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The Five Dysfunctions of a Team

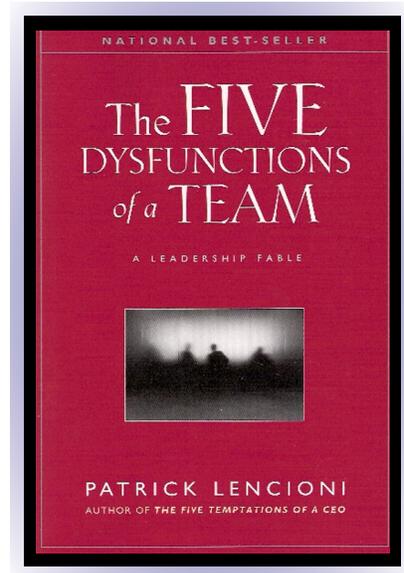
A Leadership Fable

Patrick Lencioni

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Published by Jossey-Bass

ISBN: 0-7879-6075-6



Reviewed by Susan Williams

Introduction

Team builders will, at one time or another, face the challenge of fostering harmony in groups, where there are inevitably going to be flaws. According to author Patrick Lencioni, human beings are inherently dysfunctional. Too often, leaders try to unite dysfunctional teams. Therefore, team builders must recognize and drive groups to overcome certain behavioral tendencies, many of which are negative and can bring down an entire organization.

In **The Five Dysfunctions of a Team**, Lencioni uses a novel-style, dialogue-based form of telling stories about the five dysfunctions that can deteriorate any team. In any organization, cohesive teamwork results in competitive advantage, as it can do what individuals can rarely do alone. Good teamwork can lead to domination in any field. This book tells a story about how and why a corporate executive team overcame its dysfunctions.

PART I: THE FABLE

Fictional startup company DecisionTech, located within the technology area outside of San Francisco, began its first few euphoric months reaping the rewards of a successful business. The young company enjoyed an expensive, savvy, and skilled executive team with a strong business plan.

After two years, the company began to run into trouble. Deadlines were missed, company morale disintegrated, key employees began to leave the company, and the firm became known as one of the most political, backstabbing, and unpleasant places to work in its industry.

Jeff Shanley, current CEO and co-founder, accepted a demotion after the board began to see deterioration in group unity, commitment, and camaraderie. Jeff was replaced by a woman who caused initial skepticism and uncertainty.

Kathryn Petersen, a 57-year old woman in her retirement had no real high-tech experience, mostly serving in operational positions as a “blue-collar” executive. After a career in the military and raising a

*The Staff:**Kathryn – CEO**Jeff – Business Development**Mikey – Marketing**Martin – Chief Technologist**JR – Sales**Carlos – Customer Support**Jan – Chief Financial Officer**Nick – Chief Operations Officer*

family, she studied business in a non-prestigious night school, which was not impressive on paper. Employees did not feel she was a cultural fit, but rather old school and inexperienced. One person, the Chairman of the Board, believed in her, however, and knew DecisionTech *was* in dire straits. The Chairman decided to hire Kathryn to clean up a messy situation, with confidence that she could build a high-achieving team.

Underachievement

Kathryn spent her first two weeks walking the halls, speaking with staff members, and silently observing meetings. She could see her challenge was to manage what was clearly a dysfunctional executive team. Kathryn sensed an underlying tension in meetings, resulting in lack

Key Concepts**The Five Dysfunctions of a Team:**

1. **Absence of Trust** stems from an unwillingness to be vulnerable within a group. When team members are not genuinely open with one another, it is impossible to build trust. Absence of trust wastes significant amounts of time and energy managing group behaviors and interactions.
2. **Fear of Conflict** emerges when there is no trust, because people will then be unable to engage in honest and passionate debate of ideas. Failure to vent relevant frustrations and argue intelligently results in guarded comments and unproductive discussions. Those who want to avoid hurting other team members’ feelings tend to encourage hazardous tension.
3. **Lack of Commitment** prevents group members from buying into decisions, because they have failed at open debate and consideration of individual ideas, sometimes feigning agreement in front of others. This artificial harmony prevents decision-making and the establishment of common goals.
4. **Avoidance of Accountability** means even the most driven individuals will not call on their peers on behaviors or actions that are not for the good of the team. Lack of commitment encourages lack of accountability and results in attention focused on areas other than performance results.
5. **Inattention to Results** occurs when people put their own needs before those of the company, whether that is career status, recognition, or ego. An unrelenting focus on common goals is a requirement for any team judging itself on performance.

