

Activate Yourself

Finding your 'Factor X'

Everyone has a wide range of skills and abilities. You are probably aware of your own abilities, and they may have been mentioned or praised by others at some stage in your life. Our 'Factor X' is that strength or series of strengths which, rather than draining us emotionally whenever we use them, actually build us up and energise us - we may be tired but we are also fulfilled and elated.

You may already know what your 'Factor X' is and be working to increase the time that you spend exercising those skills with your parent and toddler group. However, some may still need to discover their 'Factor X', and then see how it can best fit into their various activities.

The following list of characteristics or abilities will help you to find your energising strengths and eventually help you to find your place in any team.

Using the list

All you have to do is tick those descriptions which you know apply to you or which others have said apply to you or have complimented you upon.

In general, please try to ignore the section titles as you are likely to have skills which range across these divisions. However, some words have multiple meanings so they may occur more than once - in these cases use the section titles to help you to understand the meaning of the word.

Change the tick to a cross for those descriptions which involve things you don't LIKE to do - we can be good at something but don't want to do it!

What does it mean?

After you have ticked all the various descriptions which apply to you, you are likely to have 'clusters' of ticks in certain sections - say three or more within a section. Count the number of ticks in each section and write it next to the section heading.

Starting with the largest number of ticks, look at the section heading and see if you are happy to work in that activity or area. If you are happy to do that activity, then circle the heading, if not leave it un-circled.

Move to the next highest number of ticks and go through the same process. Continue until you have three headings which are circled. Write these three headings in the boxes below.

Your team

Have every member of your parent and toddler group team complete the same process. Then get together as a group. Using the 'Parent and toddler group role list' and your team's 'Factor X' grids see if you can assign everyone a task which allows them to play to their strengths. Then see what you are missing as a team and either try to find a current team member who can cover that area OR recruit someone who has strength in that area. In this way, you will find that you have an energised team, all using their 'Factor X'!

Your 'Factor X':

Finding your 'Factor X' list copy 1

Relationships

- Relating well with people
- Sympathetic
- Sensitive to others
- Responding
- Concerned
- Helping others
- Accepting
- Team player

Inspiring

- Motivating individuals and groups
- Raising funds
- Persuading
- Team building
- Settling disputes
- Encouraging
- Promoting
- Inspiring the team

Communication

- Expressing ideas
- Imaginative
- Writing
- Persuading
- Curiosity
- Articulating
- Making things clear
- Translating

Physical and Hands On

- Strength
- Endurance
- Coordination
- Nimble
- Constructing
- Preparing
- Designing
- Producing

Teaching

- Explaining
- Advising
- Listening
- Demonstrating
- Training
- Instructing
- Mentoring
- Leading groups

Learning

- Analysing
- Noticing
- Active listener
- Summarising
- Good memory
- Reading
- Writing
- Questioning

Activity

- Meeting deadlines
- Persevering
- Organising
- Completing
- Implementing
- Following complex instructions
- Functioning despite stress
- Record keeping

Numbers

- Counting
- Computing
- Good money manager
- Accurate
- Accounting
- Book-keeping
- Creating budgets
- Controlling spending

Artistic

- Creativity
- Expressive
- Imaginative
- Making things
- Appreciating or creating beauty
- Trying new things
- Performing
- Cooking

Creative and Visionary

- Intuitive
- Developing new ideas
- Judging effectively
- Original thinking
- Showing foresight
- Creative
- Innovative
- Experimental

Administrative

- Setting and attaining goals
- Delegating
- Motivating others
- Setting priorities
- Planning
- Follow-through
- Team building
- Managing

Leadership

- Self-starting
- Acting quickly in emergencies
- Running effective meetings
- Identifying and solving problems
- Adapting to new situations
- Accepting responsibility
- Making decisions
- Team building

Presenting

- Public speaking
- Performing (singing, dancing, acting, playing instruments, etc.)
- Making presentations
- Appearing before a group
- Helping others enjoy themselves
- Clear communicator
- Contagious enthusiasm
- Hospitality

Reviewing

- Gathering information
- Synthesising
- Evaluating
- Making decisions
- Experimenting
- Drawing conclusions
- Examining
- Recognising patterns

Marks to make:

✓ = If you know you have this skill

? = If you think you might have this skill

! = If you would like to have it

X = If you have the skill but don't want to use it

Parent and toddler group role list

This list, which was created by parent and toddler leaders, can be used with the 'Factor X' skills inventory to help you ensure that everyone in your team is working to their 'Factor X' and that most of the roles are fulfilled. Remember that you might need more than one person in certain roles and that a single person can fulfil more than one role - very helpful in small teams!

Leader - takes overall responsibility for the group's development and activity

1. Leadership
2. Inspiring
3. Reviewing

Administrator - ensures that rooms are booked, supplies ordered and paperwork completed

1. Administrative
2. Activity
3. Numbers

Team (Kids) - works with the children during each session

1. Teaching
2. Learning
3. Presenting

Creatives - handle new programme ideas, publicity, written communication and the visual environment

1. Creative and Visionary
2. Artistic
3. Physical and Hands On

Relators (Parent) - relate to parents during each session that the children are present

1. Relationships
2. Creativity
3. Communication

Accounting - handles the cash and the financial administration of the group

1. Numbers
2. Administrative
3. Activity

Communicator - spreads the vision by word and deed, may attend church meetings on behalf of the group

1. Communication
2. Presenting
3. Learning

Support - works in the background to ensure that everyone has what they need, whether that is a clean floor area or a cup of tea

1. Physical and Hands On
2. Relationships
3. Reviewing