

When Strengths Run Amok

Rob Kaiser
Bob Kaplan

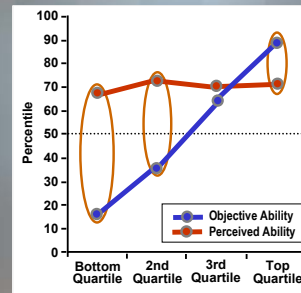
KAPLAN DeVRIES INC.

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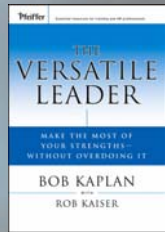
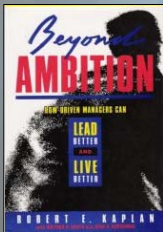
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Competence & Awareness



Kruger & Dunning (1999). Unskilled and unaware of it.
Journal of Personality & Social Psychology

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Rating Agreement

Over-raters

Weakest performers,
most likely to derail

Under-raters

Learners; highest
performers and most
likely to be promoted



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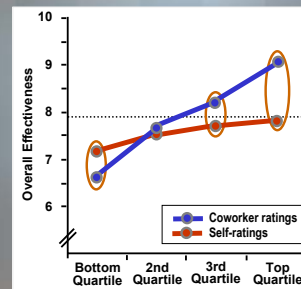
Few managers know their strengths

"Most Americans do not know what their strengths are. When you ask them, they look at you with a blank stare."

- Peter Drucker

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Talented & Unaware



"Rate this leader's overall effectiveness on a scale from 1 to 10, where 5 is adequate and 10 is outstanding."

N = 421 senior managers

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Hey, Rocky, watch me pull a rabbit out of my hat.

Again?! But that trick never works.

This time for sure. Nothing up my sleeves. Presto!

Hmmm... guess I don't know my own strength!

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Overkill is Real

Percentage rated "too much" by coworkers

Forceful 38%	Enabling 12%
Strategic 4%	Operational 11%

55%
rated "too much" on one or more dimension

N = 421 senior managers

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Not knowing their strengths, they're liable to go overboard

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Self-awareness

Percentage of self-raters who agree they do "too much"

Forceful 64%	Enabling 40%
Strategic 65%	Operational 28%

47%
of over-doers don't realize they overdo it

N = 421 senior managers

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Leadership Versatility Index 360

← Too little — The right amount — Too much →

0 -4 -3 -2 -1 0 +1 +2 +3 +4

Much too little Barely too little Barely too much Much too much

Forceful <i>exercising power and authority to push for performance</i>	Enabling <i>creating conditions for other people to be influential and contribute</i>
Strategic <i>positioning the organization to be competitive in the future</i>	Operational <i>focusing the organization to get results in the near term</i>

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John Sample

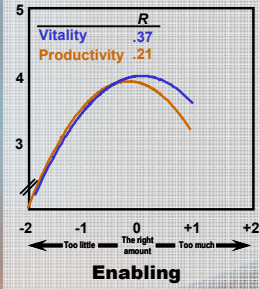
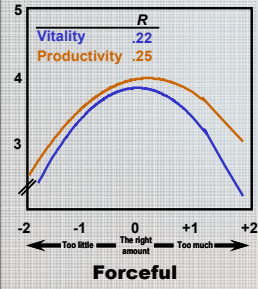
Top 5 Signature Strengths

