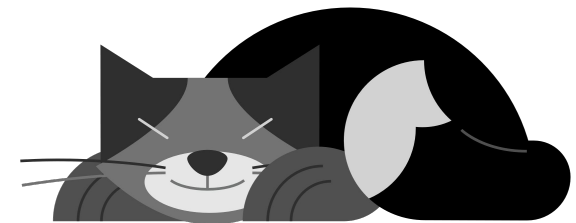


Identifying Strengths & Values in the Classroom

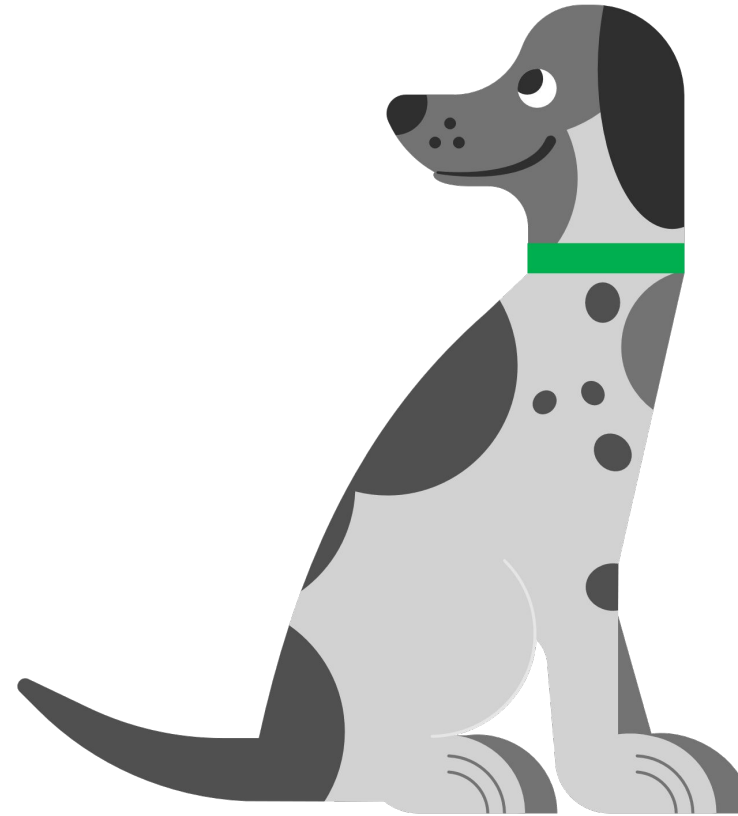
Empowering students to maximize job satisfaction and sustainability in
Veterinary Nursing

Gina Malpeli, BS LVT CHRS



Overview

- Background
- Encouraging Personal Development
 - Building impactful leaders
 - Positive mindset & motivation
 - Self-awareness & emotional intelligence
- Identifying Strengths & Values
 - Benefits
 - Barriers
 - Importance of values
 - Stages of team development
 - Strengths, values and teams
- Classroom Applications
 - Assessments
 - Activities
 - Reflection
- Closing



“The best investment you can make is in yourself.”

- Warren Buffet



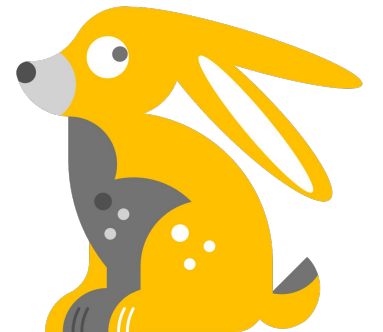


Goal:

Empower every student to be a leader without having to be in a leadership position by introducing personal development that teaches self-awareness and social-awareness early on in their careers.

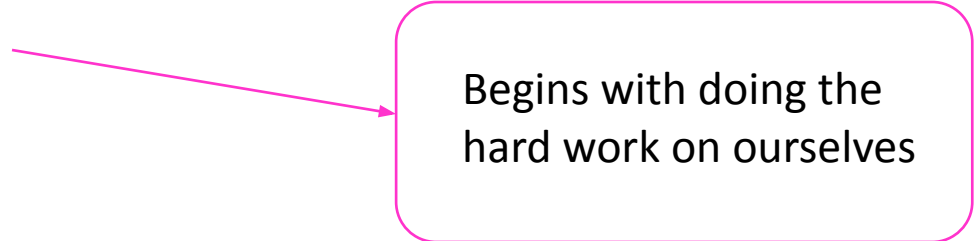
The word “leader” is **scary**

- Many equate the word “ leader” or “leadership” with a specific position or title
- Avoided or missed opportunities
- Lack of self-awareness
- Imposter syndrome
- Fear
- Lack of mentorship
- Little interest in leadership roles



Building Impactful Leaders from the Start

- Encourage professional development
- Foster communication skills
- Promote initiative & proactivity
- Cultivate team collaboration
- Develop strategic thinking and problem-solving skills
- Require accountability & integrity
- Recognize and celebrate the “wins”even the small ones



Begins with doing the
hard work on ourselves

Encouraging Personal Development

Promotes

 positive mindset & self-belief

 self-motivation

 self-awareness

 social awareness

= emotional intelligence



Positive Mindset & Self-belief



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Empty rectangular box for notes related to the person meditating icon.



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Self-Awareness

Definition:

“an awareness of one’s own personality or individuality”

What does it look like?

