

Strengths

Annotated Bibliography (with personal notes)

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Chronological Order

Clifton, Donald O. and Paula Nelson. *Soar With Your Strengths*. New York: Dell Publishing, 1992.

This was my introduction to the philosophy of Strengths, the idea that one should focus on what she does well, rather than trying to “fix” her weaknesses. It’s a short, entertaining book that makes so much sense, especially to educators.

Buckingham, Marcus and Donald O. Clifton. *Now, Discover Your Strengths*. New York: The Free Press, 2001.

This book lays out the Strengths philosophy and explains much of the research. For me, the concepts here convince me of the efficacy of focusing on what people do well. Using these ideas in my classroom, I found my students more engaged and enthusiastic because they knew I really was on their side.

Rath, Tom and Donald O. Clifton. *How Full Is Your Bucket?* New York: Gallup Press, 2004

So many people, including me, have adopted the Theory of the Dipper and the Bucket. This book discusses how powerful it is to recognize people for their excellence and that making people feel good empowers them as well as those who give the kudos. When people feel valued, they become even better.

Rath, Tom. *Strengths 2.0*. New York: Gallup Press, 2007.

This book is the “updated” version of the Strengths philosophy. To my mind, it doesn’t provide enough of the philosophy to help those new to these ideas embrace the concepts.

Rath, Tom and Barry Conchie. *Strengths-Based Leadership*. New York: Gallup Press, 2008.

I love the combination of *Now, Discover Your Strengths* and *Strengths-Based Leadership* as the basis for people to explore their own potential for leadership roles. *Strengths-Based Leadership* explores ideas I haven’t seen in other leadership books, specifically qualities of excellent teams and research identifying the leadership qualities valued by followers.