

## Executive Discussion Guide for *Impact*

The Executive Discussion Guide is designed to offer an opportunity to “go deeper” into the book and apply important ideas and practices. Often the best way to remember new ideas and put them into practice is to share your takeaways with someone else. In fact, participating in a book discussion can increase your retention by 70%. The Executive Discussion Guide, when used in a group setting, will not only improve your retention of *Impact* but will:

- Clarify your thinking of important ideas
- Challenge your assumptions
- Increase your understanding of yourself
- Improve your relationships with others
- Help you identify your areas for growth

You can use this guide with your team, a group of colleagues, friends/significant others, or a professional coach or mentor. Once you have assembled your group, set a schedule for when and how often you will meet. You may also want to establish some ground rules for your meetings such as:

- Prepare in advance
- Participate fully and share your ideas
- Listen and avoid being critical of others' ideas
- Keep group discussions confidential
- Be willing to challenge your own and others' thinking

The best way to use this guide is to read the designated chapters, answer the questions individually, and then meet as a group to discuss your answers. It is often helpful to designate someone as the facilitator and even rotate this responsibility from one meeting to the next.

## Chapter Discussions

Read Chapters 1-3, then answer the following questions in your group:

1. This book is about having a significant impact on others as a leader. Think back about your own career journey – what has led you to where you are today, the people who have influenced you the most, and your aspirations for the future. With this in mind, how would you describe the kind of impact you want to have as a leader?
2. A fundamental concept of the book is about developing a strong “core,” which is a metaphor for the person inside us – our heart and our mind. A strong core depends on self-awareness, which is the result of self-examination. What are some practices you can put in place to engage in regular self-examination?
3. Discuss the following quote: “A strong core ultimately trumps style and competence in sustaining our ability to lead.”
4. What additional insights did you gain from Chapters 1-3?

Read Chapters 4-6, then answer the following questions in your group:

1. An important concept throughout the book is that self-awareness is an essential element of great leadership and personal effectiveness. One way to increase your self-awareness is to gain a better understanding of your strengths and development areas. Discuss what you see as your top 3 strengths as a leader, and identify one area for growth. Ask for feedback from the group to further understand how they see these areas.
2. Discuss the idea that flaws in our core are like nitrogen bubbles. Often these hidden areas of our core reveal themselves forcefully and unexpectedly. What are some “nitrogen bubbles” you have discovered in yourself that you need to be mindful of?
3. Discuss the following quote: “Those who are more likely to stay out of trouble constantly remind themselves of their own vulnerability.” What are some ways you can be more aware of your shadow side and stay on “high road”?
4. Discuss ways in which you can responsibly use power as leaders. How can you further respect and value the teams and individuals who work with you?
5. What additional insights did you gain from Chapters 4-6?

Read Chapters 7-9, then answer the following questions in your group:

1. Discuss the three ways in which arrogance can harm our core:
  - 1) it is a major obstacle to self-awareness,
  - 2) it deceives us,
  - 3) it distances us from others.What insights can you gain from understanding the destructive nature of arrogance?
2. How can humility serve as an antidote to arrogance? What are some practical ways in which you can demonstrate humility to others in your workplace?
3. Discuss your beliefs about leadership and what has shaped those belief (e.g., your upbringing, you culture, mentors/bosses, work experiences, etc.). What beliefs have helped you develop strength as a leader? What, if any, are some beliefs you have held that have later proved to be errant or unhelpful?
4. What additional insights did you gain from Chapters 7-9?

Read Chapters 10-12, then answer the following questions in your group:

1. Discuss the “Ten Lies Leaders Love” in Chapter 10. What are some ways you can guard against these lies taking root in your belief system?
2. Discuss your beliefs about your followers. What beliefs and behaviors on your part have helped you fully engage your followers? What beliefs and behaviors, if any, have not been helpful in gaining the commitment and engagement of your followers?
3. What kind of “early warning system” can you put in place to help you guard against false beliefs and counterproductive behavior?
4. What additional insights did you gain from Chapters 10-12?

Read Chapters 13-15, then answer the following questions in your group:

1. What influences do you allow in your life that have a positive effect on you as a leader? What negative influences do you need to guard against or completely block out?
2. Discuss the idea of establishing a “Board of Advisors” – one or more individuals who can provide you with honest feedback and hold you accountable for your actions. What would this look like? Who would you ask to be part of this “board”? Commit to identifying at least one or two people in your life who could serve in this capacity.
3. Identify and discuss your “non-negotiables” – those core beliefs and values that define how you want to live your life and help guide your interactions with others. How can you live out these “non-negotiables” more fully?
4. What additional insights did you gain from Chapters 13-15?