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When The Who Is You

Shannon Waller: Do you want to facilitate some even better Unique Ability Teamwork? Have you been wondering when to bring in the right person and who that person is? Stay tuned for a new thinking exercise called "When The Who Is You." You'll love it.

Hi, Shannon Waller here and welcome to Team Success. Today, I want to share with you a really fun thinking exercise that proved to be very, very valuable for a team that I get to work with and I get to coach, and I wanted to share it with you because I think it's fun. So if you think about Who Not How and when are you the "Who" and what "Hows" are you really great at doing, this is really important for Unique Ability Teamwork. And in this particular team—and they're just incredible at implementing Strategic Coach tools, thinking processes, mindsets, practices, you name it, they're the poster child for Strategic Coach. So very grateful to them. But one of the things that they wanted was something that was going to help facilitate Unique Ability Teamwork and actually help to identify when people can be useful, perhaps outside of the typical or traditional ways that we would think about people.

So for example, how could someone on the accounting team be useful to someone in the product development team? Just to prevent some of those silos. And how could we kind of facilitate that teamwork in a new way? So we had great fun, brilliant creative conversation, and came up with an idea for an exercise, a thinking process, that I'm going to share with you today, which is called "When The Who Is You." And every time I say that title, I laugh because I think it's fun. "When you're the Who" is probably the more grammatically correct way to say it, but "When The Who Is You" is way more fun. So of course I'm always going to go with the more fun title.

So I want to walk through what this exercise looks like because I think it's something that you could do for yourself. And it really ties in both how you strive in terms of Kolbe, how you take action, how you problem solve, also your top strengths, and then what you love doing, and also what you're really good at doing. So the type of problems you like to solve is how I like to think about it. And then when to bring you in and when not to. And I don't know about you, but I really like when people know when not to bring me in. If you've ever been brought into a project where you're like, "Oh no, do I have to?" And maybe because of your title or your role, where someone's bright idea that day they thought you'd be perfect and you just know to your core that this is not actually something you have even the most remote interest in doing. So that's really what we're talking about.

So this thinking process is something I think is just incredibly useful for everyone to do. It allows you to put yourself out there, to share yourself with others who might not necessarily have appreciated some of the strengths and talents that you have. And it also means that you can kind of break through some of the roles. This can be something as simple as just appreciating that someone else over here is really good at spreadsheets and someone else



over here is really good at conflict resolution. And that is completely independent of what role that they have in your company.

I want to share with you an example, and this was so fun because all of us- This is where I get to use the word gobsmacked, because we really were, it was really fun. So we were in a meeting and a whole bunch of us were strategizing how to set up and organize our Kick-Start Sessions. So our Kick-Start Sessions are these really cool things we innovated to really help people who, after they've signed up for the Program but before they've started, how to keep them really happy with their decision, how to connect them with the community, how to and have them do some thinking processes, thinking tools before they actually start the Program. And get connected with us and with, as I said, the greater Coach community.

So these Kick-Start Sessions are hosted by myself, by Maureen, and by Kristi at Strategic Coach. And then Chantal from the sales team has all of her Membership Advisors because that's who knows the clients at this point. We were all on this call, and we had to organize the next year. We had to organize, in this case, it was 2023. And we're like, "Okay, we have to organize it. So what time of day, what topic, and who's doing it?" So, a fair number of pieces of information. And we do it every month. So, it was 36 pieces of information we had to organize. We're like, "Oh okay, we're going to need another meeting to set up the schedule."

And Chantal shares her screen and she's already got it more than 50 percent done. And we were like, "Whoa, that's amazing." I didn't know that Chantal, who's head of sales in Toronto, had spreadsheet capabilities. But she does. And she had us all organized and locked and loaded in ... I think it was six minutes. We made decisions, we figured out time of day, because we have two different time zones, Eastern and Central, and what the topic was going to be. It was hysterical, and we were like, "Whoa, we had no idea." So sometimes the "Who" that you need or is looking for is right underneath your nose. And, fortunately, there's enough freedom in our company, people can just go, "Hey, I've got this." Yes! It's so great.

So we've had our own experience of that at Coach, you probably have too. But now I'm going to know if there's a need to organize information, I'm going to go to Chantal. I'm going, "Hey Chantal, how would you organize this?" And see if she can't lend me her expertise sometimes. So that's what it is that we're talking about. And why it's so important, as I said, is because you want to be able to make full use of other people and their amazing talents, and you want to be fully used too. I know I do. That expression, "You want to be fully used up when you die." And it's not used, but used up. I want people to come and grab me and go, "Hey Shan, we want your input on this and this and this" in ways that I can contribute. That is the most fun ever.