- recognizing one’s emotions
- recognizing one’s preferences
- being aware of one’s unique perspective
- understand how your personal values drive your perception
- know your strengths & areas of opportunity
- practicing self-management



Image credit: emergingrleader.com/self-awareness-in-leadership/

Social Awareness

Definition:

“the ability to recognize and empathize with the feelings and perspectives of others”

What does it look like?

- practicing empathy
- listening to hear, not listening to speak
- building relationships
- practicing social responsibility
- being adaptable
- choosing how we respond to a situation or stimulus

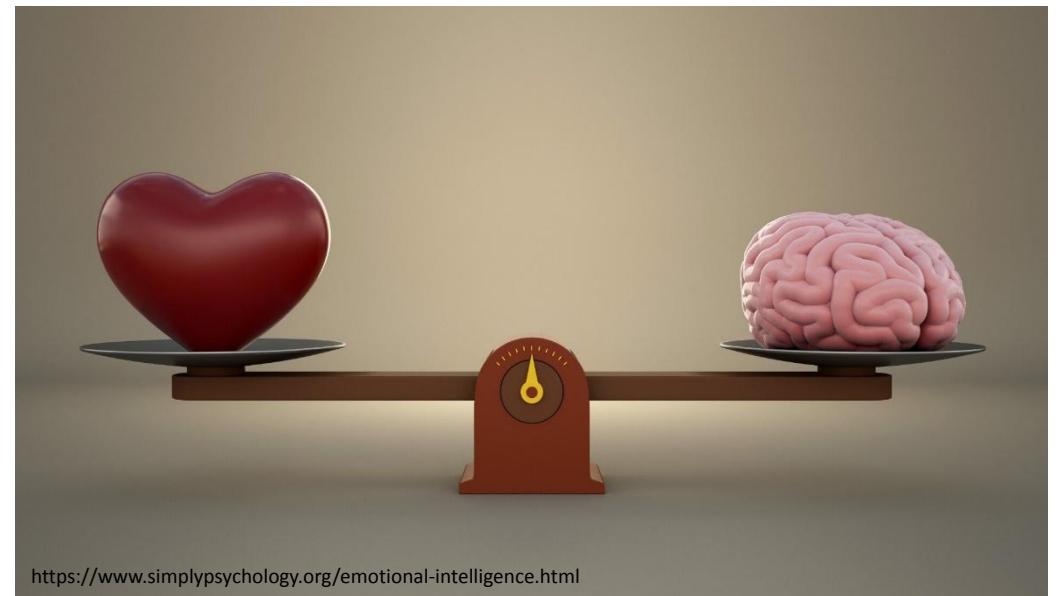
Emotional Intelligence

Definition:

“the ability to recognize, understand, and deal skillfully with one’s own emotions and the emotions of others”

What does it look like?

- leadership.....NOT a position!
- collaboration
- conflict resolution
- empathy
- self-care
- resilience



