DARLENE:  Afternoon or morning, everybody. It's Darlene here. First, I want to start by acknowledging that I'm coming to you from lutruwita, Tasmania, Aboriginal lands seas and waterways. I acknowledge with deep respect the original custodians of the land, the palawa people and I would like to acknowledge the traditional custodians of the various lands on which we are all working today and any Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders participating in this Webinar. Today's session is called At our Best. So how often do we get to work at our best or feel like we are working at our best? Imagine if we could do that more often. Deb is here today to share her wisdom on this topic. I think every week the topic just seems to relate so much to where I am, so I thank you, Deb, for kind of understanding where I am at the time and putting on a session just for me. But the session is also for everybody else, so, yeah, I'll hand over to you, Deb, and look forward to hearing from you again.

DEBBIE:  Thank you, Darlene, so glad to be here to give you this session just for you and for everyone else who has joined us and will be listening to the recording as well. Okay. At our Best, it's an interesting topic and one if we're a little bit humble we kind of have that hmm, should we be talking about our best, but we talk about taking a strength-based approach to a lot of our work but how about taking a strengths-based approach to our own life and our own work. What language would we use?  How do we talk about our strengths?  How do we know if we're using our strengths?  And should we, is it the right thing to do?  So when it comes to improving - making improvements in your work, think about it. Do you think it's better to focus on your areas of strengths or your areas of weakness?  What's going to serve you better?  We're going to put a poll up to get your response. So do you think it's better to work on our areas of strength or our areas of weaknesses?

