Talking about Sparketype with Your Team

Objectives:

1. Better understand what motivates each of your team members.
2. Generate opportunities to align tasks, responsibilities, and roles to optimize each person's contributions based on Sparketype insights.

Process:

1. **Introduce the concept of Sparketype**

   To begin, you'll need to inform your team about the concept of Sparketypes and schedule the initial meeting during which each person will share what they learned. You can introduce Sparketypes at an existing team meeting or by email / chat (see below for an example email). However you decide to introduce it, be sure to include the following information:

   - A simple, introductory explanation of what Sparketypes are
   - Why you think it's valuable for the team to learn about Sparketypes
   - Instructions for how to complete the assessment
   - A head's up that you'll be meeting to review each person's results
   - Where they can learn more about Sparketypes

Example email:

SUBJECT: Exploring our Sparketypes as a team

BODY:

Hi team,

I recently learned about the concept of Sparketypes - the "DNA-level drivers" of work that makes you come alive. I was really impressed by what I learned and thought it would be valuable for us all to explore our Sparketypes and look for opportunities to use these insights within our team.

It starts with a free assessment which you can take here: https://sparketype.com/sparketest/. It takes about 15 minutes to complete.

Once you're done, please read the personalized report it produces for you about your Sparketype.

I'll schedule time for us to meet next week to share our Sparketypes. Please complete the assessment prior to that meeting and come prepared to speak about what resonated for you in the report.

If you want more information on Sparketypes, you can listen to this podcast / read the blog article at www.themodernmanager.com/podcast-171 or get the book at https://sparketype.com/book/#order.

I'm excited to learn more about each of you and explore how we can make work more enjoyable. If you have questions or want to discuss anything related to Sparketypes or how we'll use this information, please let me know.

Mamie

2. **Each person completes the free Sparketype Assessment**

Give people 1-2 weeks to complete the assessment from the time you introduce the idea to the scheduled meeting for reviewing the results.

To ensure each person completes the assessment, consider doing the following:
- Send a reminder a few days before the meeting.
- Ask each person to send you their report (as both a way to confirm who is done and a way for you to reach about each person).
- Ask each person to email you one thing they learned from reading the report about their Sparketype.

3. **Meet as a team to share your Sparketype results**

Meeting desired outcome:
Better understand each other and what 'sparks' us.

Meeting length:
The amount of time needed will depend on the number of team members you have.

Meeting agenda:
Use the following structure as a guideline for the meeting:

    a. Welcome and review the meeting desired outcome

    b. Each person shares using this format (approximately 5-10 mins per person)
        i. My primary Sparketype is X. What this means is...

        Example: "My primary Sparketype is a Maker. That means I love to create things - physical, digital, experiential."

        ii. My shadow Sparketype is Y. What this means is...

        Example: "My shadow Sparketype is a Sage. That means I love awakening insight in other people. For me, it's really about sharing what I've learned so that others can benefit from it."

Meeting agenda continued:

        iii. These feel right about me because...

          Example: "Ever since I was a child I was an artist. I even went to art school before business school. I still make things all the time. I'm a crafter at heart and especially love making useful things. But after learning more about being a Maker I realized that it's not just knitting or painting, but also how much I love baking, playing instruments - I play three and I lead sing-alongs, and even hosting parties where I get to create a space for the evening. The Sage part was interesting because it wasn't so obvious to me, like being a Maker was. But after learning more about it, I see how my love of learning, reading, exploring and helping people is all related to sharing what I know so that others can more quickly gain the insights to improve their lives. When I think back over my life, I see how I did this as a parent and sharing my lessons learned with friends, even to the point where I've become one of their go-to people for parenting advice! My husband jokes that my talent is being a 'translator' that I'm good at taking other people's ideas and translating them into something accessible so more people can access them. I guess that's what a Sage does."

        iv. My anti-Sparketype is Z. What this means is...

          Example: "My anti-Sparketype is the Performer. This means that I find it draining to bring energy and emotion into an experience or engagement."

        v. This feels right about me because...

          Example: Even though I do a lot of group facilitation, I find it exhausting. And when I'm leading a training, I'm very into the material, but the experience doesn't make me want to do more. I've even chosen podcasting over making videos because trying to connect with an audience through a screen is just overwhelming.

        vi. Any thoughts, questions, or reactions on my Sparketypes?

    c. Open discussion (approximately 5-10 mintues)
        i. What did you learn today that surprised you?
        ii. What questions do you still have?

    d. Wrap up and next steps (5 minutes)
        i. Think about how these insights could be applied in your role, on this team.
        ii. I'll be meeting 1-1 with each of you to explore what we can do with these insights.

3. **1x1 Meetings to brainstorm and decide on any shifts to leverage Sparketype findings**

Meeting desired outcome:

A list of agreed upon shifts / adjustments / changes / experiments to enable work that is more closely tapping into the person's Sparketype (and reducing time spent in the Anti-type.)

Meeting length:

30 minutes

Prework:

Reflect on the team member's Sparketype, Shadow type and Anti-type and their current work responsibilities / tasks. Come prepared to share the following -

- Work that is in your sweet spot - you love it, it gets you into flow, it gives you meaning
- Work that drains you - it takes more time / energy than it might take for someone else
- What you would like to do more of or have more opportunities to live within your Sparketype - even if it's outside your current / typical role

Agenda:

Use the following structure as a guideline for the meeting:

- Check-in - any thoughts or reflections since our team meeting?
- Brainstorm - both people share their thoughts on the prework questions. (Make this a discussion, checking for understanding and clarification along the way. Look for where there is alignment between both people's analysis and where there are differences that need to be explored further.)
- Prioritize and Decide - what shifts / experiments do you want to try. (Make a plan for 1-3 changes and set next steps for each.)

Follow up:

After the meeting, set a follow-up to check in on progress 2-4 weeks later.

Examples of Potential Shifts:

Shifts can be large or small, experiments or permanent changes. Here are some examples of the types of changes that might come from better understanding your team member's Sparketype. You can share this list, or a subset of ideas, to help prompt your team's thinking about what is possible.

- Opportunity to formally mentor a new / younger staff member
- Opportunity to present in front of clients or company leadership
- Lead informal lunch-and-learns to teach colleagues or learn together
- Redesign a process or system
- Edit or format documents or presentations
- Plan and facilitate team-building / relationship time
- Write hand-written personal notes to colleagues or clients
- Participate in problem solving or strategic conversations
- Manage complicated calendaring
- Write social media posts, marketing copy, blog posts, etc.
- Organize team volunteering opportunities
- Send cards/flowers/food on behalf of the team when a team member experiences a celebratory moment or hardship
- Help keep people accountable to the team norms during meetings
- Opportunity to serve as an advisor or consultant to internal projects
- Organize/clean up an outdated data system
- Opportunity to lead a new project or initiative
- Research a topic / question
- Learn a new skill or software
- Migrate data to a new system
- Produce an annual report
- Run an experiment, focus group or market test
- Be a sounding board or thought partner
- Be asked to lend a hand even when outside the scope of your role
- Document lessons learned or processes
- Develop training materials