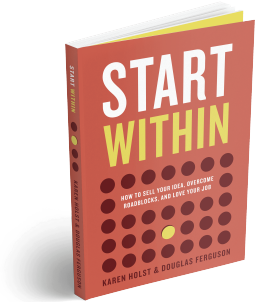


READING GUIDE DISCUSSION + ACTIVITY



START WITHIN BY KAREN HOLST + DOUGLAS FERGUSON

Start Within is the essential guide for anyone who wants to innovate within their company, develop their ideas, take ownership of their work, and find real purpose in their career. It's the playbook to guide through the process of launching an idea within a company and helping to get around the corporate obstacles that will come along the way. The book includes insightful stories and valuable lessons, with each chapter ending with activities for the reader to roll up their sleeves and apply the lessons to their work.

GROUND RULES

People may share ideas they are passionate about or stories of failure, making them feel vulnerable. Encourage the group to be supportive. It's helpful to share alternative opinions, but it's not okay to be disrespectful.

DISCUSSION PROMPTS

- + Who are the most successful "doers" that you know? These are the people who see problems, want to fix them, and get things done.
- + Is the "doer" title something that you see yourself holding? Why or why not?
- + Talk about a time where you found work to be fulfilling.
- + Describe a job or project that allowed you to learn something new.
- + Why is the work of launching new ideas so challenging?
- + Think about an idea you have that you could launch within your company, what are the constraints holding you back?
- + Which bucket(s) do your constraints fall into: I Can Handle This, What If, or Showstoppers?
- + What preemptive and counterattack strategies would enable you to overcome the constraints?

ACTIVITY: ASSUMPTION-BREAKING

- + To do the Activity: Nurture the Naysayers, break up the group into pairs. Person A and Person B.
- + For 5 minutes, Person A will share an idea, something that could launch from within the organization. Person B will listen for that whole time, only taking notes and asking open-ended questions to keep Person A sharing as much as they can about their idea. The idea doesn't have to be something they want to go and work on; the activity is more about practicing assumption-breaking.
- + After the 5-minute timer goes off, Person B will play the role of the "naysayer." Person B is to act as a skeptic and point out where the idea will fail. What flaws are inherent in the idea? Where may things go wrong? While Person B is sharing thoughts, Person A is to practice active listening: taking notes, keeping eye-contact, and not arguing or debating pieces.
- + After the second 5-minute timer goes off, Person A thanks Person B for their thoughts and feedback.
- + Repeat the same steps with Person B sharing the idea for 5 minutes and then Person A playing the "naysayer" for 5 minutes.
- + Once everyone has played the "ideator" and the "naysayer," redirect the pairs to share with the group as a whole. How did that feel? When you were hearing your idea getting torn down, how did that feel? Did you learn anything you hadn't considered? When you played the role of "naysayer," how did that feel?
- + Ask the group whether there were any assumptions they heard from the other's idea or learned through their own, that would be worth exploring.

To buy the book, or more information and resources from *Start Within*, email info@start-within.com.