



Using the Leadership Character Insight Assessment (LCIA) for Team Building: Leveraging Your Team's Character Strengths

Speaker Notes

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This document includes speaker notes for the session leader to use on the day of the presentation.



“Character is like a tree and reputation is like a shadow.
The shadow is what we think of it; the tree is the real thing.”

Abraham Lincoln

You may have heard the expressions “what a character,” “they are behaving out of character,” or “she’s got good character.” Most people have a general idea of what character means from these expressions – it’s the typical tendencies and personality qualities that make you who you are!

As this quote illustrates, character is closely related to your reputation. But character is what you cultivate internally, while reputation is what you become known for – the outward behaviors you show to others that are *driven* by your internal character. So, internally you may have a strong character of integrity, but unless you show honesty and strong ethics in your dealings with others, you will not gain a reputation for it. This quote may help explain character better to those who are unfamiliar with that term but more familiar with what reputation is.

The focus of today’s session will be on exploring our own personal character profiles, discussing how they can be used to benefit our colleagues and work teams, and plan for future development of our own character.

Using the LCIA for Team Building



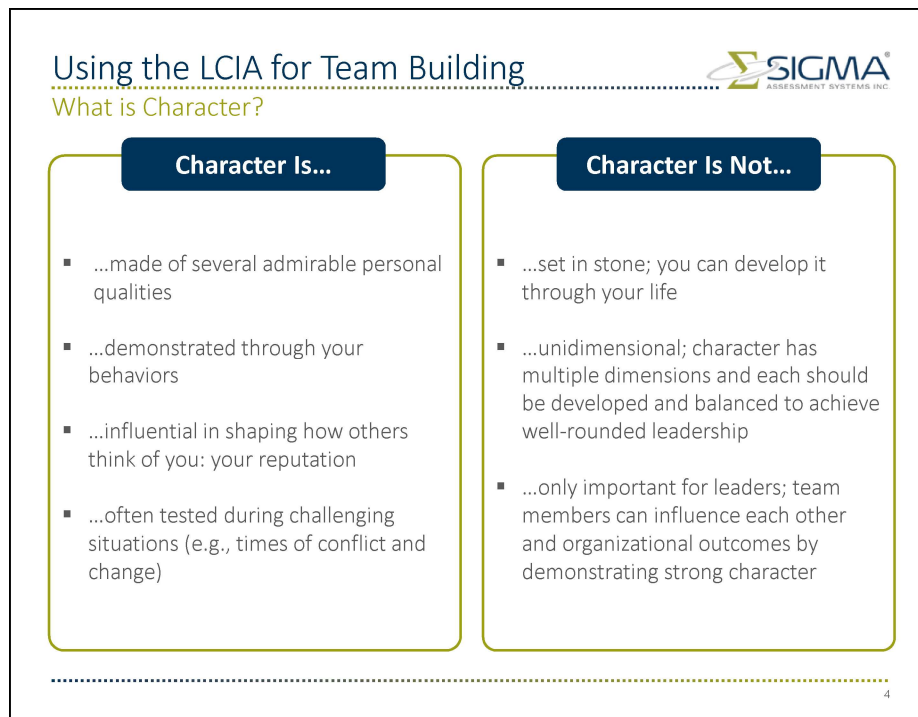
Overview

- By the end of today's session, you will understand:
 - What character is, and what it isn't
 - Your personal character strengths
 - How character can be leveraged for teamwork
 - How your team can use each others' character strengths in complementary ways

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There are a few objectives for today's team-building session. We'll start with an overview of what character is, and what it is not. We'll discuss the model of character presented by the LCIA test that you have all taken. Then, we'll take a closer look at each of your personal LCIA reports and take some time to analyze your personal strengths. There will be opportunity for group discussion of the reports, and we'll use those findings to discover how each of your unique characters can be leveraged for better teamwork. There will always be some aspects of character that are strengths for you and areas of development for others, or vice versa, and we can depend on our teammates to help us develop those areas where we are less strong.

Hopefully by the end of today you will walk away with a better understanding of your own character, your character strengths and weaknesses, the characters of those on your team, and next steps for developing your own character and helping with the development of your teammates.



There are several common misconceptions about character that we can clear up.

Let's focus on the left side first: what character *is*. It's a collection of different admirable personal qualities like humility, drive, and good judgment that people have tended to admire across cultures and times. If you think of examples of great leaders you have admired throughout history and in the present day, you might notice that they demonstrate many of the character dimensions we assess with the LCIA.