* * *

Information about the author and subject:

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of decision making, slow and unstructured discussions, and little progress forward.

Jeff, by this time, head of business development, ran on-time meetings with a published agenda, and detailed minutes. The meetings always ended at a specified time. He did not seem to notice that nothing came out of these meetings.

In addition to business development, marketing played a key role at DecisionTech. Michele Bebe, known as Mikey, headed up the marketing function and had been hired due to her reputation in the industry as a brand-building genius. However, she lacked social tact and displayed a passive-aggressive demeanor with colleagues at meetings, becoming one of the least popular staff members.

Martin Gilmore, one of the founders of DecisionTech, and the closest the company had to an inventor, not only claimed to have the most technology expertise in the industry, but he actually did, and was considered the company's key competitive advantage. However, Martin generally did not participate in meetings, and if he did, he remained distracted by emails on his open laptop computer. Over time, Martin's

attitudes and usual sarcastic comments frustrated the staff.

Jeff Rawlins, or JR, was in charge of sales at DecisionTech. He was an older, courteous, and experienced

“Though open hostility was never really apparent and no one ever seemed to argue, an underlying tension was undeniable.”

professional. Unfortunately, JR rarely followed through in his tasks. However, because of his strong track record, he remained respected by the staff.

Early on, the company decided it needed to invest in customer support, so Mikey brought Carlos Amador into the firm, who had a vastly different working style from JR. He was a trustworthy worker, a good listener, and was able to take the initiative and manage product quality.

Jan Mersino joined the company to serve in chief financial officer role, supporting Jeff in raising a significant amount of money from venture capitalists and other investors. Jan was extremely detail-oriented and did not let things get out of control, partly because she treated the company's money as if it were her own.

The final executive staff member was the chief operating officer, Nick Farrell. Nick had been hired to spur growth, develop an operational infrastructure, establish offices around the world, and lead DecisionTech's acquisition and integration efforts. But due to the ill-defined role he had, most of his responsibilities were on hold, giving Nick little meaningful day-to-day work. He also considered his colleagues inferior to him and felt he was the only executive at DecisionTech qualified to be CEO.

PART II: LIGHTING THE FIRE

One of Kathryn's first accomplishments was to organize an off-site retreat. Her priority was for the staff to become closer as a team in order to achieve success. However, her chief technologist, Martin, proceeded to schedule a potential-customer meeting to take place during her retreat. Kathryn explained to him that he would need to push his appointment back a few days due to the retreat. With his hackles up, Martin told Kathryn he didn't think she understood the importance of this potential sales opportunity. She interrupted him and said she'd see him at the retreat and offered to help him reschedule his meeting as necessary.

About the Author

Patrick Lencioni is president of The Table Group, a San Francisco Bay Area management consulting firm, and author of the best-selling books, *The Four Obsessions of an Extraordinary Executive* and *The Five Temptations of a CEO*. In addition to his work as an executive coach and consultant, Pat is a sought-after speaker. Prior to founding The Table Group, he worked at the management consulting firm Bain & Company, Oracle Corporation, and Sybase, where he was vice president of organizational development. He is on numerous advisory boards and sits on the National Board of Directors for the Make-A-Wish Foundation of America. Over the years, Pat has worked with hundreds of executive teams and CEOs – all struggling, at one time or another, with the potential for dysfunction among their teams.