Personal Development + Positive Psychology

Enhanced Clinical Competence

Improved Patient Care

Increased Job Satisfaction

Decreased Burnout

Professionalism & Confidence

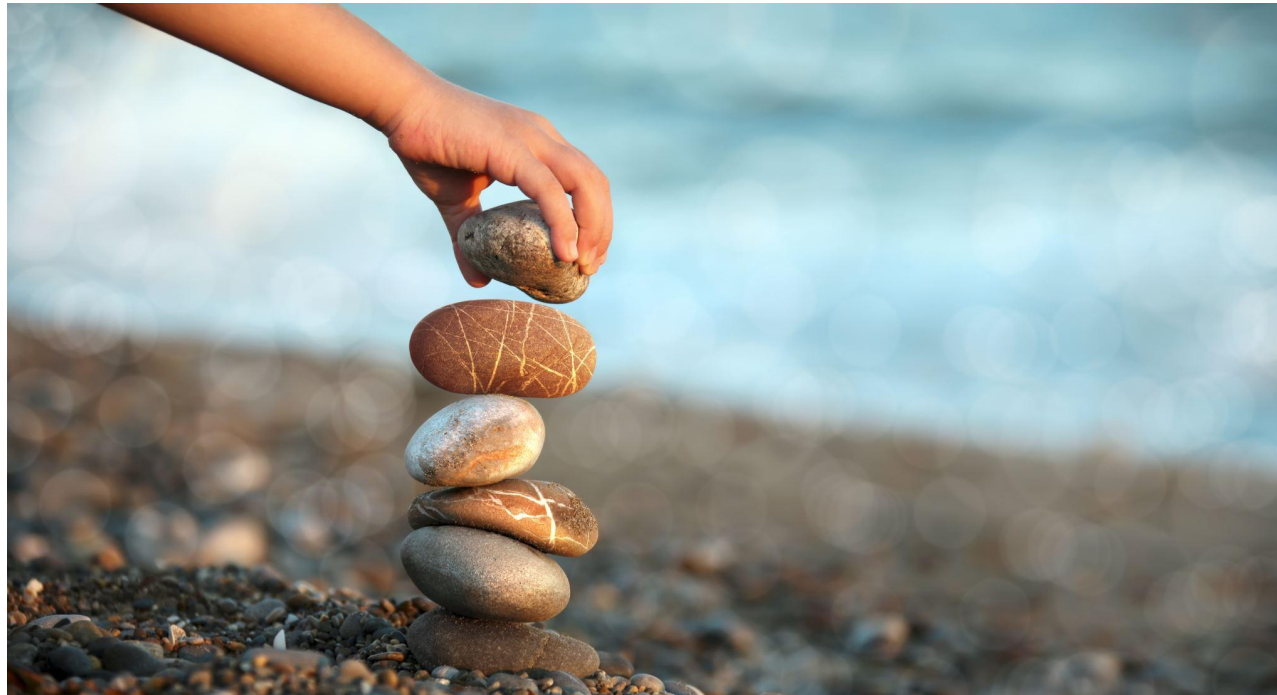
Better Team Dynamics

Enhanced Problem-solving Abilities

Personal Growth & Well-being



Identifying Strengths & Values



What is a “strength”?

In this context, when talking about “strengths”, we are talking about character strengths and natural ways of thinking, behaving, and feeling.

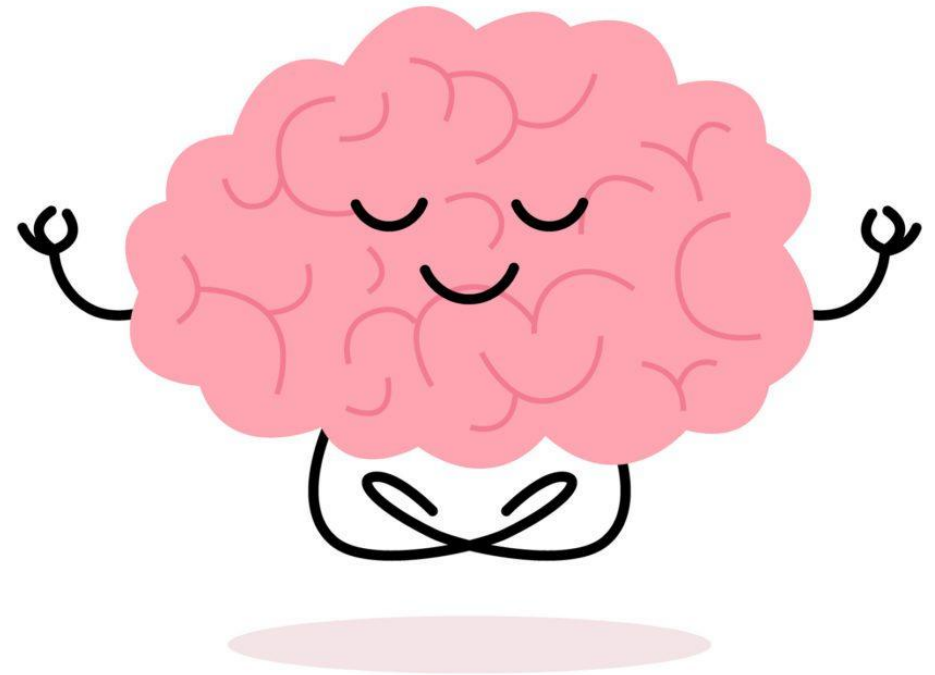


image: iStock / Getty

Identifying Strengths for Students and Nurses

- Introducing personal development concepts and activities in a curriculum.
- Teaches self-awareness and social awareness.
- Helps develop relationship management strategies.
- Promotes a positive, sustainable team dynamic and work environment from the start.
- Empowers individuals to perform at their best.



Why a strength-based approach?

- Focuses on what people do well
 - Encourages people to build on who they
 - Sets students up for success
 - Leads to greater job satisfaction
- Promotes inclusivity & celebrates diversity on teams



Research Shows:

- Strength-based culture:
 - 14.9% lower turnover rate
 - 73% of people are engaged at their jobs
 - 3 x more likely to report high quality of life



Motivation: focusing on strengths

Individual strengths
and natural talents



Achievement

Releases energy

Maximizes performance

Performance improvement

Drives engagement

Motivation: focusing on weakness

Weaknesses or “areas of improvement”



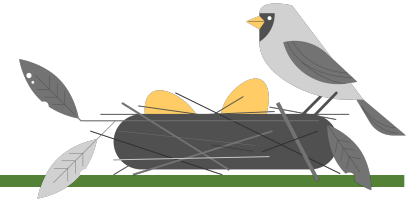
Frustration
Dread Hinders performance
Disengagement
Drains energy
Decreases self-worth

With the good comes the not so good.....

- Strength overuse
- Job-role misalignment
- Organizational culture
- Resistance from others
- Fear of standing out
- Inflexibility
- Imposter syndrome
- Overemphasis on weaknesses



Overcoming Barriers



Strength overuse

- be aware of blind spots
- recognize lop-sidedness
- perception of self and others

Job-role misalignment

- communicate needs
- propose new opportunities

Organizational culture

- encourage open discussion
- celebrate wins
- start curious

Resistance from others

- seek collaboration
- acknowledge strengths in others
- demonstrate the team impact

Overcoming Barriers

Fear of standing out

- foster a culture of uniqueness
- embrace authenticity
- challenge negative thoughts
- embrace feedback
- passion & positivity is contagious!

