




Head, Heart, Hands: A Search for Assets (Assuming Positive Intent)

The “Head, Heart, and Hands” tool is designed to support you in identifying strengths of a colleague with whom you struggle to collaborate or with whom you are in conflict. The tool is a scaffold that could slow down your thinking and help you be more intentional in identifying a colleague’s strengths - especially when conflict, mistrust, or hurt are clouding your ability to be positive or productive. The tool also helps you understand that strengths come in different forms, areas, or categories.

1. First, think of a time when it was difficult for you to assume positive intent about a colleague. If it’s helpful to you, you could write down some details.
2. Next, use the “Head, Heart, Hands” tool to identify your colleague’s strengths. You could think broadly about strengths or you could try to understand the person’s actions through a lens of his/her strengths.
3. Finally, meet with a partner to talk about the process. The conversation is meant to focus on what was difficult about seeing the positive about your colleague. Try to focus just on what it was like to see the positive (rather than divulging the details of the conflict). Consider how your work with the “Head, Heart, Hands” tool can help you assume positive intent moving forward.

Head-based Strengths 	Heart-Based Strengths 	Hand-Based Strengths 
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge • Content • Curriculum • Instruction • Students • Intellectual curiosity • Verbal skills • Analytic ability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Values • Vision or mission • Commitments • Passion • Will • Beliefs • Emotional Intelligence • Self-awareness • Ability to form relationships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skills • Abilities • Experiences • Capacities