The next morning, Jeff told Kathryn he had run into Martin in the parking lot, and had spoken about the off-site scheduling problem. He agreed with Martin that the customer meeting was more important than the off-site one. He didn't believe that missing the first day or two of the off-site meeting would be a problem. Kathryn politely and confidently disagreed, telling him that from a team standpoint, staff leadership abilities were broken and needed fixing.

Later she was surprised to receive a phone call that evening at home from the Chairman. The Chairman mentioned, in a serious tone, that he had spoken with Jeff and was concerned that she wasn't initially building a cohesive team. In her CEO mode, Kathryn said she didn't mean to sound defensive, but that for two weeks she'd been observing her staff and was not randomly "setting fires" for fun, but that she had a plan to fix a broken team. He began to speak, but she interrupted him to confirm that he

"Over the years I've come to the conclusion that there are five reasons why teams are dysfunctional...It will seem remarkably simple on paper. The trick is putting it into practice."

- Kathryn Petersen, CEO, DecisionTech

had hired her to pull the team out of spiraling dysfunction, questioning if he would empower her to do this right. She pointedly explained that the process of fixing the problems would most likely be painful. While still concerned, the Chairman backed off and said that of course he would let her do whatever she needed to do.

At Kathryn's first off-site meeting, everyone arrived on time except for Martin. Kathryn wondered what she would or could do if Martin didn't show up at all. He did show up after all, to Kathryn's immediate relief, happy that she wouldn't need to worry about a potentially unpleasant confrontation.

Absence of Trust

While praising the experience and talent of the staff, particularly Martin's contribution to the company's core technology, Kathryn said, "yet in spite of all that, we are behind two of our competitors in terms of both revenue and customer growth...we are not functioning as a team. In fact, we are quite dysfunctional".

The tension in the room increased, especially when Kathryn explained there would be changes in the coming

months, and that some people may not find the new company the sort of place they wanted to be. She insinuated that leaving the company would be understandable if it was the right thing for the firm. She reminded the staff that the reason for the off-site meeting was to achieve results, the only true focus of the team. Addressing issues keeping the staff from acting like a team, Kathryn introduced the five dysfunctions of a team

The first dysfunction is *absence of trust*.

Kathryn explained that "trust is the foundation of real teamwork". She believed that failure to open up to one another prevented strong team building. Kathryn outlined two reasons why she saw a trust problem:

- 1) lack of debate and interaction among the team,
- 2) discomfort in challenging each other.

After a few verbal exchanges, Martin began to type on his laptop computer, distracting the team from their thoughts which halted Kathryn's momentum. When questioned if he was working on something, Martin offhandedly replied that he was taking notes. Kathryn responded that in order to keep the meeting flowing, she would demand the staff to be present with a willingness to participate. They all needed to be engaged, even when the conversation was not always relevant to everyone. And, if the conversation veered off into an unproductive discussion, people should be confident about speaking up. Martin conceded her point and closed his computer.

After the brief confrontation, conversation turned to Kathryn's request that everyone answer five non-intrusive personal questions about their backgrounds. These questions concerned everything from home town to number of kids, to hobbies, to the biggest challenges ever faced. After 45 minutes of exchanges, Mikey rolled her eyes while others became defensive and argumentative. Mikey explained her opinion that the discussion had turned into "psychobabble" and doubted competitors were sitting around talking about behavioral interactions. Kathryn could easily see that Mikey's outburst spoke volumes about her inability to trust her colleagues.

Kathryn then explained that part of building team trust was to overcome the need for invulnerability. She wanted her team to discuss their strengths and weaknesses, and learn to express vulnerability. The

group slowly began to open up and address their own vulnerabilities. Only Mikey kept her remarks shallow and superficial. The problem began when people started criticizing people's strength statements, turning the conversation negative. Mikey even pointedly addressed Martin, saying he was consistently an arrogant s.o.b. just like everyone else in their industry. Mikey's behavior was beginning to have a real impact on the group, and the tone of its members.

