

Leaders, how much staff talent are you leaving on the table? By Lindiwe S. Lester

Leaders and managers, do you know even half of what your team members are able to do and contribute to the business?

Staff engagement research sheds light on the wide-ranging strengths within organizations that could help businesses move forward. Yet, managers and leaders, on only rare occasions, set aside time to discover all the talents latent in their teams.

Recently, while facilitating a workshop, participants were asked to jot down a list of their strengths, those things they do better than most, that people say they “make look easy”, that they can do without regard for time, and that they most frequently hear compliments about. Next, they were asked to take each one and indicate which strengths they get to utilize at work most of the time and which strengths they rarely or ever used at work.

Then we asked each person to take the strengths from their “rarely used at work” list and write each one on a post it note and place it on a table top.

These were identified as just a sampling of talents the organization was leaving on the table.



Brains began churning about how some of these strengths could be applied to various work situations, whether workplace skills or artistic ones. This was an *aha moment*, a huge awareness of the potential to engage so much more of what team members can contribute to the organization and their work every day.

A Harvard Business Review article titled, Why People Quit Their Jobs (Jan. 2018) notes “most often managers don’t know the strengths of their team members. They lack a process to discover them, (which in turn) then helps tailor work and engagement to maximize performance.”

With enough time and focused intention, particularly at off sites, strengths can be shared, bringing both amazement and awareness, while building connective tissue throughout the team.

Time didn’t permit during our recent session, but the next steps would be to consider how to engage all this potential for the good of the organization, and equally important, the good of the staff,

because people who engage their strengths **most of the time** at work are more satisfied and perform better--an all-around win.

Let Tap In Consulting help make your team off-sites more engaging, aligned with the strategic needs of the organization, and empowering for all as they leave.