

## A Child's Right Fit

During his junior year of high school, as part of his curriculum, Gabriel was required to participate in the StrengthsFinder assessment. His signature strengths were Developer, Restorative, Strategic, Input and Connectedness. Although his mother was a StrengthsFinder Coach, she was surprised when he announced he would not pursue college. Gabriel believed his purpose for the next chapter in his life was to move with 60 other families and young adults to another state to plant a church where he would eventually be part of the church's proposed student leadership team.

Revisiting Gabriel's signature strengths, his parents used great restraint accepting that their plan for their son's future may not be the ultimate plan for Gabriel's first post-high school years. As both a coach and a parent, his mother had to face her concerns that her son might discover, before he fully matured, that people he admired in church leadership may not be able to stay on the virtual pedestal that idealistic young adults might tend to place them. Once Gabriel worked out a plan with his parents for securing housing, employment, and a budget, Gabriel's parents sensed they were without excuse to fully support his big transition.

Through long distance coaching conversations with Gabriel, she soon discovered he was well-suited to be part of a ground zero team. He not only saw the big picture for gradual church growth, but he also did the painstaking work of faithfully showing up for every service and outreach event that required set-up and take down; and he helped to connect both the curious first timer as well as the established church transplant in creating their new community of faith. Within six months, over 1,200 people visited on the first Easter Sunday.

Her previous concern about Gabriel being the youngest member of the team diminished greatly as he retold his conflict resolution stories in which he consistently portrayed a healthy model, far beyond his life experience, by utilizing his Restorative signature theme in conjunction with his other signature themes. Over three years later, Gabriel has worked in nearly every area of the church and has completed a Student Leadership program. The senior pastor and team have regularly affirmed his vital role in developing the church from infancy to its current, flourishing condition.

Lisa Northway  
Gallup Faith Practice Strengths Performance Coach  
Strategic | Positivity | Includer | Activator | Maximizer