A person's character is generally expressed through their behaviors. For example, someone who possesses a strong sense of humanity will behave compassionately to others – listening carefully, forgiving transgressions, and being generous with their time and money. In turn, the ways that we express our character will shape our reputation, or how others think of us.

The last point on the left side concerns when character is often demonstrated. While we might slowly form ideas of people's character over time working with them, such as whether they tend to behave with strong integrity and stick to their principles, often it's times of conflict and change that really show people's character strengths. For example, it may be easier for some people to show courage during ordinary times, but when their energy is more limited, will they still devote their energies to protecting and standing up for

others?

Now let's turn our attention to the right side – what character *is not*. First, character is not something that is unchangeable. Today's session will help you understand where you're currently at with your character results across different dimensions, but with enough effort, people can develop their character by improving dimensions they have lower scores on, and refining dimensions they're already strong on. Character is something people can work on throughout their lives to become the best versions of themselves.

Many people also believe that higher scores are also better on all character dimensions. You may think there is nothing better than being super courageous, driven, humble, etc. However, in excess, character dimensions can become unhelpful. We will touch on this in detail in a later slide.

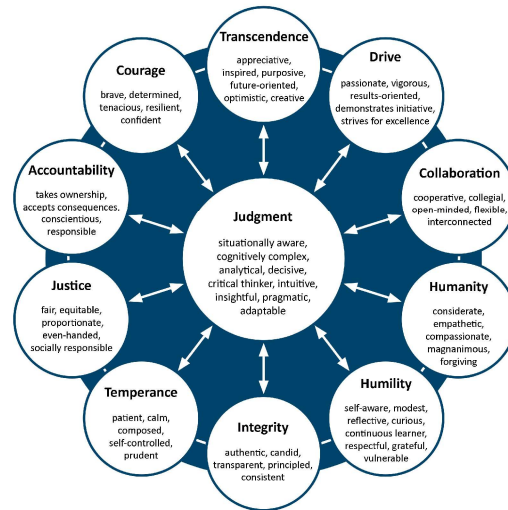
Finally, although character is a very important quality for leaders to develop, this training is meant for all roles in an organization. All coworkers interact and make decisions with each other, and when coworkers learn to embrace their character strengths and help colleagues with their areas of development, many important group outcomes can be achieved.

Using the LCIA for Team Building

Model of Character



- In the LCIA model, character is made up of 11 dimensions
 - Each dimension has several elements within it
- Judgment plays a key role:
 - Judgment controls **when** and **how** we choose to behave; think of it like an air traffic controller that determines when to prioritize certain dimensions and not others



Here we can see the LCIA model of character on the right. Some terms might be familiar to you already since I have given a few examples of character in the previous slide (e.g., drive, integrity, temperance).

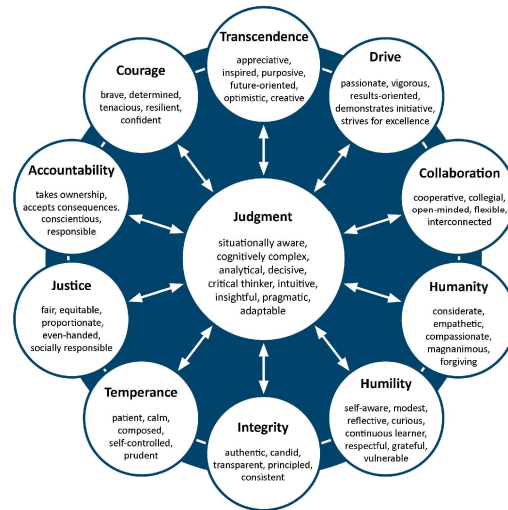
On this slide I want you to note the arrangement of dimensions. There are 11 dimensions in total, with each dimension being a single circle. As you can see, 10 dimensions encircle the middle dimension of judgment. This placement is intentional since judgment is likely the most important character dimension and acts as an air-traffic controller for the other dimensions. Judgment informs you when to use certain dimensions and not others in different work situations. For example, a creative brainstorming exercise might require some drive and collaboration and less humility since you will want to ensure your ideas are heard. On the other hand, when taking responsibility for a mistake on behalf of your team, you would want to exercise humility and accountability to ensure that you accept your mistake and desire to learn from it.

