

What makes you unique?

When reviewing applicants, principals and human resource representatives often ask, "Why should I hire you? What makes you stand out? What makes you unique?" These questions can be answered in many ways, but a good place to start is by focusing on the following areas:

1) U of M teaching program

The University of Minnesota College of Education and Human Development's teacher education programs are top notch. Talk to faculty in your program to determine what makes your program stand out among others. For example: Your experience with diverse populations in an urban environment or the number of hours spent in the classroom.

2) Student Teaching Experience

What is most notable about your student teaching placement(s)? Share your experiences in detail.

3) Individual Strengths (StrengthsQuest)

What are your top 5 strengths and how do you use them when you teach?

Use the strengths grid below to help you talk about your strengths in your cover letter or during an interview. Define how you use each of your top 5 strengths, share the benefits, and provide a past example of a time you used each strength in the classroom. Then write down a future illustration to share how you plan to use this strength as an educator.

Strengths Grid

Strength	Definition	Benefits	Past Example	Future Illustration

Additional Resources: *Teach with your Strengths: How Great Teachers Inspire Their Students* by Rosanne Liesveld and Jo Ann Miller and [Strengths at the U of M](#).