

1.3a Engagement and Team Preparation

The Exploratory Interview

Doing a strengths-assessment is like meeting a person with whom you wish to develop a relationship. It is like meeting someone for the first time at a social gathering and getting to know them better through conversation. Some of the best people to converse with are the ones that know what questions to ask to get us to talk about the things that mean the most to us. When we walk away from that kind of an interaction we feel validated regarding who we are, our beliefs, our work, or what ever it was we shared about from the core of our being. Essentially in that kind of interaction we have been talking about our strengths and culture.

1. Open the interaction by saying that you would just like to know the person you are interviewing more.
 2. The interview questions listed here are based on meeting the person outside of their home. To do an in-home interview you would want to alter the questions accordingly. However, this list gives you some guidance as to what to be looking for.
 3. Interview by asking the following questions. Don't settle for the first answers that they give you.
 4. Dig, dig, dig.
 5. Record your answers. It doesn't inhibit people for you to write these things down, if anything, people like for you to record this strengths-based information.
 6. Feel free to use both sides of the paper to record your answers.
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1. If I were to walk into the place where you live what would I see hanging on the walls, placed on the tables, or shelves?
 2. If I were to look at the reading material, tapes, CDs and videos where you live, what would I see?
 3. If I were to observe you and people you care about, enjoying an activity together what would I see?
 4. What do you value more than anything else in life and why?

Processing the Exploratory Interview Back at the Office

When you get back to the office fill in the following information from the information gleaned from the exploratory interview.

1. List all of the strengths that you learned that the person you interviewed has.
Example: thrifty, fun loving, hard working and so forth.
2. What did you learn about this person's culture? Who are they as a person?
Example; preferences, desires, goals, ethnic background, heritage...and so forth.