DEBBIE:  Okay. So two-thirds think of it as, you know, we need to focus on our strengths, if we want to make improvements, and a third of us say it's better to focus on our weakness. Thank you for that. Even sometimes if we think it's good to focus on our strengths, it's like, ooh, yeah, but should I be ignoring those weaknesses?  You might be interested to know that way back in the 50's and the 60's, one of the kind of, really, well-renowned leadership consultant and researcher and teacher Peter Draka said we perform only from our strengths and we cannot build performance based on our weakness. He talked about the task of leadership being to create an alignment of strength that make our weaknesses irrelevant. When it comes to improving a lot of people think it's better to focus on our strengths, not for most of the time. It doesn't mean you should ignore your weaknesses but if you focus on your strengths you're going to get bigger bang for your buck and more satisfaction too because actually our strengths - sorry, trigger happy here. Our strengths are things we enjoy doing. That we use often because they're pretty natural for us to use and they energise us. We just feel better when we get to use our strengths and I love Marcus Buckingham's definition, simply put, our strengths make us feel stronger and conversely our weaknesses make us feel weaker. So strengths are things that we can actually use to improve our performance. They're things we enjoy doing so we need to build on those. Then it comes to what language of strengths do we use. The Values in Action Character Strengths is one that I use a lot. It's one of the most robustly studied strengths platforms or models around. It was developed with a team of 55 scientists over three years who actually went through history, went through cultures, went through religion to find out what was best in people. When do we perform well?  When are we at our best?  From that they came up with 24 strengths that are characterised into six different virtues. We all have the 24 strengths but usually it's the top five or seven that define us the best and they're called the signature strengths. So let's go through them. I don't know if anyone has heard of the character strengths before. A lot of people have. There's a link at the end of the slides for you to go and do a free assessment. It takes about 15 minutes. It will list your character strengths in order of them, the ones that are most you, your signature ones, down to the 24. It's really important to know that we do have all of these 24 strengths. When I do the VIA strengths assessments with someone they go, I'm not good at humour or I'm not good at love. You have it. It might be a lesser strength but it still is a strength. These are what are good in people and the thing that jumps out to me is that not only are they good for the individuals, they actually do good. So when you look at wisdom, the ones under the virtue of wisdom, that's creativity, curiosity, love of learning, judgment and perspective. If some of your top strengths are there it means that you love sharing ideas, you love looking at new perspectives, weighing them up, seeing the bigger picture, looking for new possibilities and new angles to things. Temperance, if your strengths fall under the temperance virtue on the opposite side, the greens one, it means you're good at regulating your choices, your self-control, you regulate your emotions and actions too. You're also quick to forgive. You're good at getting the job done and letting your actions speak for you. If you have the courageous - some of those courageous strengths in the top ones, they're the purple, that means that - they're the strengths of the heart. So they're really emotional strengths that get things done. You are okay to put your heart on the line. You speak up. You take risks. You can have lots of energy. You tell it like it is. And the justice strength, so they're the ones under citizenship here, those strengths of community, that you want to do right by other people, that you ensure everyone feels valued and I'm sure we'll have lots of disability practitioners who would have some top strengths in this area, that you want people to have a fair go, that you want people to make a good contribution and you make a good contribution to the team. And the strengths of others is the humanity, those pink ones, social intelligence, kindness and love. So those attending and befriending strengths. You're known for your thoughtfulness and kindness. You go out of your way to show others consideration and show that you care, you take time to listen and that you're comfortable with emotions. Time and time again when I do the strengths mapping across my team, that love and kindness come out there so strong. What this does is give a really nice language for strength. Transcendence, that's a strength of spirit, you lift others up, your humour and gratitude and hope, your appreciation lifts others up around you, you inspire others, you make them laugh, you appreciate them, you connect to what is good in the world, you connect to the beauty, you look for meaning. So they're the 24 strengths in a nutshell. What might be some of your top ones?  Which ones really spoke to you in those?  Maybe put some in the chat. Any that really stood out and go hmm, yes, that's me. Yep. Some people are putting it in chat. Love of learning. Thanks, Kirsty. If anyone else has any strength that's really stood out to them, appreciation of beauty and excellence is usually one of my top ones. When we find new ways to use our VIA strengths, this is one of the great reasons I use it because remember it's been so researched, not only did it take a team of 55 scientists three years to put it together, it continues to be one of the most researched models of strengths and time and time again it finds out when we find new ways to use our VIA strengths, so it's not doing it and putting it in the draw and I picked that and it hasn’t made any difference to my resilience or wellbeing. It's when we find new ways to use it every day that it has a really strong impact on our well-being, our resilience, our mental health. We have more energy, we have more confidence, we're six times more likely to be engaged in what we're doing in the day and we feel three times more satisfied and more happy in our lives. But it's finding new ways to use them every day. Just in case you think, oh, yeah, you know, we just take them for granted. Oh yeah, so what, I appreciate beauty, I have a love of learning, just consider, just choose one, let's choose a love of learning and let's consider what it would be like if this strength just disappeared from the world for one month. All the things you couldn't do. So you couldn't pick up a book and read a new skill. You couldn't even Google something that you're interested to find out more about it. You couldn't come along to a 12 @ 12. You couldn't go to a conference. So all the actions that love of learning inspires you to do would just disappear and, you know, for my appreciation of beauty and excellence, I wouldn't be able to look at an amazing sunrise and sunset and go wow, or go to an art exhibition or even watch a great comedy and appreciate a great comedy. So they impact us in lots of little ways during the day. So what I encourage you to do is to take the three VIA character strengths survey and that link will be shared with you on the chat and when you take it, look at what you have and look at the strengths and think, is that me?  Does that make sense that they're my top five or seven?  Why is that strength down there?  Why might honesty be down there?  Can I get it up a bit further?  So they're the questions to ask if that's, like, yeah, that makes sense. That's me. I'm not sure if it's me. You could discuss it with a friend or I didn't expect that to be towards the lower of my strengths, maybe I can put some attention and focus on bringing that up. Then maybe for the next week, notice how you use your character strengths each day. So pick two or three that you want to really focus on and see how you use them already in your day and try and find new ways to use them. This will only make a difference if we can find new ways to use them each day. There's the link. So there's a free VIA survey. Just 15 minutes. It's a really great way to find out your strengths, where they lie. Marcus Buckingham is actually taking another strengths model called the gallop and you do a free quick survey with him and you get your two top gallop strengths and they have some really great names for them and that's really worth taking too. Thank you, everyone.

DARLENE:  Great. Thank you, Deb. Kylie has just put those links into the chat box for you. So take care. Bye.