And I don't want it always to be what people think they know. I don't want to be put into a role. I want to be appreciated for who I am as an individual and what my contribution can be. So that for me is very fulfilling. It's also very fulfilling for other people. Just had a great conversation today with a brand-new hire. It's like two weeks now and he brings so much to



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the table, it's not even funny. And it was really fun exploring all of his profiles but also his past history. I'm like, "Okay, of all the things you've done, what do you gravitate towards the most?"

Fortunately, it's the role we've hired him for, for which I'm grateful. But I also know we're going to have to work hard to keep him busy and feel like he's making a contribution and achieving. So I need to know these things. This is how I can help this human grow and help them to make a great contribution to Coach. So those are the kind of conversations that this thinking process really lets you do.

Now, how the heck do you do it? Now that I've been promoting it so much, how do you actually take action? So here's the thinking process that I want to share with you. And if you've been listening to any of my Team Success podcasts, you know I'm a huge fan of profiles. Oh my gosh, so many, just had a great conversation yesterday with Jerry Lujan with his partner Gary Sanchez, have the WHY.os profile, which was super illustrative and interesting. So I'm a big fan of all the things. So if you've done WHY.os, if you've done Kolbe, if you've done CliftonStrengths, if you've done PRINT, which is called "The Why of You," if you've done DISC, if you've done Myers-Briggs, if you've done any aptitude profiles, it's all grist for the mill.

So I chose two for this particular exercise that I did. I chose Kolbe and CliftonStrengths because those are kind of the fallbacks that most of our clients have. But you could by all means add in all the things. So on our doors when we are in our office, you will see our names, but then all of our profile information there. So think of it as almost like a little name plate, which is kind of fun. But I took this in a slightly different direction. So in this case, I have people write down their Kolbe strengths. So, Fact Finder, Follow Thru, Quick Start, Implementer. And if you remember, Kolbe measures how you strive, how you attack problems, and probably the type and the depth of problems that you want to work on.

So with Kolbe, if you remember, there's four action modes. So Fact Finder which is how you handle specifics and details. Follow Thru, which is how you arrange and design, kind of matters what else that's paired with. Quick Start is how you handle risks and uncertainty. And Implementer is how you handle space and tangibles. And relative to that you can fall into three what are called zones. This- In terms of how you prevent problems, this is really how you make sure things don't go awry. So if you're a 1, 2, or 3 in something, that's actually a strength. Like I, in Fact Finder, I simplify, and in Follow Thru, I adapt. I do not need to follow a system. I can adapt really quickly and pivot, mostly because there was no plan in the first place. But that is the strength.

Now is that a useful strength when I need to follow process? No. Which is why I have very dear friends who are Follow Thrus who help me. But in an emergency where the plan isn't working anymore, I'm kind of useful to have around. And I try and place myself to be useful because I have enough self-knowledge to know here's where I can help and here's where I will be a hindrance. We'll get more to that in just a moment. So if you're 1, 2, or 3, that's how you help



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prevent problems. The thing you have the least amount of mental energy for, for the shortest amount of time. It is not, however a weakness. Please do not think that a 1, 2, or 3 is a weakness. It actually is a strength. There are positive words for every single one of the different modes.

And then if you're a 4, 5, or 6, this is how you respond. This is how you are willing to take action. This is how you can bridge the gap between people who are 1, 2, or 3 or 7, 8, 9, or 10. So you're an important translator, you're a mediator, you're a bridge in whatever areas you have a middle ground on as a 4, 5, or 6. And then a 7, 8, 9, or 10 is how you initiate solutions. Very, very important to know that. This is what we absolutely count on you for. This is the direction we know you'll go into. If you're initiating Fact Finder, you will do the deep dives. You need to fill up that tube of mental energy with all the facts. And once you have enough, then you will take action. It's really important to know that.

Quick Starts, you can innovate, improvise from morning till night and not get tired. If you are a short Quick Start, your Quick Start's probably used up by about 9:30, 10:00. A few new ideas in the morning and you're kind of done. That's true for me with Follow Thru. My Follow Thru's done by the time I'm dressed and at my desk on time. That's when my Follow Thru is done. As Dan likes to say, "My Follow Thru is done by the time I'm done shaving." Completely agree. So it's just fun to know these. And there are words that go with each of the Kolbe strengths. This is available from the Kolbe Bottom Lines Booklet, which is available from Kolbe at kolbe.com. So highly recommend you use those words.

And then CliftonStrengths. CliftonStrengths is so useful because that's just really what talks about your raw talents. I always put my hand on my heart because it's kind of your affect or your preferences, your innate personality strengths. And they really fall into four different themes, and you can have a combination, all one, doesn't matter. So they're influencing strengths, strategic thinking strengths, executing strengths—I appreciate this because I don't have very many of those— and then also relationship-building strengths. So if you are really strong in one area and you lean in there, knowing people who are complementary to you, who have a lot of strengths in other areas and other themes that you don't, also super helpful.