Using the LCIA for Team Building

Model of Character



- The adjectives under each dimension name are elements that make up the respective dimension
- The strength of the overall dimension depends on the strengths of individual elements
 - E.g., someone who is fairly calm and composed but tends to be less patient will have a lower overall temperance score than someone high on all elements of temperance



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The second thing to notice about the model is that dimension names are all in bold. Underneath them, you'll see the element names. Each dimension has a varying amount of elements – for example, integrity is comprised of only five elements: authentic, candid, transparent, principled, and consistent. In contrast, a dimension like judgment has many more elements: situationally aware, cognitively complex, analytical, decisive, critical thinker, intuitive, insightful, pragmatic, and adaptable.

You can find definitions for all these elements within your LCIA report.

The important thing to remember about elements is that each element contributes to the overall strength of the dimension, and having a less developed or called upon element means that your overall dimension strength will also be reduced. For instance, those who tend to be calm, composed, self-controlled, and prudent, but often feel impatient (lacking the patience element) will find their temperance dimension score is lower than it otherwise would be.

The main takeaway of this knowledge is that each element is important and worth working on.

Using the LCIA for Team Building

Fundamentals of Character



- It is important to strike a balance between all dimensions of character; in a given situation it's likely that several dimensions of character are required for an optimal outcome
- When one character dimension is overused, or underused (instead of demonstrated in a balanced way), there can be negative impacts:
 - E.g., An overuse of drive without temperance can contribute to poor work-life balance
 - E.g., An underuse of humanity and an overuse of integrity can contribute to a rigid, inflexible application of rules and standards without room to understand, accept, and work through others' mistakes

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I discussed previously the importance of balance when determining which dimensions of character to improve on. Remember that both extremely high and low scores on dimensions can be detrimental to your work performance and other outcomes if they are not tempered by other dimensions or regulated by good judgment.

For example, we likely all know a past co-worker who has been *too* driven and works too hard at the expense of their own well-being. They may have trouble setting boundaries for themselves and saying no to other people. Their work-life balance may suffer if they do not use temperance – self-control – to know when to reduce the effort they put into their work and take a well-deserved break.

In another example, someone might have too much integrity and become overly exacting when expecting others to always behave according to their personal set of ethics. They may have trouble being tolerant of others' mistakes. This is why humanity is important to cultivate alongside integrity, since humanity helps people stay compassionate and tolerant with others' differences and mistakes. Someone who values both humanity and integrity may act according to their own set of ethics but also accept that others may have a different, but not lesser, code of ethics they choose to live by.

As mentioned before, the dimension of judgment can help you decide when to balance one

dimension with another, so it's often a good place to start with your development.

WRAP UP SECTION:

In the first part of today's team-building section I gave you a lot of information about what character is, what it isn't, the general model of character in the LCIA, and why balance is so important to maintain between character dimensions. Since this is a lot of material, does anyone have any questions?

PAUSE FOR ANY QUESTIONS. IF DESIRED, THIS IS ALSO A GOOD SPOT FOR A 5-10 MINUTE BREAK.

Activity: Understanding Your Report

The next part of today's team-building session will be an activity to get to know your own results better. Let's dive in.

Using the LCIA for Team Building



Activity: Understanding Your Report

Reflect



Take 15 minutes now to look at your personal LCIA report. On your own, using the “Understanding Your Report” worksheet, note the following:

- Do these results feel true to me?
- Which dimensions seem to be my strengths? How can I tell?
- Which dimensions are ones that I can work on? How can I tell?
- Do I have opportunities to display all these dimensions at work?

Share



Then, get together with a small group for 20 minutes and share your findings:

- How was your experience taking the test?
- Do any of you share similar strengths? What about similar areas of development?
- Which dimension would you each work on first?

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Please take out your own LCIA reports that you brought today.

WAIT FOR EVERYONE TO BE READY. IF HOLDING IN-PERSON SESSION, DISTRIBUTE PAPER WORKSHEET TITLED “UNDERSTANDING YOUR REPORT WORKSHEET” TO EVERYONE.

Now that you have these worksheets in your hands, let’s take 15 minutes to look at your own reports. Some of you may have read these reports before coming here today, and they might be new for others. As you flip through your report pages, please take notes as you analyze your own results. Consider the following questions:

- Do these results feel true to me?
- Which dimensions seem to be my strengths? How can I tell?
- Which dimensions are ones that I can work on? How can I tell?
- Do I have opportunities to display all these dimensions at work?

I will leave this slide up as you look through your report so you can make notes on each question.

