Strengths

“Hide not your talents. They for use were made. What’s a sundial in the shade?” - Benjamin Franklin

Growing up my Uncle used to say, “People accept you for who you are, and especially for who you are not.” These wise words remind me to follow my strengths, to not be someone that others think I should be. All throughout school I was taught to work on my weaknesses… Math. Practice more math and you will get better at math. The reality is that some of us just are not wired for math no matter how hard we try. It’s counter-intuitive to follow your strengths but think about it. If you put all your energy into what you are best at and you get even better, there is no end to the heights you can go. What if you spent all of your energy trying to get better at math, instead of following your passion to be a musician? You might have been the most brilliant musician on the planet… who knows?! But you may miss that opportunity because you were practicing math. Let someone else do the math, someone whose strength is math.

The trick is to figure out what your strengths are. It’s really not that difficult. Ask yourself, what is it that you are most passionate about? What lights your fire? What gets you excited to get up in the morning?

Mark Eaton, retired Utah Jazz player, says in his Four Commitments of a Winning Team speech, “Know Your Job.” That means, do what you do best. In his case it was stand there and block baskets. When the Utah Jazz landed a coach that knew how to strengthen his player’s strengths, they went from the bottom of the NBA to the top.

For more information on following your strengths, I recommend looking up Marcus Buckingham, Trombone Player Wanted on You Tube (TPW – Chapter 1 and Trombone Player Wanted Chapter 2).

What percentage of your day do you spend playing to your strengths? Are you working in diversified teams where each team member is playing to their strengths? “Hide not your talents!”