



Lead From Your Strengths

Move United Education Conference, Spring 2026

Harlow Nonprofit Consulting

Abbey reading a book called “What Happened to You?” to her kids

A Different Starting Point



Leadership isn't

~~one-size-fits-all~~

What works for someone else may not work for you — and that's not a problem to fix.



Most models focus on closing gaps

We spend a lot of time shoring up weaknesses instead of building on what's already working.



This session focuses on designing around strengths

We're here to identify what energizes you, and figure out how to do more of it.

How This Will Work

Reflection

Time to think about your own experience.



Small Group Conversation

Share your thoughts with a partner or small group.



Real-World Application

Apply your thoughts directly to your work and what you can change.

**What's something you do that
other people treat as a bigger
deal than you do?**

Behavior Sort

E — Energizes


This work fills you up. You feel more like yourself doing it.

D — Drains

You can do it — but it costs you. You feel depleted after.

N — Neutral

Neither here nor there. It's just part of the job.

 Be honest, not aspirational.



*Image from the book The Big Orange Splot
Image shows a vibrantly painted house*

**What do your "E" items have in
common?**

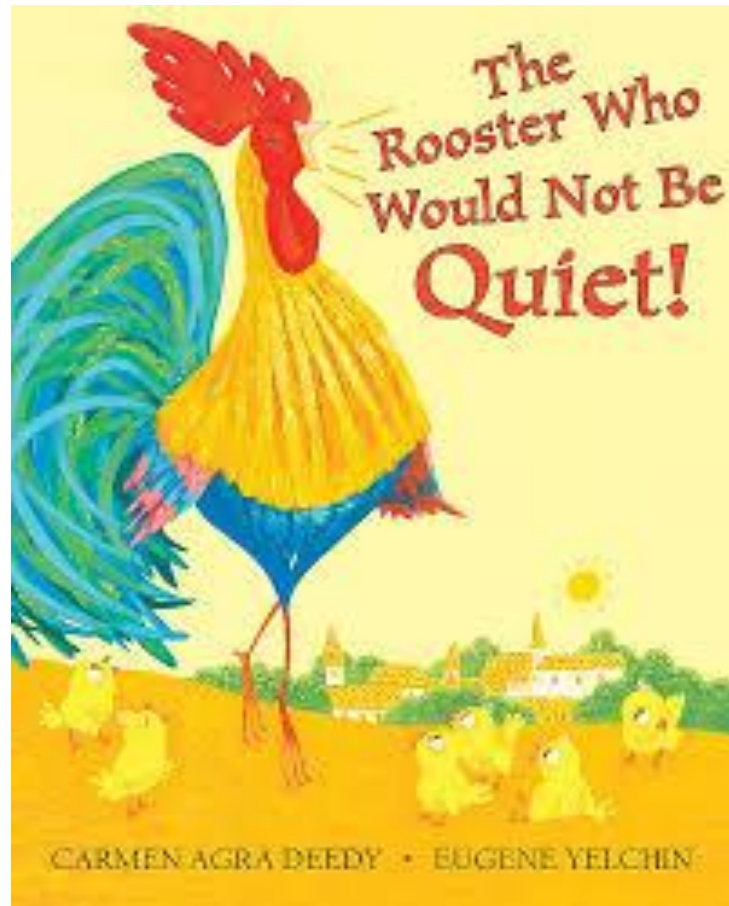
Bring It Back to Now

"When was the last time you actually did these at work?"

This week?

This month?

Can't remember?



Pair Share

What did you name as your strengths?

Share 1-2 things that genuinely energize you

What happens to them under pressure?

When things get hard, do you lean into them — or do they get pushed aside?

Image from the book *The Rooster Who Would Not Be Quiet!*
Shows rooster crowing

**What happens when
strengths are overused or
stretched too thin?**

Here's the Shift

Strengths don't disappear under pressure

They overfire. The thing that makes you effective becomes the thing that gets in the way.

It's not a character flaw

It's a calibration problem. Most high performers have been here at some point.