SET A TIMER FOR 15 MINUTES. DURING THEIR WORK TIME, ORGANIZE SMALL GROUPS OF EMPLOYEES. DEPENDING ON YOUR TOTAL GROUP SIZE, SMALLER GROUPS MAY VARY, BUT AIM FOR 3-4 PEOPLE PER GROUP FOR ADEQUATE DISCUSSION. IF DOING A VIRTUAL TRAINING, ENSURE THAT YOU ORGANIZE SEPARATE BREAK-OUT ROOMS FOR EACH

GROUP. WHEN THE TIME IS UP, PROCEED TO THE NEXT STEP BELOW.

OK, time is up. Please take a moment to finish up your last sentence, then we will move on.

All right, now that we have had time for self-reflection on your own reports, let's get together in small groups to share your findings. In your groups, you'll share your own key findings about your report with each other using the notes you've taken. Spend time discussing in your group the following questions:

- How was your experience taking the test?
- Do any of you share similar strengths? What about similar areas of development?
- Which dimension would you each work on first?

I'll give you a minute now to write down these questions so you can bring them to your group discussion. Are there any questions?

ONCE EVERYONE IS READY, READ OUT GROUPS AND ALLOW TIME FOR THEM TO PHYSICALLY MOVE TOGETHER IF IN-PERSON. IF TRAINING IS VIRTUAL, SEND THEM TO THEIR BREAK OUT ROOMS FOR 20 MINUTES. ONCE THE 20 MINUTES IS UP, PROCEED TO THE BELOW TEXT.

OK, now that everyone is back, let's share as a group one interesting insight you learned from your group discussion. **GO AROUND AND ASK EACH GROUP TO SHARE ONE THING THEY DISCUSSED.**

Let's take a short break before we move into our next set of activities.

TAKE 5-10 MINUTE BREAK.

Activity: Character and Teamwork

Now that we are back from our break and have finished with our first activity, let's move on to discuss how we might use our improved knowledge of our own character to also enhance teamwork.

Using the LCIA for Team Building



Activity: Character and Teamwork

Just as it's important for individuals to be self-aware, it's important for teams to be collectively self-aware of each others' strengths and areas for development

Discuss



For the next 20 minutes, with your small group from before, discuss examples where elements or dimensions of character were shown in group settings

- E.g., Perhaps one team member showed accountability by quickly taking responsibility for a certain mistake and rectifying it

Now, discuss examples where certain elements or dimensions of character were not displayed, but would have greatly helped in a group setting

- E.g., Perhaps a project was delayed due to poor communication because of a lack of collaboration

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In our previous activity, we focused on improving our self-awareness of our own character. We focused on what our current individual strengths and areas of development were. Now, we'll shift focus to our teams. How can we become aware of our team's collective strengths and areas for development, and use them to our advantage to improve our productivity and collaboration?

We'll break into the same small groups as before for the next activity. In your groups this time, I want you to focus first on discussing some examples where elements or dimensions of character were shown in group settings and were helpful previously. For instance, maybe you remember how one team member showed accountability by quickly taking responsibility for a mistake, letting everyone know as soon as possible, and then working to solve the mistake. This accountability may have helped prevent future larger mistakes.

After that, you can discuss some examples where you noticed elements or dimensions of character were missing or not displayed, and how they may have led to poor outcomes. How could character have helped your group in that situation? For example, perhaps your team has previously struggled with collaboration and not communicated clearly or quickly with each other, leading to preventable delays in a project. By working on your collaboration in the future, you could prevent those situations from happening again.

I'm now going to leave you 20 minutes to discuss these topics. Ideally, try to set aside 10 minutes to focus on each question.

LET GROUPS SEPARATE AGAIN. IF VIRTUAL, SEND THEM TO SEPARATE BREAK-OUT ROOMS. SET A TIMER FOR 20 MINUTES. ONCE TIMER ENDS, MOVE TO BELOW TEXT.

OK, time is up. Let's quickly go around again and have each group share one example of a situation where character was present and helpful OR a situation where character might have helped avoid an unfortunate incident. **LEAVE 10 MINUTES FOR THIS ACTIVITY.**

Using the LCIA for Team Building

Activity: Character and Teamwork



Reflect



For the next 10 minutes on your own, take another look at your personal report.

Fill out the “Top Strengths Activity” worksheet. Then, pick your top strength and brainstorm ways that you can use that strength in a group setting.

Optional: Can fill out “Strengths Spotting in Others” worksheet first if you have 15 extra minutes.

Share



Together as a group for 20 minutes, share your chosen strength with your group. Identify if any of your strengths are the same as another person’s areas of development. Think of ways that you can help the other person develop on that dimension.

