

## CHARTING INDIVIDUAL CONNECTIONS

### OVERVIEW

This is a participatory activity for youth and adults to explore their gifts and strengths.

### OBJECTIVES

- To identify participants' strengths
- To connect the strengths of others to team needs

### TIME REQUIRED

Approximately 45 minutes

WHAT	TIME	CONTENT	MATERIALS
<b>Step 1: Setting the context</b>	10 min.	<p>Describe the purpose of session: “We are all leaders in this project. One key aspect of leadership is the ability to identify your own strengths (i.e., what you are good at and what you can offer the team). Sometimes it is hard for us as individuals to realize and name our skills and potential connections to the whole of the team. Therefore, others play a key role in helping people connect their skills to team needs. This exercise will help us practice those skills.”</p> <p>Refer to flip charts.</p> <p>Give an example: “For example, someone may be a skilled artist—how could those skills be used in our team?” Push to get the group to elicit at least 5 different examples (e.g., make posters for PR, draw invitations to vision meeting, decorate trashcans for service project, help design team shirt). Then say, “Now for another example, how about someone who has great skills in basketball, how could those skills be helpful to our team?” Ask the group to provide some possible answers: Since they are a good team player, they could help us understand how teams work effectively and help us work together; they could recruit their teammates to help us out on service projects; they could ask the coach to let us use the facilities for meetings.”</p>	<p>Flip chart with the following written on it:</p> <p>Effective Leaders</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Know their skills/gifts</li> <li>2. Can connect their skills to team needs</li> <li>3. Can help other connect their skills to team needs</li> </ol> <p>Markers Tape</p>
<b>Step 2: Brain- storming</b>	10 min.	<p>Say to the group, “Now we are going to do an activity where we identify our individual gifts and think of ways these can be connected to our team needs and opportunities.</p> <p>“Let’s take a moment to close our eyes . . . think about something that you are really good at. You might want to think about when you are happy or feeling good. Can someone give me an example?”</p> <p>Solicit a couple of examples. Then say, “Everyone get it? Okay, now write your gift on a half sheet.”</p>	<p>Half sheets of paper Markers</p>

*continued on page 77*

WHAT	TIME	CONTENT	MATERIALS
<b>Step 3: Sharing</b>	15 min.  Allow about 1 min. per person	<p>Say, “Now we are going to practice making the connections and speaking in front of a group. I am going to ask each of you to come to the front of the room and tell us what your gift or skill is. Then we are going to give you some ideas of how those skills can be useful to our team and work. Who would like to go first?”</p> <p>The first person walks to the front of the room and states his or her name and gifts. Ask the group, “How could X’s skills be useful?” Ask for a couple of different examples to help people realize that the same skills can be useful in a variety of ways. Do this for each participant.</p>	Tape or sticky wall
<b>Step 3 Adaptation</b>		<p>If group members are shy or inexperienced with speaking in front of a group, pay special attention to encouraging them and to coaching them to speak loudly, look at the group, smile, and so forth. You might also try an additional set-up: Ask speakers to say “Hello my name is _____,” and ask the group to respond “Hi _____, we are glad you are a part of our team.”</p>	
<b>Step 4: Reflection</b>	10 min.	<p>Processing: Say, “Now I have some questions for you. Let’s think about your experience in figuring out what your skills are. Was that easy? hard? What did it feel like when I asked you to visualize your skills? Pause to leave time for answers.</p> <p>“How about when you walked in front of the room and shared your skill? What was that like (ask for a couple of answers)? How many of you were scared thinking about the fact that you would have to stand in front of the group (ask for a show of hands). What about after you did it? Were you still scared? What helped you become less scared?</p> <p>“How about giving feedback and connecting skills to needs? What was that like? How is this helpful? Why is it an important leadership skill? What did you learn? Think about the gifts and connections we made in the group. What skills do we have a lot of? What others might be useful?”</p>	