Inflexibility

- be open-minded
- self-awareness
- set incremental goals
- focus on the team
- embrace change



Imposter Syndrome

- be genuine
- challenge your expectations
- reflect on success
- engage in training
- practice resilience

Overemphasis on weaknesses

- advocate for a balanced approach
- accept the current culture and stay true to you
- provide positive feedback to others
- your mindset will influence those around you

Assessing Values with Students



What degree am I pursuing?



What career industry do I want to work in?



What branch of Veterinary Medicine do I want to start in?



Is this a short-term goal or a long-term goal?



Where do I want to get a job?



Does this environment match my values, allow me utilize my strengths, and pursue my interests?



Aligning Values with Your Career

- Understanding our values helps us understand our motivations.
- Leads to job fulfillment.
- Higher engagement and motivation.
- More likely to experience a positive work environment.
- Contributes to decreased burnout.



Looking Beyond “Core Values”

- Asking students to look at things that they value and interests in and outside of work.

- Things like:

- Working in a team vs. working more independently
- Flexible schedule vs. more structured
- Autonomy vs. being supervised
- Fast paced vs. more steady
- Free time vs. opportunity for overtime
- Weekend work vs. valuing free weekends
- And many more



- Make valuing mental health and personal life a priority.

Sometimes the grass is greener on the other side....

- Make students aware of the diverse opportunities available in veterinary technology on and off the clinic floor from the very beginning.
- Sometimes it is easy to get “stuck”.
 - Sense of loyalty
 - Disengagement
 - Resentment
 - Toxicity emerges
- Understand that life will change, and we must allow our career to change with it.



Navigating the Stages of Team Dynamics



Tuckman's Model

- Stages apply to all teams or work groups
- Anytime the team experiences a change we start back at “forming”
- Many teams do not get to “performing” and get stuck in “norming” or “storming”

Stuck in “Storming”?

- Lop-sided management or mismanaged teams
- High turnover
- Individuals unhappy in their roles or role misalignment
- Unclear roles or responsibilities
- Our assumptions of others
- Challenging each other’s authority or work styles
- Lack of team values or mission
- Challenging each other’s ideas or values
- Lack of trust
- Unmet expectations



Strengths & Values in Teams



- Self-awareness and social awareness contributes to a stronger team.
- Being able to recognize unique strengths in others helps build a more balanced team focused on mutual support and respect.
- Seeking to understand differences promotes more effective and positive communication.
- Putting the right people in the right roles = higher job satisfaction & sustainability.
- Better understanding & empathy leads to better relationships = better teams.

Classroom Applications

Strengths Assessments to Use with Students

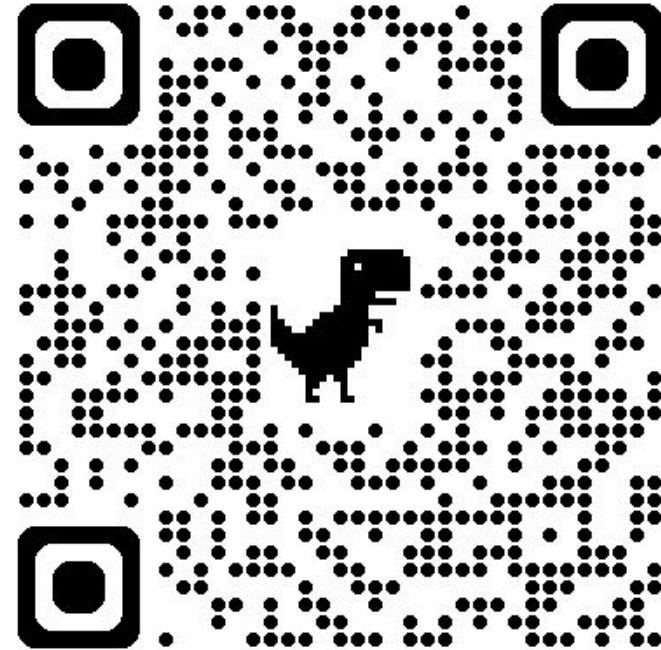
- Clifton StrengthsFinder 2.0
- VIA
- Standout Assessment
- High5 Test
- Standout
- SP
- Strengths Scope



Class Example:

HIGH 5 TEST

- <https://high5test.com/>
- Free to take the test
- Gives top 5 strength themes
- 4 theme domains
- Students take independently
- Group activities with associated topics in class
- Can be modified for virtual use with breakout rooms for small group activities



Class Example:

HIGH 5 TEST

DOING

People with strengths concentrated in DOING category know how to organize, meet a goal, and make things happen.

FEELING

People with strengths concentrated in FEELING category know how to build strong relationships that can hold a team together & make it greater than the sum of its parts.

MOTIVATING

People with strengths concentrated in MOTIVATING category know how to take charge, speak up, and make sure the team is heard.

THINKING

People with strengths concentrated in THINKING category know how to absorb and analyze information that can inform better decisions & help teams consider what could be.