- Examples: Recommending influential books, talks, podcasts, or habits that helped you develop that dimension; delegating work effectively so it gives development opportunities to those that need them

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The next activity will be the next step to the self-reflection one you did previously. Earlier, you identified which dimensions seemed to be your strengths. Now, you’ll narrow in on one strength in particular that feels really important to you and reflective of your identity. On your own, brainstorm ways you can use that chosen strength in a group setting. It may feel challenging to select only one strength, so you can use these tips. Think of compliments you might get frequently from others, especially your co-workers. Maybe they call you persistent, passionate, and hardworking – all related to drive. Or, they may consider you creative, inspired, and forward-thinking – those are qualities related to transcendence. You can also think of a strength that you often admire in others, since that’s often something you would likely focus on yourself as well, such as emulating those who are particularly humble. Take 10 minutes to jot down some notes about your chosen strength and how you can use that to help out your team.

OPTIONAL: IF YOU ARE RUNNING AHEAD OF SCHEDULE AND HAVE 15 EXTRA MINUTES, COMPLETE “STRENGTHS SPOTTING IN OTHERS” WORKSHEET FIRST. OTHERWISE...

SET A TIMER FOR 10 MINUTES. IF YOU ARE RUNNING THE SESSION IN PERSON, HAND OUT THE “TOP STRENGTHS ACTIVITY” WORKSHEET. ONCE TIME IS UP, MOVE TO THE BELOW TEXT.

You've now had 10 minutes to think about your strengths and how you can use them to help your team.

We'll be moving to a group activity again for our next step. Get together with the same small group as before, and share your chosen strength with your group. After everyone shares, see if there's any strengths in common between yourselves (e.g., two people both chose judgment as a strength). See as well if there are any strengths that others have identified as an area of development for themselves. If there are overlaps between strengths and areas of development, think of ways together that you can help each other develop on certain dimensions, like recommending influential books, talks, podcasts, or habits that have helped you, or delegating future work so they can work on a particular area. For example, if courage is your strength and another person's area of development, think of some influential thinkers that have inspired you to become more courageous, or ways that you show courage at work, and share those tips. Assign that person more courage-required work, like public speaking opportunities. You will have 20 minutes to discuss.

SET A TIMER FOR 20 MINUTES. ONCE TIME IS UP, MOVE TO THE BELOW TEXT.

I hope that activity helped you think of some ways you can help each other and leverage your group strengths to ensure everyone can find ways they can develop at work. Beyond using strengths for personal development benefits, like achieving more professional goals and working towards promotions, knowing the values and unique character strengths of your team can help you all delegate fulfilling, satisfying work to each other. Additionally, knowing each other's strengths will ensure better communication because you will have a better understanding of each others' needs at work.

Using the LCIA for Team Building

Activity: Character and Teamwork



Reflect



Once you have finished your group discussions, take 20 minutes to work alone on your “Leader Character Development Plan” worksheet

This worksheet helps you choose one development dimension to focus on first

- If judgment is a low score for you, we recommend focusing on it first as it affects all other dimensions

Ensure that you include details from your group discussions in the development plan, particularly in question 5 (“Other people could help me in making these changes by...”)



Leader Character Development Plan

Developing one's character is an extensive and life-long process. It requires deliberate effort and a sincere commitment to becoming more self-aware and open to feedback to improve. Opportunities to develop and strengthen character exist in everyday activity. Once you begin to enhance your understanding of the 11 dimensions and associated behaviours, you can begin working on the areas that warrant improvement. This plan will help you get started.

Steps to Create Your Leader Character Development Plan

1. Select a dimension of character to focus on. (Keep in mind that your weakest dimension may be undermining your strongest dimension. Ideally select a dimension that you are curious to learn about.)
2. Respond to the questions below.
3. Seek input on your plan from a trusted peer or your supervisor.
4. You can repeat this cycle for other dimensions as well.

Questions

1. The changes I want to make are ... (Be specific. Include goals that are positive (wanting to increase, improve, do more of something), and not just negative (stop, avoid, or decrease a behaviour).)
2. My main goal in making these changes are ... What are the likely consequences of action or inaction? Which motivations for change are most compelling? What will success look like?
3. The steps I plan to take to make these changes are ... How can the desired change be accomplished? What are some specific, concrete steps (when, where and how)?
4. Some things that could interfere with my plan are ... What specific limiting core beliefs, events or problems could undermine my plan? What could go wrong? How will I specifically address these challenges?
5. Other people could help me in making these changes by ... What specific things can another person do to help me take the steps I've outlined above? (Others can provide such support (accountability, buddy/coach identified prior)? How will I arrange for such support?
6. I will know that my plan is working when ... What will happen as a result of taking the steps I've outlined in this plan? What benefits can be expected? What might indicators of progress look like?
7. As part of this development process I learned ... What did I learn as a result of focusing on the improvement of this dimension that could be leveraged in the development of other dimensions?

