



Facilitating the Teaching Intern and Cooperating Teacher Relationship Utilizing StrengthsQuest

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INTRODUCTION

- **Do weeks go by before a positive working relationship between Cooperating teachers and Interns is developed?**
- **Do interns work with cooperating teachers who insist instruction is done their way?**
- **Do cooperating teachers feel interns teach the “wrong” way?**

At Kansas State University emphasis has been placed on building the intern/cooperating teacher relationship prior to the internship semester using the StrengthsQuest tool.

RESULTS

Over the past five years...

- 62 Cooperating Teacher/Teaching Intern pairs completed the StrengthsQuest program
- We opened up the conversation between the teachers about how they are similar and different.
- Prompting this conversation helped the teachers realize although they may teach the same concepts in different ways, and as long as they are effective, they can learn from each other.

PLOTTED RESULTS SAMPLE

Name	Executing					Influencing					Relationship Building					Strategic Thinking						
	Achiever	Arranger	Belief	Consistency	Deliberative	Command	Communication	Competition	Self-Assurance	Woo	Includer	Individualization	Positivity	Relator	Analytical	Context	Futuristic	Ideation	Input	Intellecion	Learner	Strategic
Adam	1																					
Brett																						
Connor																						
Quashon																						
Greta																						
Jackie																						
Jaqueline																						
Jason																						
Jamison																						
Kellie																						
Kevin																						
Liana																						
Levy																						
Mike																						
Paul																						
Victoria																						
Trace																						
Cathy																						
Raul																						

TIMELINE OF EVENTS

August	Each intern and cooperating teacher for the spring semester was provided a StrengthsFinder code to take the online survey tool. Upon completion, a summary of the results (their top 5 strengths) were sent to the faculty coordinator.
September	A certified StrengthsQuest trainer was invited to the AGED 500 Leadership and Professional Development course as a guest lecturer to help the future interns further explore their strengths and identify how their strengths can help them be stronger peer teams for later course work.
December	During the Teaching Intern/Cooperating Teacher training, the trainer was again invited to facilitate Strengths utilization. The data from the cooperating teacher's and intern teacher's StrengthsQuest tool is plotted on a chart to easily compare.
January-May	Teaching Interns respond to a weekly journal that asked how they feel about their internship along with other talking points.

NEED FOR INNOVATION

Often, valuable time is lost during the teaching internship while cooperating teachers and interns are learning how to work with each other. The StrengthsQuest training seeks to:

- Utilize scenarios to explain how each individual may accomplish a similar task **differently, but equally effective.**
- Feedback and evaluating effectiveness in the classroom should be **based on the result, not the method.**
- Examine how the teachers are similar and different as individuals prior to working together on a daily basis.

ADVICE TO OTHERS

Identifying a coordinator is key to success. Their duties may include:

- Collect the StrengthsFinder codes
- Distribute codes to interns, cooperating teachers, and university faculty
- Follow up to ensure completion
- plotted data
- Obtain a trainer or acquire the expertise needed to conduct training sessions
- Manage payment of codes (\$9.99 each) from www.strengthsquest.com

This program takes approximately 10 hours to plan and execute including the time spent conducting the two trainings.

STRENGTHSQUEST THEMES BY DOMAIN

EXECUTING	INFLUENCING	RELATIONSHIP BUILDING	STRATEGIC THINKING
People with dominate Executing themes know how to make things happen.	People with dominant Influencing themes know how to take charge, speak up, and make sure the team is heard.	People with dominant Relationship Building themes have the ability to build strong relationships that can hold a team together and make the team greater than the sum of its parts.	People with dominant Strategic Thinking themes help teams consider what could be. They absorb and analyze information that can inform better decisions
Achiever Arranger Belief Consistency Deliberative Discipline Focus Responsibility Restorative	Activator Command Communications Competition Maximizer Self-Assurance Significance Woo	Adaptability Connectedness Developer Empathy Harmony Includer Individualization Positivity Relator	Analytical Context Futuristic Ideation Input Intellecion Learner Strategic

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