DOING

- Believer
- Deliverer
- Focus Expert
- Problem Solver
- Time Keeper

FEELING

- Chameleon
- Coach
- Emphathizer
- Optimist
- Peace Keeper

MOTIVATING

- Catalyst
- Commander
- Self-Believer
- Storyteller
- Winner

THINKING

- Analyst
- Brainstormer
- Philomath
- Strategist
- Thinker

My Top 5

Empathizer

Optimist

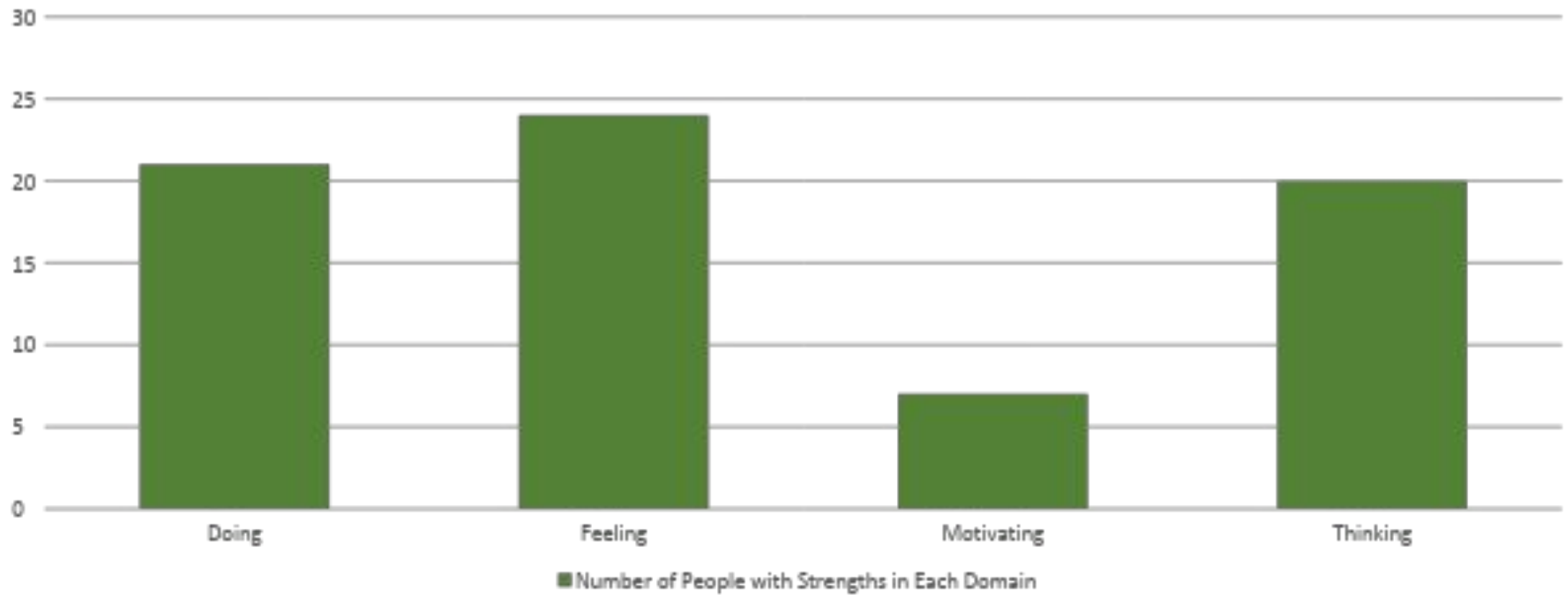
Deliverer

Philomath

Thinker

Class Results: HIGH 5 TEST

Strength Distribution Across Domains



Class Results:

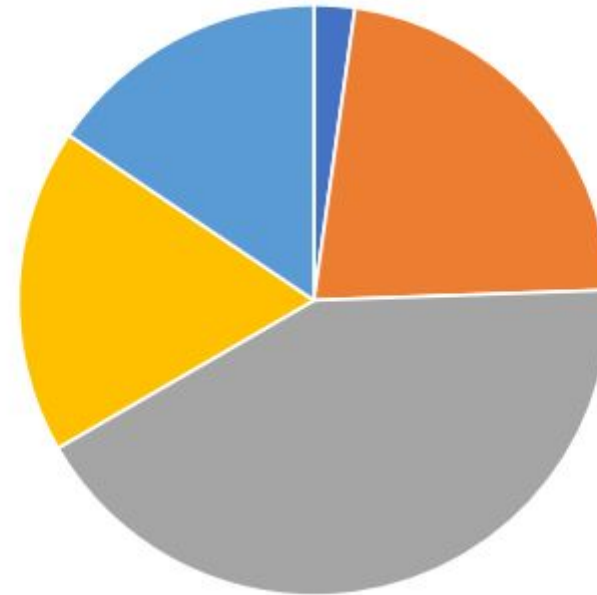
HIGH **5** TEST

Doing



■ Believer ■ Deliverer ■ Focus Expert ■ Problem Solver ■ Timekeeper

Feeling

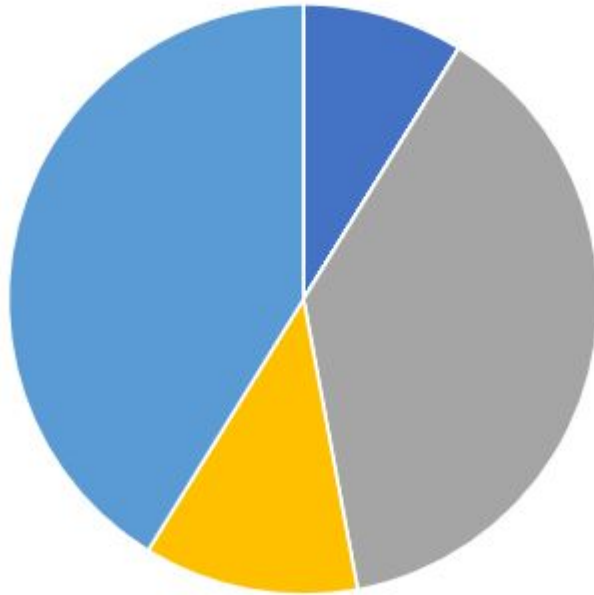


■ Chameleon ■ Coach ■ Empathizer ■ Optimist ■ Peacekeeper

Class Results:

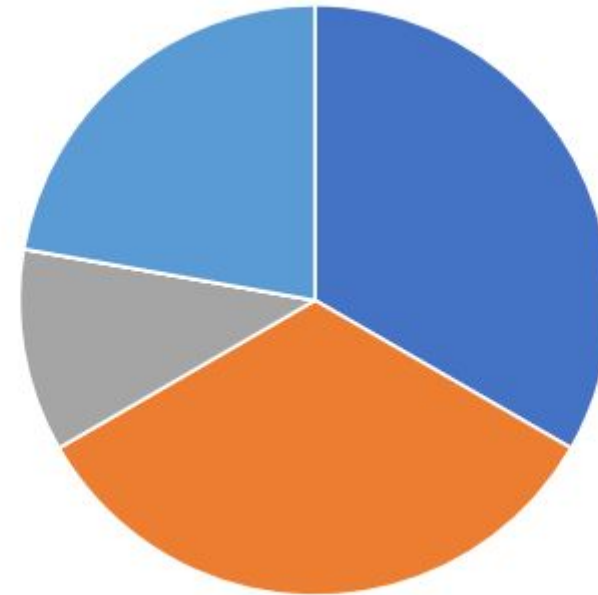
HIGH **5** TEST

Thinking

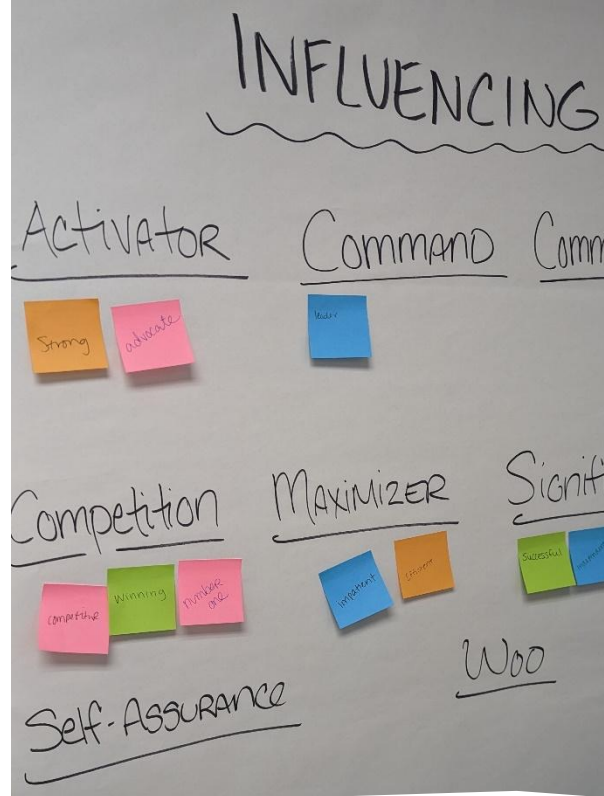
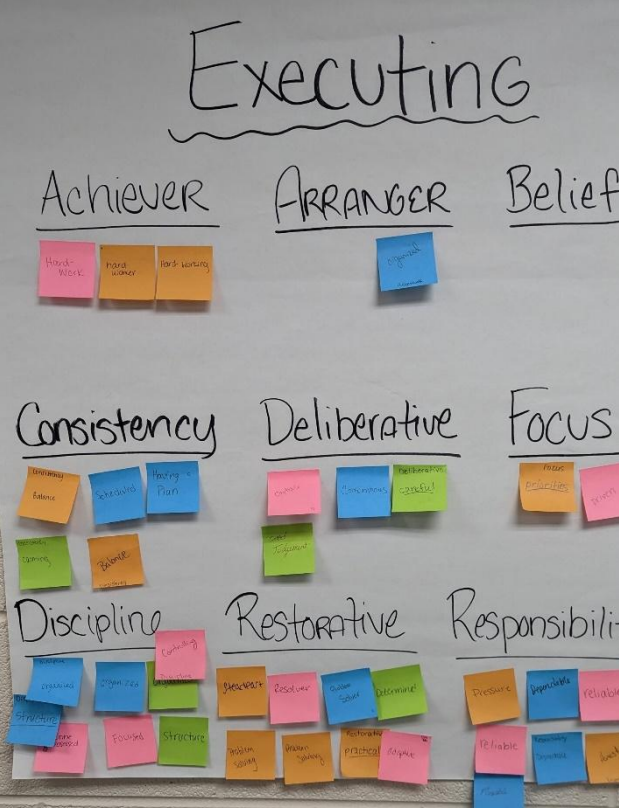


■ Analyst ■ Brainstormer ■ Philomath ■ Strategist ■ Thinker

Motivating



■ Catalyst ■ Commander ■ Self-believer ■ Storyteller ■ Winner



Talent Show

- In-class activity using assessment results
- Students break into small groups to debrief their individual character “strengths”
- Each student gets 5 post-its to write any word they feel represents themselves in each of their top 5 results.
- Students then put the post-its under each

