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Who this book is for, what it is about, and why I wrote it.

1 How Well Does Your Team Really Work? 1

Why does a group of smart leaders so often create a less-than-smart team? This chapter describes how the mindset leaders use can get them and their team stuck. It explains why adopting a mutual learning set of values and assumptions gets you and your team unstuck so that you get more done and achieve your goals.

2 How You and Your Team Get Stuck: The Unilateral Control Approach 25

When you and your team try to achieve your goals by unilaterally controlling the situation, you get the very results you've been trying to avoid. This chapter enables you to compare your own mindset and behaviors to those of a unilaterally controlling leader, so you can understand the mindset from which you are operating.

3 Getting Unstuck to Get Results: The Mutual Learning Approach 49

When you shift to a mutual learning mindset, you and your team operate from a more productive set of values and assumptions. These include being transparent, curious, accountable, and compassionate, and creating informed choice. This chapter demonstrates how that mindset generates common understanding that transforms decision making to produce better team performance, stronger team working relationships, and work that is satisfying and motivating.

4 Getting the Puzzle Pieces on the Table: Mutual Learning Behaviors 1–4 87

How you think is how you lead. This chapter provides detailed guidance on how to put the mutual learning mindset into action through four mutual learning behaviors: state views and ask genuine questions, share all relevant information, use specific examples and agree on what important words mean, and explain your reasoning and intent. See how these behaviors lead you and your team to higher quality decisions, shorter implementation time, and greater commitment and trust.

5 Putting the Puzzle Together: Mutual Learning Behaviors 5–8 109

Continuing from Chapter Four, this chapter provides detailed guidance on how to put the mutual learning mindset into action through four more mutual learning behaviors: focus on interests not positions, test assumptions and inferences, jointly design next steps, and discuss undiscussable issues.

6 Designing for Mutual Learning 143

How you design—or redesign—your team shapes whether your team gets the results you want or the results you're trying to avoid. See how to enhance your team structures, processes, and context to get more effective decision making, less unproductive conflict, and greater commitment.

7 Dealing With Common Team Challenges 177

Most teams face challenges that are easily addressed by using a mutual learning approach. This chapter describes how to apply the mutual learning mindset and behaviors to deal with these challenges, including keeping team meetings on track, speaking with one voice as a team, preventing end runs, and giving and receiving feedback.

8 Becoming a Smarter Leader 199

Have you decided to become a smarter leader through mutual learning? This chapter helps you take stock of what you want to achieve, develop an action plan for what you want to change and why, and prepare to talk with your team about your changes. Together these steps will help you engage your team to support your leadership change.

9 Becoming a Smarter Team 215

Your team has greater power to get better results when you and the team decide to change together. The stakes are higher, but so are the rewards. This chapter provides specific steps to help you and your team take stock of what the team wants to achieve, develop a team action plan for change, and plan for team conversations to begin the change. Together, these steps will help you create a team whose results exceed the sum of its parts.

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