



PEDAGOGICAL GUIDE

This guide, aimed at accompanying persons, provides an insight into the concept of talent through key knowledge.

1. BECOME FAMILIAR WITH THE CONCEPT OF TALENT

The term talent is often overused and is frequently associated with other concepts that evoke more or less extraordinary abilities of the human race such as gift, genius, or having mastered advanced technical skills or knowledge in a specific field.

This term is often associated with being known or recognised in one's field: being a big shot, a star, a famous person...

Now, while it is true that some people have these kinds of extraordinary gifts or abilities, it is also true that what has led them to manifest this excellence is not only their gift, but also the way in which they have made the necessary efforts to master it, develop it, and manifest it.

This is exactly what we call talent and what we are going to focus on in the proposed accompaniment programme.

These talents can be described as innate skills, life skills, "soft skills" or "power skills" as coach and talent expert Fiorella Pallas* calls them. They express a way of acting naturally and effortlessly, with fluidity, which makes us efficient and effective. The conscious use of a talent transforms it into a point of strength.

According to the Gallup Institute**, the world's leading authority on talent, talents are naturally recurring patterns of thoughts, feelings and behaviours that can be applied and transferred productively.

The Institute has mapped talents into a set of 34 themes, grouped into 4 main families of soft skills, all of which will be discussed in more detail below.

Of these 34 themes, it is said that an individual has on average a unique combination of 5 of them in which they excel: these are what we call their innate talents!

In summary,
Talent is not:

- A gift
- Having genius
- Technical expertise (acquired knowledge/learned skills)
- A set of acquired skills (what one has practised - to the point of becoming a virtuoso or athlete)
- Linked to external recognition / fame.

Talent is:

- A recurring pattern of thoughts and behaviors (soft skill), which, when activated, allows one to respond in an innate, easy, fluid and efficient way to everyday situations
- The set of characteristics that make a person unique and make him or her stand out.

2. WHY WORK ON TALENTS?

Too often success is associated with the ability to DO something, in other words, with technical skills or knowledge.

However, as Gallup points out, "know-how" only accounts for 20% of a success! The remaining 80% is determined by "life skills", that is, the innate talents that allow the power to act to be expressed to the full.

The aim is to observe and take ownership of these talents in a constructive manner, so that these resources can be developed on a daily basis. Each individual will then be able to move forward, and make a difference by taking the most constructive actions and decisions for himself.

Innate talents serve as multipliers: according to Carole Doucet, Martin Ducharme (HEC Montréal), "no matter what you or your colleagues do in your organisation, talents are present, but too often in an unconscious and unplanned way. This is because most people are either unaware of their particular talents or have little awareness of them. Attention is often focused on acquiring new skills or even improving weaknesses. Yet studies by Gallup show that investing in one's talents can be up to six times more influential than increasing one's knowledge or skills.

To better understand the importance of talents in today's society, it is interesting to note that by 2020, the World Economic Forum has pointed out that almost 40% of the technical skills will be obsolete and will need to be retrained after the first quarter of the 21st century.

According to the World Economic Forum, the top 10 skills recognised as "winners" in terms of success in the world of work are precisely those talents (soft skills).

These elements confirm the importance of taking an interest in, counting on and rely more on those innate soft skills, whatever the social background, level of qualification or situation of a person.

Indeed, talent is in no way linked to a diploma, a training course or the acquisition of any technical skills or social recognition.

When working with people in vulnerable situations, using the notion of innate talent can facilitate their support towards a change of perspective and help them fight a well too frequent tendency to self-discriminate.

The difficulty sometimes arises when working with vulnerable people because they do not feel capable and perceive themselves to be without resources, both "internal" (skills, knowledge, intellectual) and material (precariousness or fragility).

Understanding and discovering their talents can be empowering them, to take action, to believe in themselves.

Change of View offers two tools to work on awakening their innate talents, a "Talent explorer" board game and a process to identify their innate talents.

These two tools are complementary and it is recommended to practice the board game, which is more fun and collective, before tackling the more individual identification activity.

* Fiorella PALLAS: <https://fiorellapallas.it/>

** Institute Gallup: <https://www.gallup.com/>

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