Inattention to Results

Kathryn then changed the direction of the meeting to illustrate another dysfunction, *inattention to results*. She explained that inattention to results was the ultimate dysfunction, that it involved team members seeking individual recognition at the expense of results, threatening and compromising the goals of the entire team. Kathryn said she was hired to create the best team possible instead of guiding the careers of individuals.

"...when everyone is focused on results and using those to define success, it is difficult for ego to get out of hand," she said. "...if the team loses, everyone loses".

The group could not be a set of individuals looking out only for themselves.

The next part of the meeting had the team separated into small groups to generate different kinds of results categories. After an hour, the group agreed on seven categories:

- revenue
- expenses
- new customer acquisition
- current customer satisfaction
- employee retention
- market awareness
- product quality

They decided each of these categories should be evaluated and measured monthly. Martin complained that these metrics were the same they had been using for the past nine months. JR's concern was that these categories did not necessarily contribute to bottom-line success, but that quickly closing a few deals would. A few individuals, including Martin, JR, and Mikey began to speak in a sarcastic tone of voice, basically demonstrating that no one

in the group was aware of each other's roles. They blamed other departments for failing, even though they didn't know

"Our job is to increase revenue, profitability, and customer acquisition and attention...but none of this will happen if we don't function as a team."

- Kathryn Petersen, CEO, DecisionTech

how resources were being used from one department to another.

It became clear to everyone in the group that the DecisionTech staff was a collection of individuals who did not necessarily know what everyone else was doing. Kathryn had to point out that *every* team member was responsible for sales, marketing, product development, customer service, and finance.

Individuals began to attack each other's roles and how well they were succeeding. People also began to admit that they did not feel connected or a part of the group. Carlos said it did not always seem as if everyone had the same goals in mind, even at staff meetings.

Kathryn angered a few people when she proceeded to say that this team was one of the most political groups she'd ever seen. Jeff and Nick especially took issue with her statement. They believed that after having been at DecisionTech such a short time, Kathryn's assertion was careless.

In an effort not to come across as condescending, Kathryn disagreed, saying politics at DecisionTech were alive and well. Nick demanded a definition of politics. Kathryn said, "Politics is when people choose their words and actions based on how they want others to react rather than based on what they really think".

Fear of Conflict

Once again the question of trust came about. Trust is important because it enables people to engage in an open, constructive conflict. Kathryn explained the dysfunction of *fear of conflict*.

Nick said they were having no problems facing conflict. Kathryn replied by saying there was plenty of tension but almost no constructive conflict. Kathryn had observed that the team did not argue very well. There may be passive-aggressive comments from bottled-up feelings of anger, but less ideological conflict. The result of fear of conflict was creation of artificial harmony when people hold back

their real feelings and opinions. Kathryn's team seemed increasingly anxious about not knowing the rest of the dysfunctions of a team, so Kathryn quickly launched into them, to provide a framework for later discussions.

Lack of Commitment

Lack of commitment is yet another dysfunction of a team. Evidence of this dysfunction is ambiguity. According to Kathryn, commitment to a plan or a decision with the goal to have all members buy into it requires conflict.

She said, "When people don't unload their opinions and feel like they've been listened to, they won't really get on board".

The team seemed to understand this concept, seeing a correlation between commitment, trust, and conflict.

"It would seem pointless to hold each other accountable for something people never agreed to from the beginning".

The group established that the most important setting for conflicts were at meetings. Meetings without productive and ideological conflict would hamper success in determining the future in terms of product development or partnerships. From this point on, Kathryn said all meetings would be filled with conflict, because if there was nothing worth debating, then there would be no meeting.

Avoidance of Accountability

The final dysfunction of a team is *avoidance of accountability*, often evidenced by low standards. Kathryn explained that after reaching clarity and buy-in, everyone must hold each other accountable for what they do, which should include high standards of behavior and performance.

"People aren't going to hold each other accountable if they haven't clearly agreed to the same plan," said Kathryn.

It would seem pointless to hold each other accountable for something people never agreed to from the beginning.