So again, this is just kind of a big overview on different strengths, different profiles, and how they illustrate for you. So what I have people do is list whatever profile information they have in words that really help, not just the numbers, but the words that help articulate that. Then I have people write down "Things I Love Doing." And by the way, when I say love doing it, I also mean that you're good at. Doesn't mean you love doing it but are terrible. That's called a hobby. I'm not talking about hobbies at work; I'm talking about things you love doing.



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For me, design, delivery, coaching, connecting the dots, strategizing, big-picture problem solving, initiating action with people, collaborating—love collaborating, kind of have to with my Kolbe, I figure. So those are some of the things on my list. You will have your own list. So these are kind of your proclivities. What kind of work do you really enjoy doing? I'm really fortunate to be able to work with people who love scheduling. This is my dear friend and colleague Katrina. She looks at my schedule as though she's playing Tetris. I look at it and want to run away, but for her that is something that she really enjoys working on. Thank goodness. I would be sunk without her.

Someone else I work with closely loves analytics, loves doing the deep dive into the numbers. Occasionally, it's like, "Okay, let's focus this direction." But she's brilliant at actually figuring out what things mean. She just figured out something about a certain type of advertising we were doing that's not paying off. I'm like, "Oh, well then let's stop spending money doing that, shall we?" I mean, I didn't know that. If I was just look at the surface, which is what I was peeking at, it would've made total sense, and you did a deeper dive, not so much. So really, really grateful for that kind of expertise.

Someone else I work with is phenomenal at thinking through events and pulling things together and just... There's an event, bam, she's on it, and she can make that happen. So I love knowing that I know people who can do those things, but they're not things I love doing. So this leads us to our next section, which is when to bring me in and when not to. And this is really fun. So this is where you get to write down, what are the types of situations where you know you can make a contribution? So some examples, building teamwork, strengthening communication, saying no gracefully, high-level strategy. Yes, those are mine. Those are things I love doing: positively influencing people, getting things going, activating. That's also on my list. That's when to bring me in.

When not to bring you in. I actually think this is probably the most fun list to fill out, things that you do not want to be involved in. You're like, nope. Some people, conflict resolution, if they have any kind of Harmony, or they're natural peacemakers, maybe you really do need them in that one. But if people are just dead set against one another, that's going to be a very stressful situation for them. When you want to keep peace and harmony, that's when you bring in someone with those strengths. So, for example, when not to bring me in, in this example, mostly me: deep research; process-driven or recurring activities; long, slow processes. I would also add in anything to do with drama, I really don't like.

So don't bring me in there because I will just cut through it and probably get rid of the problem. Yeah. Now, if that's the solution you want, I'm your person. If that's not the solution you want, you don't want me. So it's very, very clear and there's something very refreshing to be able to just put this down on paper. You'll notice that there's nothing in here about a role or a title or about a background or about education. This is about the actual human that you have in front



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of you, be this you or one of your teammates, to really understand how their skills and talents and natural abilities have coalesced into things they love doing. Which means feel free to give them these types of activities.

There's so much guilt that goes along with teamwork because we're giving people activities that we ourselves do not enjoy. They drain us of energy. We don't find them fun. And we think, "Okay, if I don't like them, how could I make anyone else do them? I'm just being a mean, bad person if I do that." Now, if you see this on your "I Love Doing" list, you're like, "Oh, they love doing things I don't." And then you look at their list of when not to bring them in, and you're like, "Oh, I love doing those things." This is the point of the exercise, is then you get to collaborate. So super fun. Just write these down to, grab a piece of paper and share this.

Do this for yourself, do this with your family, do this with your team, great to do with your kids for that matter. Good with your spouse. I just think this is a way to, in a cool way, reveal ourselves so that we can be made great use of, as I talked at the beginning, and also kind of have guilt-free teamwork. And you'll also notice if there are any holes. If no one wrote down that they love doing a certain type of activity that you know you desperately need, that's when you go and look for someone. That's when you go and find your next great "Who" to help contribute at that level because you don't have anyone who's already in-house.

So I just think it's so educational, but it's also based on a very real level. Does not require any roles, any, as I said, education, any background. This is just who the great talent is that you have in front of you. And to my mind, it's just a great next step in terms of building Unique Ability Teamwork. So I was very excited to share this with you. The exercise is called "When The Who Is You." So this is something again, just grab a piece of paper. Don't get caught up in there's any particular way to do it. It's just list whatever profiling information you have, things I love doing, when to bring me in, and when not to. And that will give you so much fun, bottom line information with which you can then share with other people.

So I hope you have some fun with this. I hope you've enjoyed thinking it through, and I hope it really facilitates your Unique Ability Teamwork because that is what we are all about. So thank you so much for listening. If you have any questions or comments, please let me know at questions@strategiccoach.com and always, here's to your team success.