Be accountable. Track your progress daily or weekly using a journal.

The LCIA Development Plan is based on the collaborative insights from SIGMA Assessment Systems, the RCMP, the CRA, CSEA and the Bay Business School, drawing on the work of Miller and Rothrock (2012).

Miller, W. R., & Rothrock, S. (2012). *Measurement interviewing: helping people change*. Guilford Press.

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The final activity for today will be another independent work activity. We just focused on identifying one strength we have, and seeing how we can help others in the group using our strengths. Now, we'll flip perspectives and choose one dimension to focus our personal development efforts on.

PASS AROUND “LEADER CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT PLAN” WORKSHEETS IF HOSTING AN IN-PERSON SESSION. IF VIRTUAL, ASK PARTICIPANTS TO PULL UP THE FILE.

Please look at the Leader Character Development Plan worksheet. Despite the name referring to leaders, these development questions can help anyone, regardless of role. Work your way down this list of questions. You can write your answers on the sheet or on a separate sheet of paper.

We'll spend the next 20 minutes working on this sheet. Pick one character dimension to work on first – usually, it's a dimension that you have a lower score on. We recommend that if judgment was a lower score for you, you focus on that first, due to the central role judgment plays in influencing the other character dimensions.

As you work through the questions on the worksheet, be sure to include new information you learned from the previous group discussions we've had today in your development

plan, particularly in question 5.

SET A TIMER FOR 20 MINUTES. ONCE TIME IS UP, MOVE ON TO THE NEXT SLIDE.

Wrap Up

Thanks for your participation in the second set of activities. This brings us to the end of the content of today's team-building session. Before we leave, let's summarize what we've covered today.

Using the LCIA for Team Building



Wrap Up

Throughout this session, we've explored and met the following objectives:

1. What character is, and what it isn't

- An overview of the character model
- The importance of balancing character dimensions

2. Your personal character strengths

- Review and analysis of your personal report
- Completion of the Leader Character Development Plan worksheet

3. How character can be leveraged for teamwork

- Sharing past examples of character helping and hindering teamwork

4. How your team can use each others' strengths in complementary ways

- Discussion of your team's complementary strengths and areas of development and how to assist your teammates' development

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At the start of today's session, I had mentioned we'd cover several different topics. Let's go over what we learned today.

First, we discussed the theory behind what character is, and what it is not. I showed you the model of character with 10 dimensions surrounding the 11th dimension of judgment and we discussed why balance is so important when we think about how to develop our own character. It isn't always ideal to have extremely high scores on a dimension, especially if that dimension isn't balanced by another. Your well-being and work performance may suffer without adequate balance in your life.

Next, we had an activity where we focused on understanding the results of your personal LCIA report. We narrowed in on your personal strengths and areas of development and you had some time to discuss your findings in a group.

We also had an activity where we discovered how our teammates' LCIA results could be leveraged to improve teamwork. We discussed examples of when character had been present in past teamwork situations and been helpful, and instances where character could have been exercised to improve a past poor outcome. Then, we used our strengths to brainstorm how we could help each other improve on our respective areas of development.

Finally, we wrapped up with a self-reflection exercise and worksheet to focus on developing one particular dimension on your own, based on your own report results. We thought about next steps in the future as you make these changes, with a focus on how others can help you achieve your professional development goals.

I hope that today's workshop has been informative, interesting, and engaging for you. Thank you all for your attention today!

Using the LCIA for Team Building

Contact



If you have any questions about our team-building session today, please don't hesitate to contact me.

If you have questions about the LCIA and leader character,
please contact the test publisher:

<https://www.sigmaassessmentsystems.com/contact/>



US: SIGMA Assessment Systems, Inc. • PO Box 610757 • Port Huron MI • 48061-0757 • P: 800-265-1285 • E: support@sigmahr.com
Canada: SIGMA Assessment Systems, Ltd. • PO Box 3292 Stn. B • London ON • N6A 4K3 • P: 800-401-4480 • E: support@sigmahr.com
www.SIGMAAssessmentSystems.com