At their first substantive meeting as a group, they would collectively work to decide the overall goal for the rest of the year. The question the team needed to answer was, "if we do anything between now and the end of the year, what should that be"?

Nick and JR simultaneously responded with "market share". Martin disagreed and thought the goal should be product improvement. Jan wanted cost containment. Kathryn encouraged further debate, believing this discussion was the most productive she'd heard since she'd been with the company. With further differing opinions, Kathryn asserted that if everything is important, then nothing is. The conversation began to center around the importance of sales and revenue; however, it was suggested that revenue was not as important as getting new customers and closing deals. With that, Kathryn helped the group narrow the goal, which happened in the next five minutes.

Under her leadership, everyone agreed that they would close 18 new customer deals with at least ten willing to be active references by the end of the calendar year. With the progress they had made, JR suggested that they should cancel future off-site meetings. Kathryn believed canceling future meetings would be a mistake. Her reasoning suggested that as soon as everyone returned to the office, there would be the tendency to slip back into the old struggles again.

At the end of the meeting, Kathryn made it clear that she would not tolerate behavior that demonstrated a lack of trust or focus on individual ego. She expected everyone to hold each other accountable. The group seemed sobered by this statement at the prospect of future pain.

PART III: HEAVY LIFTING

After the off-site meeting agreements, Kathryn found all previous progress was deteriorating. The team remained guarded with each other and her. There was little interaction and no desire to engage with one another.

Just several days after the off-site retreat, Nick proposed acquiring a company with complementary products that needed cash.

Kathryn said she believed the company was already facing enough challenges. Nick argued that they needed to be visionaries. Kathryn mentioned that Mikey should be at this meeting to provide perspective on market position and strategy. Nick disagreed. Kathryn added that an acquisition would only add to their internal political issues. Nick praised Kathryn for her ability to lead meetings but added that she "didn't know squat about our business".

Then Martin glanced at his watch saying he had another meeting. At this point, Kathryn suggested they were behaving destructively, and asked Nick whether he'd like to continue the conversation right there or face-to-face. He agreed to speak with her alone. Nick vented his feelings about how strategic this acquisition could be, and as an acquisition and merger manager he wasn't having much to do. He said he felt bored and helpless watching his peers "screw up".

Kathryn calmly explained that he was contributing to the dysfunction of the team. She only saw him tearing people down instead of offering help to others. Kathryn said, "...you have to decide what is more important: helping the team win or advancing your career".

She had touched on the dysfunction of inattention to results, as he concentrated only on his status and ego.

At Kathryn's first official on-site staff meeting, everyone attended except Nick and JR. Kathryn explained that the purpose of the meeting was to lay the ground work for the 18 deals they had decided to close. Nick walked in late, announcing he had been out of line at the earlier meeting and that he should have made sure Mikey was included. He agreed he needed to make an important change. He said he needed to contribute to the team and the company, and asked for the group's support. If he didn't get that support, he would leave, but emphasized that he wasn't yet ready to do so. Kathryn was pleased at his ability to be honest and open with the group, and was relieved to hear that he could stay.

Kathryn then shocked the team by saying that JR had quit the previous night. She revealed that he no longer wanted to sit at meetings having to solve other people's personal problems. Mikey weighed in, saying she believed JR felt he was not able to be successful in selling. After heated discussion about the team's track record in sales, Nick was nominated to take on the role, since he had previously headed a sales team.

The second off-site discussion began the next week. Kathryn started by saying that they all still needed to work more effectively as a team. Kathryn wanted to be clear about their behaviors as a team. Her main concern centered on whether they thought that this executive team was as important as the teams they were leading in their departments. Her team at once became defensive, saying

they were much closer to their departmental groups than to this executive team. This consensus was Kathryn's concern. She said that good managers who don't act like a team cause confusion about which group is first.

The dysfunction of putting team results ahead of individual issues still seemed to be in place. Kathryn suggested that as good as the group felt as a team, this thinking could not come "at the expense of the loyalty and commitment we have to the group of people sitting here today".

