

Section III: The STRENGTH Formula™

Greatly Enhances Your Abilities To Utilize Your Strengths, And Manage Your Weaknesses.

The STRENGTH Formula™ is a creativity tool that relies on questions to change mindsets to create new ideas. It was designed by INSIGHTMirror 360.

What was Jack Welch's (former President of General Electric) opinion of Creative Problem-Solving Tools?

When running General Electric, Jack Welch was a strong proponent of Creative Problem Solving Tools. Sometimes, he referred to these tools as Artificial Thought Processes -- which are very valuable in finding solutions through unorthodox methods. As Mr. Welch used to explain it, "If you don't find dramatically new ways of doing business, you're not going to be in business. And if you don't intrude *artificially* in what's going on, you probably won't come up with radical out-of-the-box ideas."

Young children don't need creative problem-solving tools!

Young children are not in a box when they come up with new ways of doing things. They are not encumbered by filters that come from mind-sets based on previous experience.



Matt was just curious about how computers worked. So naturally Matt took it apart!

Unfortunately many schools have children simply following the standard curriculum in

search of a child's weakness they can fix. A noble cause, but one that ignores where does a child's curiosity and areas of strengths not also pursued. This led Dr. Neil Postman to say, *No wonder children enter schools as question marks, and all too often leave as non-questioning exclamation points!*

STRENGTH FORMULA CHECKLIST

S = Substitute

T = Tenderness

R = Rearrange or Reverse it

E = Eliminate

N = Notions of Fantasy /Neverland (Netherland)*

G = Grouping

TH = Theories

The STRENGTH Formula is based on the notion that everything "new" is an addition or modification of something that already exists. As Sir Isaac Newton observed, *If I have seen farther, it is by standing on the shoulders of giants.*



***Notions of Fantasy

Note: We derived The STRENGTH Formula by playing with a creative problem-solving tool introduced by Alex Osborn, incorporating the acronym S-C-A-M-P-E-R. We have moved some letters around, and added others to create the STRENGTH acronym and exercise.

* Neverland (Netherland) Original home of Peter Pan.

Practicing How the STRENGTH Formula Works in Concert with Your INSIGHT-Mirror 360 Feedback Report Results:

1. You will choose just one *strength-challenge* and *weakness-challenge* from your 360 Feedback Report. These two challenges will be used throughout the entire STRENGTH Formula process. Note that we used a variety of different challenges on the following sample pages to simply demonstrate the range of ideas the STRENGTH Formula produces.
2. Criteria for choosing the best challenge two challenges.
 - The impact it has on your work.
 - Something that is doable in your work setting.If you have a boss who is out of their mind and will undermine your attempts with either you Strength or Weakness, then move on to choosing a more suitable challenge.
3. Is this challenge at least 50% achievable, considering such criteria as office politics, your own commitment in achieving it, and the amount of time you can estimate that you will need to change your own behavior?

The Strength Formula starts with the letter “S” for Substitution. Below are the six questions we use to generate ideas from “S”:

Substitution

- What can be substituted?
- Do I know all I need to know?
- Can the rules or premises be changed?
- What/who else can be used instead?
- What new situations can I put myself in?
- What other processes/procedures can be substituted?

Example of Substitution in medical science:

Scientist Paul Ehrlich kept substituting one color for another, well over five hundred times – until he found the right dye to color the veins of laboratory mice.

A Case Study to Work With:

Question # 21 from the 360° Feedback Report: From the Substitution-Questions contained in the boarder below, find ways to manage a weakness and ways to use a strength more effectively.

Let's say you scored low on question #21 from your 360° Feedback Report: *Encourages direct reports to ask tough questions and to disagree*. This low score is particularly significant because you are the manager of its Research and Development, and it is certainly part of your job to create an environment where ideas flow freely.

You will be using the STRENGTH Formula by taking question # 21 through all seven STRENGTH Letters to help obtain practical ideas or possible breakthrough solutions to manage this weakness. We do not expect each STRENGTH-Letter will be of assistance. But the combined good ideas from just three out the seven Strength Letters for your Strength Challenge Question and three of the seven letters for your WEAKNESS Challenge, almost guarantees you successes with the two questions you started with.

Idea #1: I will share with my people the results of the 360 Feedback Report, and have one-on-one discussions with everyone on my team that I'm not going to change overnight. I will ask for their help when they believe I have a closed mind to a new idea by literally having them say, "I think you have a closed mind on this one." I'll simply stop in my tracks and ask, "why." Then I will take a deep breath and do my hardest to at least see their point of view.

Idea #2: I will let my people know that in three weeks I will asking them to anonymously write a paragraph or two on how I am doing in opening and sustaining a dialogue with employees who dissent from my way of thinking on an issue or problem. And then ask them to slip their type written comments and suggestions under my door.

Idea(s) inspired by the “Substitution” Questions:

- Am I so insecure I need to prove I know it all?
- Can substitute my arrogance, with humility.

Please write-down your ideas down in a notebook regarding ideas for your one strength and one weakness challenge.