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AEC INDUSTRY EXPERTS SHARE INSIGHTS, EXPERTISE AND KNOWLEDGE

Be You!

"Let go of who you think you're supposed to be; embrace who you are."

– Brené Brown

Love me some Brené Brown. When it comes to inspiration and authenticity, I think of her! She is a long-time researcher and academic known in particular for her research on shame, vulnerability and leadership. But whoa, how do shame, vulnerability and leadership go together? In my opinion, it goes back to authenticity and owning your "you," a message that resonates throughout Brené's speeches, podcasts, and books. Knowing who you are, knowing what drives you, knowing what makes you unique and owning those attributes goes hand-in-hand with authenticity. The power of knowing, owning and celebrating who you are leads to personal growth and better relationships... and who doesn't want that?

How do you start to own your uniqueness? I was introduced to CliftonStrengths about eight years ago and learned that it is a tool grounded in positive psychology that ranks natural talents instead of focusing on weaknesses. It's helped me realize what my strengths are and with an investment of time and energy, I've learned how to utilize those strengths to grow into the leader that I am today. With individualization as my number one talent, I'm naturally curious about what makes people unique and special. Leveraging my strengths, I identify the unique qualities in individuals, what makes for a great team, and how to strategically align ideas.

When you know and use your strengths, you are more engaged not only in your personal relationships, but also professionally in your work. This leads to a higher performance and a better understanding of how you work with others to be at the top of your game. Once you realize your natural talents, you figure how to make your career path work for you!

"Believing that you're enough is what gives you the courage to be authentic." – Brené Brown

Yeap, that's a second Brené quote. Like I said, I love me some Brené.

While in my time at Transwestern, we have brought in a Gallup-Certified strengths coach to facilitate a session for our senior property management teams, brokers, marketing team and city leadership. That was a wonderful experience because it showed us how we work as a team internally and what makes the most effective teams tick. But more than all of that, it has helped me in my professional growth in learning about the strengths that I bring to the table that have helped me along my career path. As I've grown in my career, I've also seen it used in Leadership Development Programs in our industry. Through seeing how other local leaders are using it, it really ignited me to share this tool, and I've been fortunate to facilitate workshops for my colleagues at Transwestern, our Young Professionals Group, our National Business Analyst Group and with those that are in my sphere of influence within other networking organizations.

As we get ready to gather around the topic of CliftonStrengths and Personal Branding, my hope for you is that you gain a few takeaways that will help you along as you grow in your career. Gaining a little more self-awareness by reflecting on what you've accomplished thus far, boldly sharing your natural talents with others, and seeing the strengths in others around you will help us all in setting the foundation for a strengths-based industry.

You have all the tools you need within you to succeed, so be (uniquely) you.