Agreeing to change their behavior, the team members decided to stick to their plan of building a cohesive team, as they discussed the important issue of deciding the right way to use company money.

Both Carlos and Mikey suggested that they needed more resources in sales, marketing, and consulting. Martin seemed disgusted by the idea. He explained that DecisionTech was a product company and therefore needed to invest in its technology. Nick accused him of being

*"I don't know how else to say this, but building a team is hard."
- Kathryn Petersen, CEO, DecisionTech*

biased. Jan jumped in and asked why Martin was often so defensive about his department, while Mikey added, "you act like we're questioning your intelligence".

Jan said they were actually questioning how good their products needed to be for them to succeed in the market. Martin began a diatribe blaming the company's demise on bad technology.

This distribution of blame demonstrated the dysfunction of inattention to results. Group members were tending toward caring about something other than their collective goal to drive profit. While profit may be the ultimate priority, the objectives set by the executives needed to constitute a representative example agreed to by the majority of members. Team individuals were focused only on paying attention to their own needs. After two hours of arguing, the group members realized they needed to develop a workable solution to discuss resource allocation. After airing individual opinions, Jeff suggested cutting a future product line and delaying another for six months. Nick wanted to redeploy engineers from those projects and train people to assist with product demonstrations. The group agreed to these suggestions, laying out an aggressive timeline for making the change.

Kathryn suggested to Nick that he lead the team in a review of their progress around the 18-deal goal. At the previous off-site meeting, the team had agreed to focus on product demonstrations, competitive analysis, sales training, and product brochures. Nick proceeded to ask each of the leaders of these key drivers how they were doing.

Martin's department was ahead of schedule. Carlos said his department hadn't yet begun to implement competitive analysis, giving the excuse that he'd been helping Martin, and his people had not been available to meet. Nick asked who specifically was not available and Carlos responded that he hated to point fingers, but as Nick pushed him further, Carlos began to list names. Kathryn saw a clear problem in this case. She explained that as a vice president of the company, Carlos needed to take accountability for his job. Kathryn suggested that they all challenge each other about progress being made. Pushing people in the right

“...we should all consider ourselves to be sales people. Especially if closing...18 deals is really our top priority.”
- Nick Farrell, COO, DecisionTech

direction showed care for the team. Moreover, the team needed to challenge each other with respect.

The next key driver, sales training, was then addressed. The program was on schedule, but Nick said he wanted the entire executive team to attend, much to Mikey's dismay. He wanted each person to believe and act like sales people.

Everyone agreed that aiding sales was a top priority except for Mikey, who forcefully attacked the team, saying she didn't need anyone other than Martin.

Kathryn was becoming convinced that Mikey might have to leave the firm. After Mikey's ugly outburst, Nick was concerned that product brochures about to go to the printer had not been shown to him to include customer research input. Mikey angrily said that her staff knew better than anyone how to put together these brochures and did not need input. In the tense air of the meeting, Jeff complimented her on her work and without humility she said “it's what I do best”.

Behind closed doors, Kathryn said she did not think Mikey was a fit for the team and perhaps not happy to be with the company at all. Kathryn added that she had a demotivating impact on the team, was not open to ideas, and seemed bitter. Mikey did not agree that her leaving would

be best for the team but Kathryn disagreed, adding that it might be in Mikey's best interest to leave.

Kathryn clarified that she was not firing her, and that Mikey did not have to leave; however, she must change completely, and quickly. Mikey disagreed that her behavior was the problem. Kathryn countered by telling her that she was not participating in areas outside of her department, was unable to accept criticism and then apologize when she was out of line. Kathryn added that Mikey was often rude and disrespectful to her colleagues, and disinterested in attending sales training meetings.

After vehemently saying she would not change to fit in with a dysfunctional group, she said members of her staff would likely begin leaving as a result. She then walked out.