Two Patterns To Notice

The Efficiency Trap

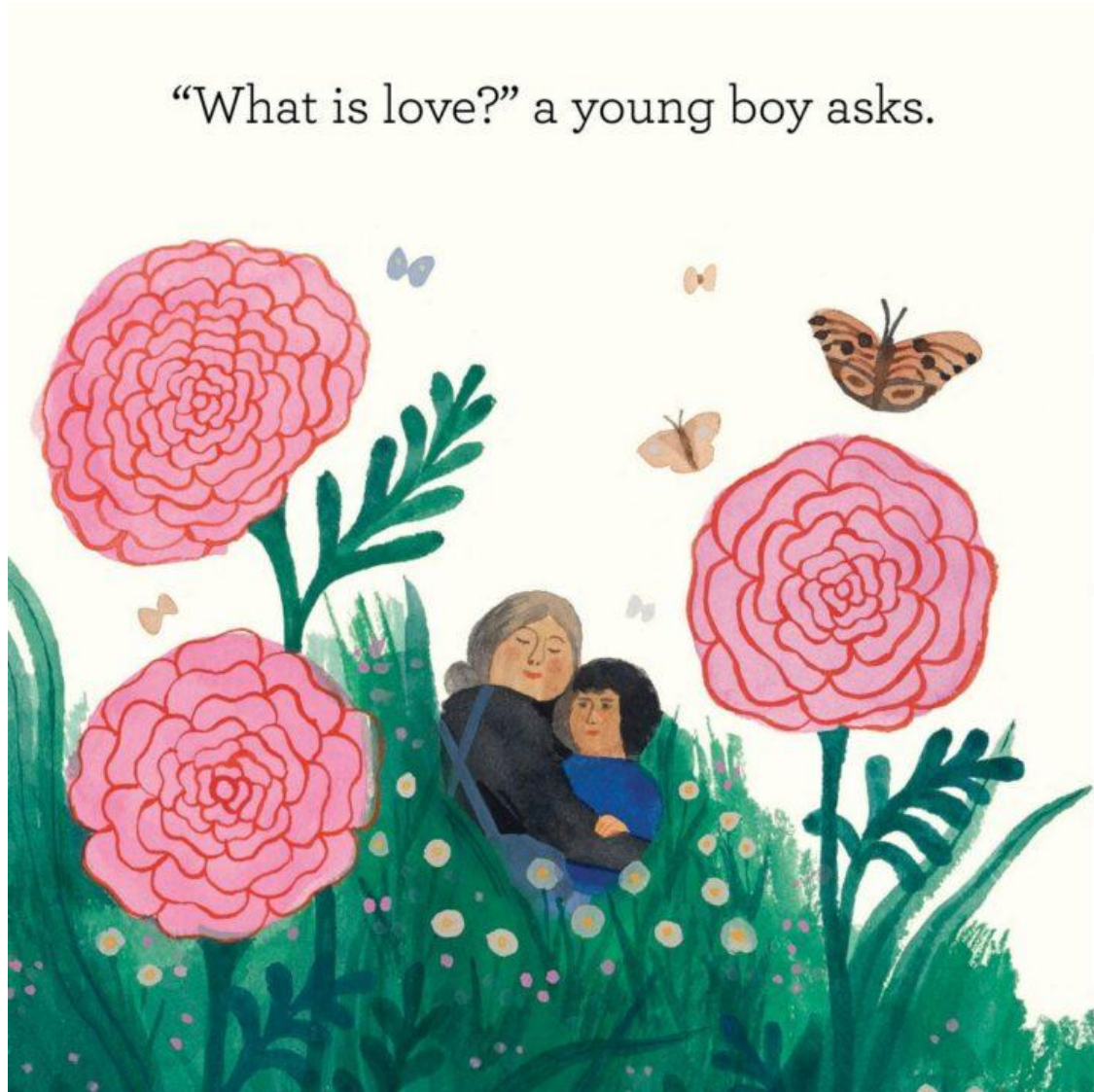
You keep doing things because you're good at them — even when they no longer deserve your time or energy.

Good ≠ Best Use

Being capable doesn't mean it belongs on your plate.

**Where are you spending
energy in your drain zone?**

“What is love?” a young boy asks.



If Nothing Changes...

... what happens?"

Image from the book *What is Love?*
Shows a young boy hugging grandmother and asking “What is Love?”

**What is one small shift that
would make this feel 10%
more sustainable?**

Protect, Redesign, Say It

Protect

What work needs to be guarded?
What must stay in your hands to
keep you energized and effective?

Redesign

What could be shifted, shared,
delegated, or done differently —
without sacrificing quality?

Say It

What's true about how you lead best? Name it clearly.



Image from the book Chrysanthemum of a young mouse dancing and throwing flowers

One Move

"What is one change you can make in the next two weeks?"

Write it down. Make it specific enough that you'll know whether or not you did it.

Before You Leave

I lead best when...

Complete this sentence: be honest, be specific, and say it in your own words.

One thing I'll do differently is...

Keep it grounded in something real that starts this week.

Let's Stay in

I'm around and I love chatting.

Touch

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Free Resources

<https://harlownonprofitconsulting.myflodesk.com/voxer>

Ask Me Anything Voice Note Channel!



<https://www.harlownonprofitconsulting.com/newsletter>

Newsletter: Practical & a little unconventional



Starting April 29 (Free for Move United conference registrants)

<https://www.harlownonprofitconsulting.com/learninglab>

📄 **Strengths-Based Leadership Learning Lab**

