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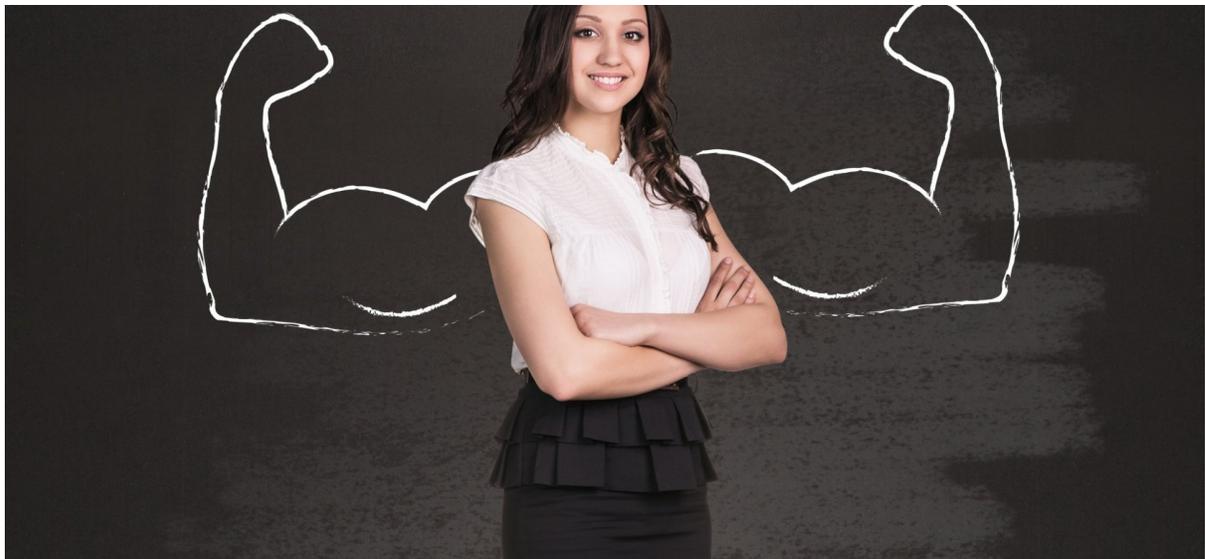
COLUMNIST

Why You Need To Adopt A Strength-Based Leadership Strategy This Year

A focus on weakness is ingrained in our culture, and, during these changing times in leadership, it's time for a paradigm shift in that thinking.



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A focus on weakness is ingrained in our culture, and, during these changing times in leadership, it's time for a paradigm shift in that thinking. A new movement in the business world could fundamentally change the way we think about improvement, especially for business leaders who truly want to be their best and to bring out the best in their people.

This revolution capitalizes on the unique contributions of each individual, leveraging their unmatched, powerful ways of being and doing. It results in increased efficiency, improved effectiveness and a happier way of life.

The approach is Strengths-Based Leadership (SBL).

SBL is a philosophy of leadership based on the belief that we are all born with unique strengths and talents, and that when we act in alignment with those strengths, we are at our best. We can understand it by studying its history, or context, and its key concepts. SBL is part mindset, part skills and practice.

Two key concepts explain this approach, the understanding of which allow individuals to leverage the philosophy and play to their strengths:

Our strengths are enduring and unique. Our strengths are enduring, because we are born with them. Strengths are things we do naturally. They're easy for us, and we usually enjoy doing them. They're unique, because no one else in the world has the same combination of strengths, expressed the same way, as anyone else.

Our greatest room for growth is in the direction of our strength. For many people, this is a switch. Typically what people do is put all of their attention and energy into their weaknesses and take their strengths for granted.

There's nothing wrong with wanting to improve; it's the obsession with weaknesses as the place to improve that's counterproductive. It's much more powerful to build on our strengths. Importantly, the message should not be that we ignore our shortcomings. In many instances, we must attend to them. We manage our weaknesses so we can build on our strengths.

So when it comes to putting SBL to work, you must first identify your strengths, then commit to doing more of the activities that strengthen you while doing less of the activities that weaken you. What are your strengths? How can you minimize your weaknesses? How can your weaknesses work for you? Ask yourself, your mentor and trusted friends these questions to capitalize on how SBL can radicalize your leadership strategy.

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