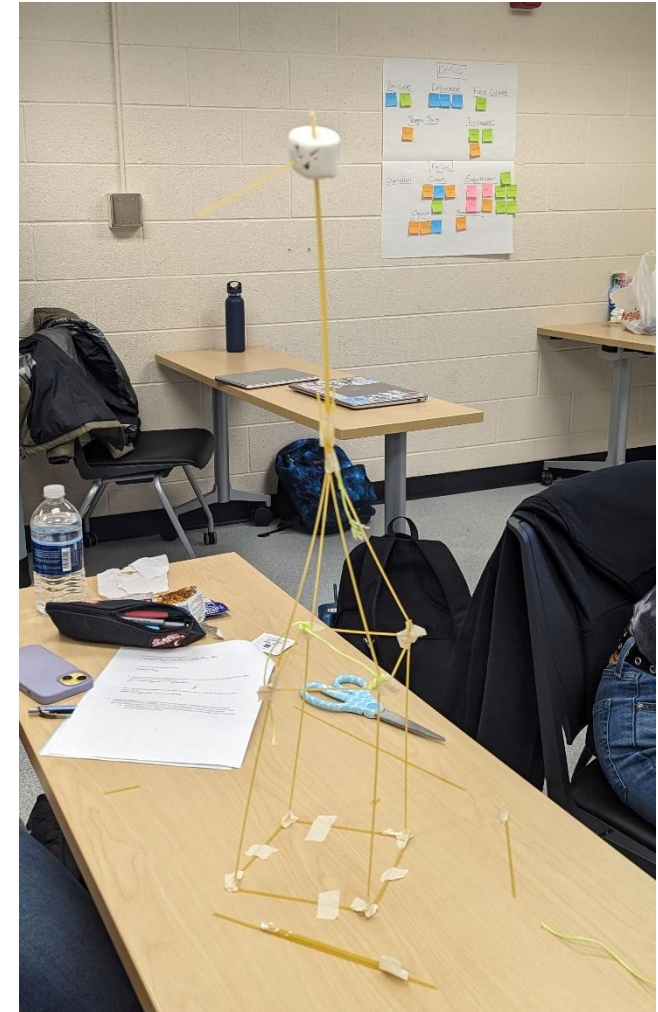
Class Example: Strengths & Teams

- In small groups, students complete activities simulating their group as a team
- Discuss what each person brings to the team, areas the team is lacking and perceived challenges, and combined team strengths
- End with the “Marshmallow Challenge”, followed by a debrief



Debrief:

- planning
- leaders
- challenges
- moving forward



Class Example: Values Assessment

SOCIETY - Contributing to improvements in the world	WORK ALONE Working independently on projects, without significant contact with others.	FREE SCHEDULE Fulfilling responsibilities according to my own schedule, with no specific working hours required.	STATUS Regarded as a person of high intellectual prowess or as an acknowledged "expert" in my field.	BEING SUPERVISED Working under the direction of others.
HELP OTHERS - Helping people in a direct way, either individually or in groups.	AFFILIATION Recognition as a member of a particular organization or as someone connected to a prestigious person.	FREE TIME Adequate time for leisure activities and interest outside of my work.	DECISION MAKING The power to decide courses of action, policies, etc.	SECURITY Being assured of keeping my job and receiving a reasonable financial reward.
PUBLIC CONTACT Consistent and frequent contact with others.	FRIENDSHIP Developing close personal relationships with people as a result of my work.	POWER Controlling others' work activities; influencing others.	PRESSURE Working in situations with frequent deadlines or where the quality of my work is judged critically by others.	DEVELOPMENT Being in a situation that permits or requires constant expansion of skills and personal/professional development.
TEAMWORK Close working relationships with co-workers while focusing on common goals.	AMBIGUITY Having responsibilities that are not clearly spelled out.	INFLUENCE Holding a position to change the attitudes or opinions of others.	COMPETITION Engaging in activities that pit my abilities against others.	LOCATION Living in a city or geographical area that is conducive to my lifestyle and that allows me to do the things I enjoy most.
PROFIT Job includes a strong likelihood of accumulating large amounts of money/ other material gain.	AUTONOMY Ability to determine the nature of my work without significant direction from others.	EXCITEMENT Experiencing a high degree of, or frequent, excitement.	AESTHETICS Studying or appreciating the beauty of things, ideas, etc.	BALANCE Experiencing a balance among the family, work, and play aspects of my life.
FAST PACE Working in circumstances where there is a high pace of activity and tasks must be performed rapidly.	ORDER Working in an environment that is organized and orderly.	ADVENTURE Having responsibilities that require frequent risk-taking.	CREATIVITY (art) Engaging in creative work through any of several art forms	COMMUNITY Living in a place where I can be involved in community affairs.
VARIETY Having responsibilities that frequently change in content or setting.	SPONTANEITY Working under few constraints; the ability to work with abandon and passion.	KNOWLEDGE Pursuing knowledge and understanding; meeting intellectual challenges.	CREATIVITY (other) Creating new ideas, programs, organizational structures, etc. not following a format previously developed by others.	LEADERSHIP Direct responsibility for others' work and influence over direction.
PRECISION Working in situations where attention to detail is necessary.	FEEDBACK Receiving frequent feedback and reinforcement from others.	RECOGNITION Recognized publicly for the work quality.	RESPONSIBILITY Taking a high level of responsibility, in any form.	STABILITY Having a work routine and job duties that are largely predictable and not likely to change over a period of time.
ACHIEVEMENT Experiencing the challenge of completing difficult tasks; feeling a sense of accomplishment.	PHYSICAL CHALLENGE Having a role which makes physical demands I would find rewarding.	ADVANCEMENT Having an excellent chance of moving into a higher or better-paying position.	SETTING Working in comfortable or pleasant surroundings.	TRAVEL Working in a job that requires frequent travel.

