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Knowing Your Unique Gifts

By Alvah Parker

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When Bill became my client he had a very successful recruiting business but he could see the business environment was changing. He felt that he was not using his natural gifts effectively in his business and he wanted some help in identifying what he could do with those talents that would provide him with more fulfilling work.

The one characteristic that separates the ordinary worker from the extraordinary one is that the great ones know themselves very well and use their special talents to make the work better for themselves and others. Bill was on the right track. He wanted to uncover what he was naturally good at and then find a way to use those gifts in his work.

Why is it that we tend to focus on improving our weaknesses instead of looking for our strengths and using them to our advantage? What I am suggesting is that if you work at getting better at something, work on what you are good at (It's usually what you like to do too!) and forget about working on improving what you have no desire to be an expert in.

In Bill's recruiting business he needed to have excellent phone skills since most of his work was done by phone. But Bill knew he needed the excitement he got from being face to face with people. If he had stayed in his recruiting business he might have taken courses on telephone sales techniques... not something that excited him.

We get a lot of "guidance" encouraging us to perfect our weakest skills. From our first days in school our teachers are critical of anything less than perfection in reading, spelling and arithmetic. That carries over to our adulthood when that inner voice continues to tell us to "do it until you get it right" even though it is a struggle.

We all however have skills that we do easily. Great leaders, entrepreneurs and managers know themselves well enough to know what those skills are and use them in their jobs. According to Kenneth Tucker in an article for the Gallup Management Journal, "The best managers succeed because they have an acute awareness of their own talents, they understand how to use those talents intentionally to

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motivate and develop their direct reports, and they maximize others' performance by helping them identify their greatest talents and turn them into strengths."

In her book, *Use What You've Got and Other Business Lessons I learned from My Mom* Barbara Corcoran, Founder of the real estate company, The Corcoran Group, says her mother told her, "If you don't have big breasts, put ribbons on your pigtails." She says, "I didn't have a big chest but I did have a nice personality, a great smile and the gift of gab. All I needed was my mother's cue to begin using them to my advantage. That was my first lesson in sales."

According to the Kenneth Tucker article, "Most people are unaware of their talents." Are you aware of yours? Some managers are really good at identifying the strengths and talents of employees. You are lucky if you work for one.

If you work alone or have a manager who can't help you, here are a few ways to identify your talents. Ask four or five friends or co-workers what they see as your talents. You'll get some common themes as you review their answers. Another approach can be done in a group. Each member is given a blank piece of paper that someone tapes to that member's back. Participants are instructed to write some positive characteristics of that person on the member's paper. Everyone ends up with a list of their positive traits.

Another group that I was part of took the time at one meeting to collectively verbalize and write down the strengths and talents for each member. As you use one or all of these methods begin to think about what is said and sit with it a bit. Eventually you will know what fits you.

Often people use assessments to learn about themselves. <http://www.emode.com> is a website with lots of different tests. If you like assessments you'll love this site. One that might help you to identify your talents is called the "True Talent Test". Use caution when reading the results of any assessment. You are the best judge as to whether the assessment is accurate or not. None is 100% accurate so accept what you agree with and disregard what seems wrong.

Finally another way people learn how to identify and work with their talents is to hire a coach. A coach can give you the support you need to try some different ways to identify your gifts and/or sort out all the input you get from trying the other identification methods.

After doing several of these exercises my client Bill actually decided to try working for a radio station both in their marketing department and on air. Here he could easily use his gift of being a natural marketer. It turned out to be the kind of work he really loved.

Take Action:

1. Try any or all of the methods I suggested to find your gifts. If you already know them think about how you are using them in your current job. Can you find other ways to use them in your work and in your life?
2. Read *Use What You've Got and Other Business Lessons I learned from My Mom* by Barbara

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Corcoran.

<http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/ASIN/1591840023/parkerassociates/002-5392280-0261609> One of 10 children Barbara's mother was able to identify each child's unique talent. Barbara says she chose to believe her mother that her gift was creativity and went on to use that gift in her real estate business.

Alvah Parker is a Business and Career Coach as well as publisher of Parker's Points, an email tip list and Road to Success, an ezine. Alvah is found on the web at www.asparker.com. She may also be reached at 781-598-0388. Copyright © 2004 all rights reserved. Permission is granted to reproduce in its entirety including copyright and contact information.

Estelle's Gifts

By Timothy Davis

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Welcome to an exciting and beautiful assortment of unique gifts from my heart to your heart. Inside you will find some of the most loveliest gifts offered for any occasion at affordable low prices,. So take a moment to expose each gift,enjoy shopping at Estelle's Gifts. Our website address:
<http://www.estellesgifts.com> or call 732-499-0259

Here's an home base company just getting started. Only been in business since 11/01 base in Rahway,NJ. In business to sale gifts for all occasion and holidays. Owners Timothy Davis is from Memphis,Tenn been here since 1973. Wife is from Hasensack,NJ.



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