HOW MIGHT SCHOOL-UNIVERSITY PARTNERSHIPS MOVE FROM FUNCTIONING TO FLOURISHING?

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My keynote about flourishing partnerships draws on the following work

1) M. Seligman: Human Flourishing (2012)


3) S. Sinek: Start with Why (2009)

4) D. Alred: The Pressure Principle (2016)

5) G. McKeown: Essentialism (2014)

6) M. McQuaid: Focus on your strengths (2014)
Some elements that contribute to human FLOURISHING

The notion of human flourishing contains, at least, the following:

- Being able to count your blessings
- Able to be hopeful
- Making acts of kindness
- Having mutual respect & positive relationships
- Engaging in meaningful work
- Identifying and using your strengths
- Belonging to ‘something’ bigger than yourself

*and more ......*
I SUGGEST THAT WE CAN THINK ABOUT
BY USING OUR

1. **CHARACTER** strengths:
   Example: Being Honest

2. **PERFORMANCE** strengths:
   Example: Being Creative
FIVE Debilitating Beliefs (DB’s) that can challenge moving from FUNCTIONING to FLOURISHING

DB 1

That educators, students and partnerships grow most in their areas of greatest weakness.
Debilitating Belief 2

That experiencing failure is the best preparation for learning to be successful.
That we tend to focus on fixing our weaknesses, because knowing how to learn from our successes is not a strength of ours.
Debilitating Belief 4

That we tend to undervalue ‘good news’ as this can often lead to complacency, immodesty and fear (not being able to repeat what you have achieved)
Debilitating Belief 5

That learning from reflection-on-action, is a practice looking for a problem
MOVING FROM FUNCTIONING TO FLOURISHING

4 QUESTIONS FROM THE STRENGTHS-IN-PRACTICE SURVEY ©

1. On balance, which will help you be most successful in your current work? [one answer only]
   a. Building on your strengths?
   b. Fixing your weaknesses?

Key question 1
a. Building on your strengths?
b. Fixing your weaknesses?
MOVING FROM FUNCTIONING TO FLOURISHING

2. Can you name your top THREE strengths? [one answer only]
   a. Yes, I know my strengths well
   b.Probably, but I’d be hard pressed to come up with a list of three
   c. No, I’ve never really thought about identifying my strengths

Key question 2
2. Can you name your top THREE strengths

a. PROBABLY
b. YES
c. NO
TWO WAYS TO THINK ABOUT STRENGTHS

1. CHARACTER strengths:

   Honest, Caring, Kind, Fair, Forgiving, Humble, Appreciative, Brave, Hopeful ..... 

2. PERFORMANCE strengths:

   Creative, Curious, Persevering, Resourceful, Resilient, Agile, Meticulous .....
MOVING FROM FUNCTIONING TO FLOURISHING

3. When doing my job ..... [one answer only]
   a. I have the **opportunity** to do what I do best each day
   b. I **work hard**, but know I could be working better.
   c. I feel **kept down** by work colleagues including my line manager.
   d. I feel **unfulfilled and de-motivated**

Key question 3
3. When doing my job ....
   a. I have the **opportunity** to do what I do best each day.
   b. I **work hard**, but know I could be working better.
   c. Feel I am **kept down**.
   d. I feel **unfulfilled and de-motivated**.
KEY QUESTION 4

4. Which of the following best describes the way you’ve felt, at work, over the past 6 months? [one answer only]

   a. **Stuck:** I’m not the best I can be because I’m stuck in a ‘hurry-worry’ rut.

   b. **Nose Diving:** I dislike a lot of my job, often feel frustrated and unfulfilled.

   c. **Functioning:** I could be doing more creative work and improve things, but never have the time ... too busy.

   d. **Flourishing:** I’m fully engaged and able to make new and different things happen.
4. Which of the following **best describes** the way you’ve felt, at work, over the past 6 months?
   
   a. **Stuck:** I’m not the best I can be
   b. **Nose Diving:** I dislike a lot of my job
   c. **Functioning:** I could be more creative at work and improve things
   d. **Flourishing:** I’m fully engaged and able to make things happen
1. Try to become skilled at using the **power of the positive question**.

These help us focus on, and amplify, the things that are working well in the partnership.
2. A goal may not be to give a *course of action*. Perhaps we need to resist telling people what to do and how to do it.

The goal might usefully be to offer a *CAUSE for action*. 
MOVING FROM FUNCTIONING TO FLOURISHING APPLICATION TO FACULTY-SCHOOL PARTNERSHIP (3)

3. Perhaps reverse SOME of our naturally occurring ways of thinking, acting and communicating. For example:

- From WHAT the partnership does - the service it provides
- And from HOW a partnership functions – how it does, what it does
- To WHY it does, what it does! What and how might motivate. Why may inspire!
MOVING FROM FUNCTIONING TO FLOURISHING APPLICATION TO FACULTY-SCHOOL PARTNERSHIP (4)

4. **Try to develop a ‘no limits mindset’**.

This is cultivating a belief that, however well the existing partnership is working, it can always be improved, in some way.

And this improvement process (from functioning to flourishing) is energised by understanding the *root cause/s* of what’s working well and then developing inter-action plans to amplify what you want more of, not less of.
THANK YOU FOR LISTENING

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