of you needs to cancel, etc.
- Possible questions:
  - What type of communication do you prefer (Phone, e-mail, text, facebook, etc.)?
  - Have you ever had a mentor before? What was that experience like for you?
  - How many times is reasonable for you to meet a month?
  - What are you looking forward to in this mentoring relationship? What challenges do you think we will face throughout the year?

#### • Goal Setting

- Why IUPUI? What brought you here?
- Do you have any specific educational or career-rated goals for this year? How can I support you in your quest to meet those goals?
- Where do you see yourself in 5 years? What’s your dream job?

#### • StrengthsQuest

- Shape your discussions around the topic of personality traits and how they relate to leadership
- Talk about the strengths assessment
  - What were your top 5 themes? Do we have any in common?
  - How do you see some of these themes playing out in your life?
  - Was the first time you’d taken it?
  - Were you surprised by your results? Were there other strengths you thought might be in your top 5?
  - Do you tend to focus on things you are good at or things you need to improve? How does StrengthsQuest support or challenge your mindset?
  - What are some other ways that you can learn about your strengths and weaknesses?
  - How do your strengths and weaknesses relate to working with others?
  - Why is it important to know how to use this knowledge about yourself in your everyday activities?

### Women and Mothers in the Labor Force

- For the first time in our history, women comprise half (49.9%) of the paid labor force compared to 35.3% in 1969.<sup>1</sup>
- 71% of mothers with children under the age of 18 participated in the labor force in 2008.<sup>2</sup>
- In 2008, 4 in 10 mothers (39.3%) were the primary breadwinners in their family and another 24 % were co-breadwinners, earning at least 25 percent of the family income.<sup>3</sup>

### Women’s Pay<sup>4</sup>

- Women earn 77 cents for every dollar earned by a man
- African-American women earn 69 cents for every dollar earned by man
- Latina women earn 57 cents for every dollar earned by a man

### Women in Leadership<sup>5</sup>

- Female CEO’s represent just 3% of Fortune 500 company leaders
- Women hold only 15% of Fortune 500 Board of Director seats
- 12% of Fortune 500 companies have NO women on their Boards of Directors

## Fast Facts

### Resources

<sup>1</sup> The Shriver Report, A Woman’s Nation Changes Everything, Maria Shriver and the Center for American Progress, 2010, page 33, Data from the U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, July 2009, Current Establishment Survey,

<sup>2</sup> U.S. Department of Labor, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, September 2009, Report 1018, Introduction and Highlights

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. p. 36

<sup>4</sup> Institute for Women’s Policy Research

<sup>5</sup> Catalyst