When the meeting resumed, Kathryn broke the news that Mikey was leaving the company. Kathryn said the official word would be that Mikey's moving on and they would find a new vice president. Mikey's departure continued to dampen the group's mood throughout the afternoon even as they redirected the discussion to details of the business. Before long, Kathryn felt she had to address Mikey's departure, saying that emotionally, they ought to deal with her leaving as a team. There were various comments from the group, ranging from fear of losing another executive to who would be next to leave. Kathryn knew that Mikey was never a true member of the group, and reminded everyone that if she tolerated behavior like Mikey's, the performance of the team would decline dramatically. Kathryn did what she did because, “I don't plan on losing any of you”.

Following this announcement, the executive team agreed to search externally for a replacement who would do the following:

- demonstrate trust,
- engage in conflict,
- commit to group decisions,
- hold peers accountable, and
- concentrate on team results instead of ego.

PART IV: TRACTION

Several weeks later, at the last of the offsite meetings, Kathryn pointed out that the company was still behind its

two competitors. She asked that they take a step back and assess where they were as a team. She wrote down the five dysfunctions and had the team re-examine each one. She wanted to be sure the group would not backslide in their efforts to avoid the five dysfunctions, which would make a significant impact on profitability. The team was discovering that overcoming the five dysfunctions would not be easy, and that the process was a road littered with bumps.

Whether discussing budgets, strategic planning, employee performance, team development, or sales progress, strong teams spend a considerable amount of time with each other. Cohesive and functional groups actually save time, eliminate confusion, and minimize redundant communication. Building a functional team combines common sense with less common levels of discipline and purpose.

Watching her team's progress, Kathryn noticed not only that her team was staying together, but that they were more active, noisy, assertive, eager, and enthusiastic. Over the next 12 months, DecisionTech increased sales dramatically, meeting its revenue goals during three of the four quarters. Company turnover was reduced and morale improved.

* * *

A chapter-by-chapter summary and a bibliography are provided.

Remarks

What is encouraging and inspiring about this book is that it encourages people to become aware of their humanity. Achieving this awareness requires identification of team dysfunctions through individual group members. This leadership story is peopled by fictional characters on a realistic quest to identify and acknowledge the five dysfunctions and learn to overcome them. Lencioni uses the *novel* format to create dramatic interchange, using the device of a storyline as a teaching tool. When these tools are consistently employed, teams can make a huge, daily, and immediate impact on performance.

Lencioni has written an entertaining fable where he helps readers learn how to initiate discussions about dysfunction, and provides a clear model for implementation.

Readers will be able to see the relevance of team dysfunctions in any situation where groups must work together successfully. Success requires continual assessment of these situations to help prevent the team from losing progress-making momentum.

In his advance praise of **The Five Dysfunctions of a Team**, Geoffrey A. Moore, chairman of The Chasm Group and author of *Crossing the Chasm*, says, "Every manager and executive will recognize themselves somewhere in this book. Lencioni distills the problems that keep even the most talented teams from realizing their full potential".

Reading Suggestions

Reading Time: 8-10 Hours, 233 Pages in Book

Cover to cover, this book moves like a compelling novel where characters not only come to life but represent personalities of everyday people. This fictitious example of a dysfunctional group gets to the core issues of team failure.

In the chapter called Team Assessment, a questionnaire provides a diagnostic tool to help evaluate a team's susceptibility to the five dysfunctions. Having all members of a group answer the questions and tabulate the results can help to identify where teamwork is lacking, linking behaviors and actions to a specific dysfunction.

Page 195 begins a chapter that suggests ways to overcome the five dysfunctions. It clearly and succinctly explains how teams can accelerate the process of overcoming the dysfunctions, providing tools to simplify implementation and thereby improve group cohesiveness.

A Special Tribute to Teamwork at the end of the book is well worth reading, if only to encourage people to read this book in its entirety.

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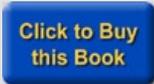
An Overview of the Model

Team Assessment

Understanding and Overcoming the Five Dysfunctions

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ISSN 0741-8132