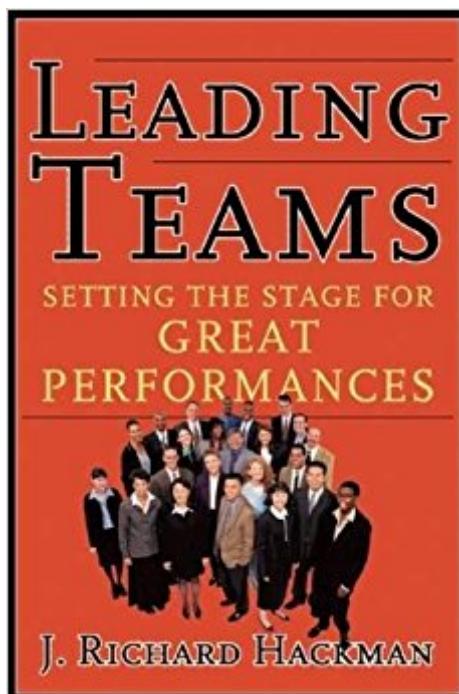


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Leading Teams: Setting The Stage For Great Performances



Synopsis

Richard Hackman, one of the world's leading experts on group and organizational behavior, argues that teams perform at their best when leaders create conditions that allow them to manage themselves effectively. *Leading Teams* is not about subscribing to a specific formula or leadership style, says Hackman. Rather, it is about applying a concise set of guiding principles to each unique group situation; and doing so in the leader's own idiosyncratic way. Based on extensive research and using compelling examples ranging from orchestras to airline cockpit crews, *Leading Teams* identifies five essential conditions; a stable team, a clear and engaging direction, an enabling team structure, a supportive organizational context, and the availability of competent coaching; that greatly enhance the likelihood of team success. The book offers a practical framework that leaders can use to muster personal skills and organizational resources to create and sustain the five key conditions and shows how those conditions can launch a team onto a trajectory of increasing effectiveness. Authoritative and astutely realistic, *Leading Teams* offers a new and provocative way of thinking about and leading work teams in any organizational setting.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"Written with exceptional clarity and wit, and teeming with original, down-to-earth advice, *Leading Teams* is indispensable reading for anyone who works in teams, studies them, or wonders what makes them sink or soar." -Harvey Hornstein, Professor, Teachers College, Columbia University

"This is the book I have been waiting for on team effectiveness. Based on findings and containing

insights from the leading researcher on teams, Leading Teams has everything. It is engaging, highly readable, and full of practical, useful advice." -Edward Lawler, Distinguished Professor and Director, Center for Effective Organizations, University of Southern California, Marshall School of Business "Full of rich stories and organized into compelling cases, Leading Teams clearly communicates an elegant analysis of effective team leadership. A gem for practitioners and researchers alike." -Chris Argyris, James B. Conant Professor Emeritus, Harvard University and Director, Monitor Group "In Leading Teams Dr. Hackman takes his extensive knowledge of how to effectively lead teams and mixes it with insightful research and humor, providing the reader with a powerful prescription for improving team performance." -Dave Bushy, Former Senior Vice President of Flight Operations and 747 Captain, Delta Airlines "Richard Hackman provides real-world tools that challenge everything you thought you knew about creating high-performing teams. I found myself cheering each time he demolished a popular but wrongheaded conception of how to lead teams and provided a common sense answer in its stead." -Michael Putz, Senior Manager, Business Development and Strategy, Cisco Systems

J. Richard Hackman is the Cahners-Rabb Professor of Social and Organizational Psychology at Harvard University.

Hackman could have made each point faster and much more concise. Something that should take only a few paragraphs to explain seemed to take the author many pages and often the additional content became a distraction. Often I would have to read the material more than once to determine value add vs. non-value add content.

I bought this book as a textbook for a course on leading teams and read it cover to cover. The Hackman model is a nice model and eye opener for anyone who has never given deep thought on team effectiveness and the border context teams are in. However more sophisticated readers may find it to be lacking in several aspects and should invest their time on other teamThe Hackman model appears to before concerned with setting the stage for teams to perform well instead of directly helping teams to improve. Therefore this model doesn't say much about conflict management, managing diversity and authority, and a bunch of other important stuff to keep the team running. It's also lacking as a guidance for leaders to improve their performance as Hackman has a tendency to say "this is very hard to balance" without giving ideas on how to balance the issue, and leaving the readers much in the dark after reading the book (thoug I admit it's too much

to ask for, this is a team book and not a leadership book after all). For more sophisticated readers and who has previous exposure to team theories, I would recommend Roger Schwarz's *The Skilled Facilitator*. It gives a good summary in first 2 chapters and quickly moves on to more hands on and actionable recommendations. For those with no previous experience in this field before, Hackman model is a classic model and it might be worth a read. Just don't stop here as this book will not answer all your questions.

I saw this book referenced in a Harvard Business Review blog post and it was regarded as one of the "standards" by which other work is measured. So, I checked out the author and other references. All of the references treated this work the same- as the "standard". I am not disappointed. The text has many real-world (understandable) examples and information with explanations that are well thought out and presented. If you're tired of business books that are an academic's view of the real world, you will find this book refreshing. It is real-world, easily read, explains a lot and is worth every penny. If you manage or work in a dysfunction team or group, or just want to understand them, this is your book. If the "written by a Harvard Professor" label worries you into thinking that this book is just an academic exercise, don't let it. This book is readable and contains a lot of good information and examples.

Love the depth of knowledge presented with an understandable approach given on team dynamics. I think that all managers and team members should read this book.

A great book, complex matter, nice to read. Hackman knew everything about teams and can tell about it

I need to sell this book back no use for it

Leading teams is the best book on the topic of teams that I've read so far. It's very well structured, well researched, well written and full of useful information that can be used in real life to improve teams. The book consists of three parts of which part II is the main content of the book. Part I is called "challenge" and starts with a comparison of two different airline companies who have different strategies of improving service quality. One using self-directed team and one using more strict processes and procedures. It explains the advantages and disadvantages of the team approach and puts the challenge to how we can create an environment in which a productive team

can work. Hackman then proposes five enabling conditions for getting team to work:1. A real team2. Compelling direction3. Enabling structure4. Supportive context5. Expert coachingEach of these are clarified in the five main chapters.A real team is defined as having four features: a team task, clear boundaries, defined authority and some stability in members. Each of these is clarified and backed up with very interesting research data.A compelling direction, a clear goal needs to be set for the team. This energizes the team. The chapter on compelling team has some very interesting material on fixing the process or fixing the goal.Enabling structure builds also on earlier work done by Richard Hackman and talks about structuring the team and structuring the task that the team needs to do. When both of these are structured then they will enable the team and create a possibility of a really well working, highly productive team.In supportive context, the rest of the organizational context is discussed. This includes the rewarding system (something I didn't always agree with the author, though he makes very valid points!), the learning system and the technical supporting system.In the last of the five points, he more or less focuses on the team leader role. The team leaders role as a coach of the team. He earlier states that the team leader role is certainly overrated, though it still is important. He describes how a team leader can coach the team.Part III is the closing part of the book. It summarizes some of the earlier conclusions. It consists of one chapter that makes recommendations for moving forward with team in the organization. Then the last chapter the author discusses common obstacles and speculates about the future of teams.Overall, the book was an excellent read. Funny at times, well structured and excellent references. Of all the team-related books, this one stands out. One of the reasons for standing out is that its more based on research than about speculation (like many team books). A must read when you are working in or with teams.

It is used as a text book for a class I am taking but have found it to be very helpful.

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