

Starting with strengths

This learning tool invites you to think about your strengths as an educator and to explore how they relate to the capacities for your Graduate Diploma program.

You will need a list of the capacities for your program, as well as a large sheet of paper, a marker and two colours of post-it notes (large enough to write a sentence).

Part 1: Thinking about your strengths

- a. Using one of your colours, write a strength on each post-it. Think of as many as you can.
e.g., "I am a good listener," "I am knowledgeable about teaching reading," etc.
- b. In the centre of the large sheet of paper, put "my strengths." Then spread your post-its out around this to create the first layer of a web.

Part 2: Giving specific examples

- a. Using the second colour, write examples for each of the strengths — one example per post-it. The examples could be things someone else could see, hear or feel if they came to your workplace and saw you in action.
e.g., "I am a good listener" – I don't interrupt children when they are speaking; I monitor how much I talk in staff meetings; I acknowledge what others say before I add my own opinions, etc.
"I am knowledgeable about teaching reading" – I have lots of different kinds of books in my classroom; I try to balance direct instruction and time for children to read independently every day; etc.
- b. Cluster the examples around the strengths they relate to in a second layer on your web. You could also draw lines or arrows from one place to another if the examples connect with more than one strength.

Part 3: Connecting with the capacities

- a. Give a number to each of the capacities.
- b. Using the marker, write numbers on your web for any capacities that seem to be connected with your strengths and examples. One example may connect with more than one capacity.
e.g., "I monitor how much I talk in staff meetings" — connects with "reflect on and learn from my experiences as a teacher/learner" and "make thoughtful educational decisions"