Class Example: Values Assessment

VM 155 Veterinary Nursing Careers and Professional Development

Name: _____

Assignment: Values Worksheet (10pts.)

Using the chart below, sort the values based on what is most important to you at this time in your life in the table below. You do not need to fill each section and you may have more for one section than another. There is not right or wrong. This is all about you. Complete and submit with the associated reflection questions.

ALWAYS VALUED	OFTEN VALUED	SOMETIMES VALUED	SELDOM VALUED	NEVER VALUED
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

Reflection Questions:

1. Which values came easy for you to place? Which were more of a challenge to place?
2. How did you decide which were the most important to you?
3. How would you feel if the things you value most were not honored or attainable with your job?
4. In thinking about work environments, how does this help you formulate what to look for as you search for your next job? Do your current job interests match the values you have listed? (Be prepared to discuss this question at the beginning of the next class).
5. Think of jobs, internships, student clubs, or other activities you have done. Which ones have been most interesting or meaningful to you?
6. How could these themes play out in an area of veterinary medicine you are currently interested in?

- Students complete the assessment independently
- Small group debrief during class time to discuss similarities and differences
- Can be adapted for virtual classroom with breakout rooms

Class Example: Strengths, Values & Transferrable Skills

- Identify transferable skills
- How can they transfer to vet med
- Mining a job description to match transferrable skills and values

Strengths & Transferable Skills

List your top 5 strength themes from the assessment tool on the lines below:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Now, think about where your top 5 strengths can be found in the list of transferable skills below. Circle as many skills as you think connect with your strengths and those that you feel you possess but may not be connected to a strength theme. If you can think of others that are not listed, add them on the "others" line provided.

Strong work ethic	Organization
Communication	Leadership
Teamwork	Self-confidence
Initiative	Friendly/outgoing
Interpersonal	Tactfulness
Problem-solving	Creativity
Analytical	Strategic Planning
Flexibility/Adaptability	Entrepreneurial/Risk-taking
Detail-oriented	Positive attitude
Technologically savvy	Others: _____

Now, using the transferable skills that you connected with your strengths, think about how you demonstrate these skills in your current role or previous experiences that would be relatable to a veterinary position. Using the chart below, identify previous or current job roles and experiences that

Job Posting Analysis

Pick a job search engine (Indeed, Monster, Google jobs, etc., a vet-specific board, or visit an employer's Careers website directly) and search for two positions you would be interested in applying to. Then fill out the analysis below. Complete the analysis and submit. Choose 1 of the 2 postings, then submit a screenshot or copy of the posting. The analysis and chosen posting are due Monday, 2/12/24 by 2pm.

	Job Posting #1	Job Posting #2
Clinic/Organization Name:		
Location:		
Hours (full-time/part-time):		
Do they have a web page or social media to review?		
Reviews:		
Job description is clearly listed:		
Salary Range:		
Work hours:		
Required Experience:		
Primary job duties:		
Benefits listed:		
What transferable skills are they looking for?		
Red flags:		
Favorite things about the posting:		

Class Example: “How to Work With Me”

You get the best of me when....

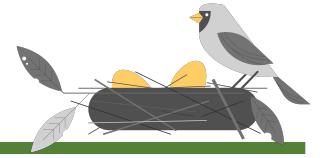
You get the worst of me when....

You can count on me to....

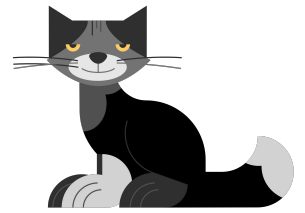
What I need from you is....

- The last activity or assignment to wrap up the personal development section is the “How to Work with Me”.
- Students reflect upon what they’ve learned about themselves, their classmates, what they bring to the team, and what they need from the team.

Inclusivity & the Value of Difference



- Recognizing strength characteristics and barriers in ourselves and how we behave, enables us to recognize characteristics in others.
- When we understand the diverse ways people navigate the world, we begin to see value from a different perspective.
- Our backgrounds are diverse, our work styles may be as well.



Wrapping it up....

- Introducing personal development early in the career journey enables individuals to become more self-aware and aware of social situations around them.
- Understanding one's strengths enables individuals to perform at their best, contributing effectively to their teams and organizations.
- Aligning work with personal values enhances job satisfaction and fosters a sense of meaning in professional endeavors.
- Workshops, assessments, and reflective activities can help guide students in exploring their innate talents and core values.
- By engaging in self-discovery, students can gain clarity regarding career aspirations and preferred work environments.
- This proactive approach will help enhance individual well-being and elevate the standard of care.

References

- All images without documented image credit were sourced from the Microsoft 365 stock image bank.
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