← Too little — The right amount — Too much →

SELF-ASSURANCE	ACTIVATOR	ACHIEVER	FOCUS	COMMAND
		Forceful	Oper'l	

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Cost of Overkill

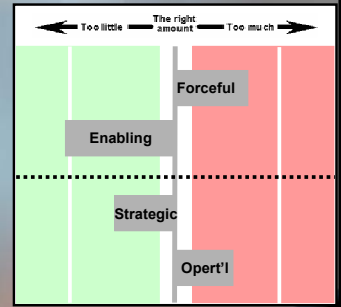


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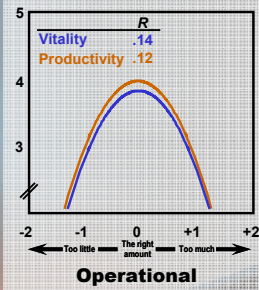
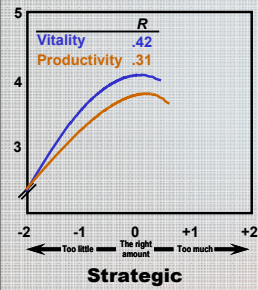
Top 5 Signature Strengths

**SELF-ASSURANCE
ACTIVATOR
ACHIEVER
FOCUS
COMMAND**



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Cost of Overkill



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Lopsided Leadership

Of the senior managers who do "too much"...

Forceful...	97% do "too little" Enabling
Enabling...	86% do "too little" Forceful
Strategic...	67% do "too little" Operational
Operational...	94% do "too little" Strategic

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Overused strengths crowd out the other side

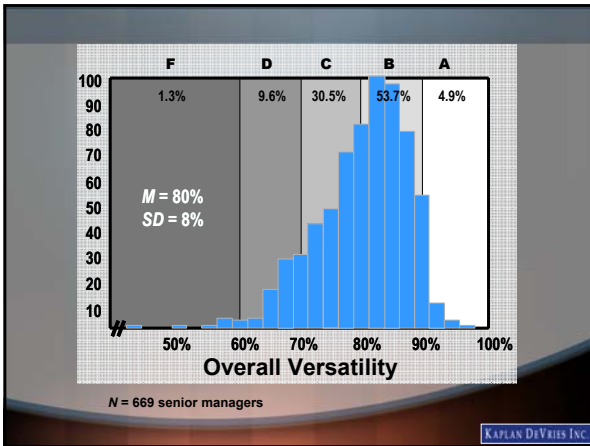


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Versatility

...a full range of motion; able to freely use opposing approaches, unrestricted by bias in favor of some and avoidance of others.

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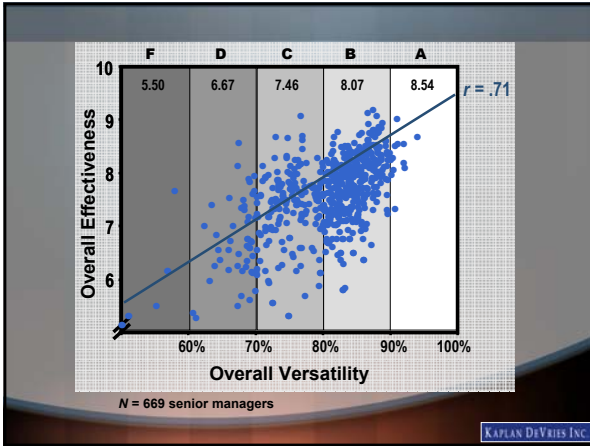
What can be done about strengths run amok?

Correlations with Versatility

	<i>r</i>
Team Productivity	.42
Team Vitality	.66
Perceived effectiveness	.71

In Practice

What can coaches do? What can the field do?



What Coaches are Up Against

Two blindspots and a misconception

What Coaches Can Do

Two Remedies

What the Field Can Do

Two Recommendations

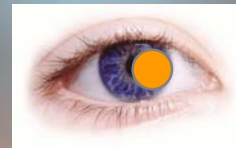
Remedy #1

Administer positive feedback, plenty of it.



The Problem

A big blindspot in how managers are assessed and developed



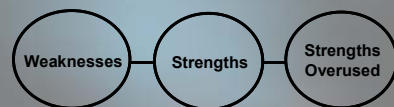
Remedy #2

Use counterweights.



Recommendation #1

Make a place for strengths overused.



Recommendation #2

Put a focus
on lopsidedness.



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