

What is a Strengths check?

It is process to find out the strengths of a person through significant others in his/her network of friends and family.



Phases

- Preparation Phase
- Strengths Storming
- Feedback phase
- Furnish a treasure chest/ map
- Create opportunities

Strengths Storming

Preparation phase - background work by CW

1. Explain to client what is Strengths Storming, and obtain agreement from client.
2. CW thinks of a list of possible people the person can invite for the Strengths Storming.
 - This is helpful for prompting and guiding the person in coming up with his/her list of 'lifeworld experts' when he or she is 'stuck'

**Write a list of people
you would like to have
on your „Team of
Experts“ for your
Strengths storming.
Time: 5 minutes**

Strengths Storming

Preparation phase - background work by CW

3. Sit down with the person and ask him/her to give you the names and telephone numbers of 7 - 8 people in his network/ community whom s/he would like to invite for the strengths storming session.
- Highlight to the person that it is preferable to invite people from various sections of his/her everyday life so that each person will be able to provide different perspectives of his/her types of strengths.

Strengths Storming

Preparation phase - background work by CW

4. The community worker then **calls** up each of these people personally to invite them to the strengths storming session. S/He needs to:
 - Inform clearly the **time, venue**, and furnish other details like who else will be at the session, how long the session will take, and give a quick run through of how the session will flow to **decrease anxiety for those being invited**.
 - Ask each 'lifeworld expert' to **come prepared with a list of strengths** of the person and emphasize that strictly **only positives** can be mentioned.

Strengths Storming

Preparation phase - background work by CW

5. Logistics needs

- 10 pieces of 'Mahjong' paper
- The thickest markers 2 of each colour
- Thick adhesive tapes or blue tags
- A comfortable **small room** to hold the Strengths Storming.
- 8 chairs
- A big and stable table for 8 people to comfortably sit around and can accommodate the size of a mahjong paper
- 2 helpers who are not part of the Strengths Storming

Strengths Storming

At the Scene of Strengths Storming

1. Welcome and thank everyone for coming.
Introduce each person by name and furnish background of each lifeworld expert.
2. Explain rules clearly, slowly, step by step and makes sure everyone understands all the rules.

Rules for...

...Strength Storming

 No narrowing of strengths!

 No Ownership of comments

 Strictly limited to positive things!

 The more the better!

...Feedback

 Describe behavior, give an example!

Strengths Storming

At the Scene of the Strengths Storming

3. Appoint or ask someone from the team of lifeworld experts to be the **writer**.
 - Tell him/her to write very **BIG** and **BOLD** with the thick markers prepared, and preferably write quickly but clearly.
 - Write only **5** strengths per piece of mahjong paper
4. Announce the **time** allotted for the strengths storming.
 - Usually 15mins will be sufficient.

Strengths Storming

At the Scene of the Strengths Storming

5. The community worker will be the **facilitator and time-keeper**
 - If the caseworker is part of the team of experts in the Strengths Storming session, s/he should appoint another experienced helper to be the facilitator and time-keeper.
 - Role of facilitator



This is too small! I said 5 strengths per page. Write big and bold!

Who?
Who's helpful?

Then tell him! Look at him and say "you are helpful"

Helpful!

He's helpful!

Nu'man is helpful!!

Many Friends, to
takes initiative to
talk, polite
Can cook pasta
"Maggie", has a
good product
knowledge
Nuc'man is a keen learner
He ask questions during each
seminar
Fights for h
and
Nuc'man is willing to try
even when he
is scared

Abb.: Strengths Storming in einem RC für einen Jugendlichen (oberhalb des Schreibers)

Strengths Storming

At the Scene of the Strengths Storming

Other tricks/ tactics:

- Repeating a particular strength quickly helps to quicken the pace of the strengths storming. For example, "ok Nu'man is helpful. He is helpful, helpful. Ok what else, what else."
- Be sensitive to noticing how the person is as people are calling out his/ her strengths. Does s/he look disinterested? Uncomfortable? Was the person's curiosity aroused?
- Prompt the experts to use simpler words so that the person can understand.

Strengths Storming

At the Scene of the Strengths Storming

While the strengths storming is going on, the 2 helpers are to:

- Paste the written mahjong papers on the wall facing the person so s/he gets a clear view of his/her strengths.
- Subsequent pieces of paper should go on the other walls such that the whole room is plastered with a wallpaper of the person's strengths.

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RAZZIF



① Generous (sharing)

② Kind Hearted.

③ Helpful

④ Intelligent.

5. Razzi's Example

- ① He is not selfish and shares whatever he can share.
- ② He helps with house chores, routine.
- ③ Initiates his services for the wellbeing of the everyone.

due to Caring / loving / Generous / Kind
Relief / Respect

- ④ Shows leadership qualities, intelligent & forthcoming.
- ⑤ Participates wisely and skillfully in the game of Soccer & other sports due to sportsmanship.
- ⑥ Respectful toward Elders & Aunty in authority.

⑦

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1. She is a Caring person ①

2. Thoughtful ②

3. Helpful ①

4. Intelligent (Ideas) ③

5. Kind ① (Decision)

6. Punctual ④

7. Sincere ④

8. Generous. (SHARE)

9. Sporting.

10. Confident ③

11. Obedient ④

Strengths Storm

Feedback Phase

When the allotted time for strengths storming is up, the facilitator will ask the experts to furnish **concrete examples** of situations where we can see those strengths listed.

- Allocate another 15mins for this.
- Be as precise as possible.

Strengths Storming

Furnish Treasure Chest or Treasure Map

Ask the person how s/he would like to record and preserve the list of strengths.

- The CW should make sure that this is done within a week either by doing it himself or engaging someone else's help.

Strengths Storming

Create Opportunities!

Make an appointment no later than in one week's time to explore with client which strengths listed s/he most identifies with.

- Create a small action step to for the person to utilize this strength to reach a longer term goal.

Strengths Storming

Phases

1. Create trust
2. Team of experts, place and time
3. Explain rules
4. Strengths Storming session
5. Feedback
6. Furnish treasure chest or treasure map
7. Explore opportunities

Do's

1. Was the person's curiosity aroused?
2. You got the right experts?
3. Keep it simple!
4. Furnish a wall paper of strengths
5. Be concrete, give an example!

Note!

1. Strengths check should not be one-off. Add to list of strengths as you work with client.
2. Do not do it at the expense of client's feelings of extreme discomfort with such a strength check. Don't force! Go where the client takes you.

Why do a Strengths Storming?

George's Sharing

- Why he chose to do the Strengths Check with the 2 KU Home kids
- What was the preparation process like?
- Anything particularly significant or memorable?
- How has the Home environment changed?
- Were initial goals met? What went right?