

Stay happy, love life and ... Build on Strengths!



We all have strengths! We all have things that we are great at, that excite us and we love to do. There are also things that we are not great at and we dislike doing. Right? I am creative and a people person far more than I am organised and analytical. I love writing, creating, speaking and meeting new people ... I am good at it. I am not as excited about cleaning, tidying, bookwork, accounting and the like ... I put it off time and time again. I often berate myself and think that I need to get better at this stuff – I need to work on my weaknesses if I am to be a well-rounded person. Then it hit me ... why spend my time getting to be just average at something I dislike when I could spend the time to excel doing things I love? I decided to learn to delegate the 'blah' and spend time on the 'yah'!

Many years ago I was school teacher. I came out of college with a Bachelor of Physical Education, but the only job I could get at the time was teaching maths and science – which when you think about it is hilarious! I remember my teaching career with pain and torment! It was not the best period of my life (as short as it was) and I really didn't enjoy it at all. Looking back now, it is glaringly obvious why, for two reasons ...

A square peg doesn't fit in a round hole without damage!

I used to drive home from my teaching job every day angry and stressed. I couldn't understand why – now I know. Firstly I was trying to force myself to do something I wasn't good at and that I didn't really love. I was a sportsman not an academic! Secondly I was trying to force many teenagers to do something they didn't love and were not good at! I was pounding away trying to make that square peg fit into that round hole and in the process was creating a lot of pain for myself and others. We all have strength and weaknesses – the key should not be to pound away at ourselves and others about what we are not good at, but to hone our skills and excel at what we are.



Don't get me wrong ... I am not saying that we should avoid all things just because we are not good at and don't like them. Developing good practices with your people skills, exercise & nutritional habits and other

success habits (that I talk about ad nauseam) is essential if you want certain results in your life ... whether you like them or not. As I have said many times, I dislike exercise, yet I do it most days because I want to be fit, lean and healthy so I can live a better quality life. Some things just need to be done!

However, why force yourself to do something you hate, when it is something that someone else loves? I have an accountant and book keeper because I hate doing that stuff. Using them gives me the time to do the things I love ... writing, speaking, meeting new people and building relationships. What you love, others hate and what you hate, others love ... it is a perfect world for us all to work together on the things we love and are good at.

Use your strengths in the team



There is obviously a basketball team with these two players in it (the photo on the left). Imagine if the coach came up to the short dude and said, 'we need you to take the jump at the start of the game'. Then what if he went to the whopping tall man and said, 'we need you to run around really quickly and pick up all the low balls'. Obviously these are not the strengths of the two men - so the coach puts the short man on the stretching rack to make him taller and starts some sprint & speed work with the tall man. How is this going to go? Badly, right? It is stupid and would never happen - in any team the players are put in positions that compliment and where they can use their strengths. They then spend time to develop these strengths even further to be the best they can be. Why wouldn't we do the same?

In marriage, relationships or family we are part of a team. In a workplace or business we are a part of a team, in any other group or association we are a part of a team. Wouldn't it be best to hone the individual strengths and skills of each person in the team? I was talking to a friend, Anita, yesterday who loves her career as a psychologist and loves working with people. Her husband is an accountant and loves working with numbers. It is a perfect combination as Anita does what she loves - getting out meeting and helping people and her husband keeps the back end office in order. They are both working with and developing their strengths and loving their life.

So, here is the challenge for you this week - have a look at where you are investing time doing stuff you love and are good at. Then look at where you are doing things that cause anxiety and that you could delegate to someone else who loves doing that stuff. Change it, delegate it or outsource it! Then with that extra time you have just created, use it to focus on, get better and even excel at the things you are already good at.

Do this and life will be a happier, more satisfying and exciting place to live! Have a strong and successful week!

November 6, 2011

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