



Point of View

Dear Marketplace Friend,

Gifts. Strengths. Talents. All of those descriptions are used by people, about people, in every setting imaginable. Within families, within churches, within the community; even - and, in some ways, especially - in the workplace setting. *"She has a remarkable gift." "That assignment really plays to his strengths." "The people on that team demonstrate some amazing talents."* Those commentaries are evidence of something that is profound...

Lots of people do things for which they exhibit little or no extraordinary predisposition. Often, they're *"just doing what has to be done,"* or, they're *"doing what they've been paid to do."* Though they receive training to sophisticate their performance, their output lacks the excellent evidence of an innate capacity that sets them apart.

When Peter wrote his first letter to Christians who were learning to find and fill their personal niche within the Kingdom of God, he gave this counsel: *"Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms. If anyone speaks, he should do it as one speaking the very words of God. If anyone serves, he should do it with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ."*



To him be the glory and the power for ever and ever." (1 Peter 4:10-11) Peter's informed advice: serve with your gifts. Misalignment - a role in which God-given talents are not in play - is not intended; never was.

Since the founding of **The Master's Program**, we've incorporated the Strengths-Finder assessment as part of the discovery process. This on-line tool - introduced through multiple business books offered through the Gallup Organization - has been a powerful ingredient in TMP's commitment to help leaders identify their personal strengths.

In ***Strengths Based Leadership*** (Gallup Press; 2008), Tom Rath and Barry Conchie have joined forces to take this revolutionary message to a new level for people who lead. Their intent with this volume is to expose the results of their work with organizational leaders within the strength-based workplace movement.

For many **TMPers**, the revelation of

their top-five Natural Talents (*from their pool of 34*) has been a great start; in this next installment, they reveal the four critical domains of leadership strength (*executing, influencing, relationship building and strategic thinking*) and which Natural Talents enable extraordinary leadership to be demonstrated in these areas.

In addition, they report on the results of their exploration with thousands of employees of what they need from the influential leaders in their lives: *trust, compassion, stability and hope*. Reduce any of those necessities in any community, and the efficacy of leaders with teams will erode quickly.

Talk about closing the loop: half of the book is devoted to strategies for leaders to effectively provide those four critical values to their direct reports, based on the leaders' specific personal Natural Talents. How do I - with *Maximizer, Strategic, Arranger, Activator and Self-Confidence* - assure that I'll be able to *Build Trust, Show Compassion, Provide Stability and Create Hope*? This is just what I need...

The value-add hits a crescendo by showing how leaders can lead others based on the follower's own strengths individually, uniquely exposed.

If you were looking for a book with an escapist story - well written and craftily constructed - capable of taking you away from reality, this isn't what you're looking for!

But, if you'd like your leadership to drive your team to be outperforming the economy in advance of "The Recovery," here's some advice-in-a-book to help get you there!

Bob Shank

Bob Shank is Founder and Chief Mentoring Officer of The Master's Program (TMP).

To read prior issues of the Point of View visit:
www.mastersprogram.net

To learn more about TMP visit:
www.mastersprogram.org

To read a Program Summary of TMP visit:
www.mastersprogram.org/summary/

RSVP for a TMP Executive Briefing:
www.mastersprogram.org/Briefing.aspx