

# Leading Tough Conversations

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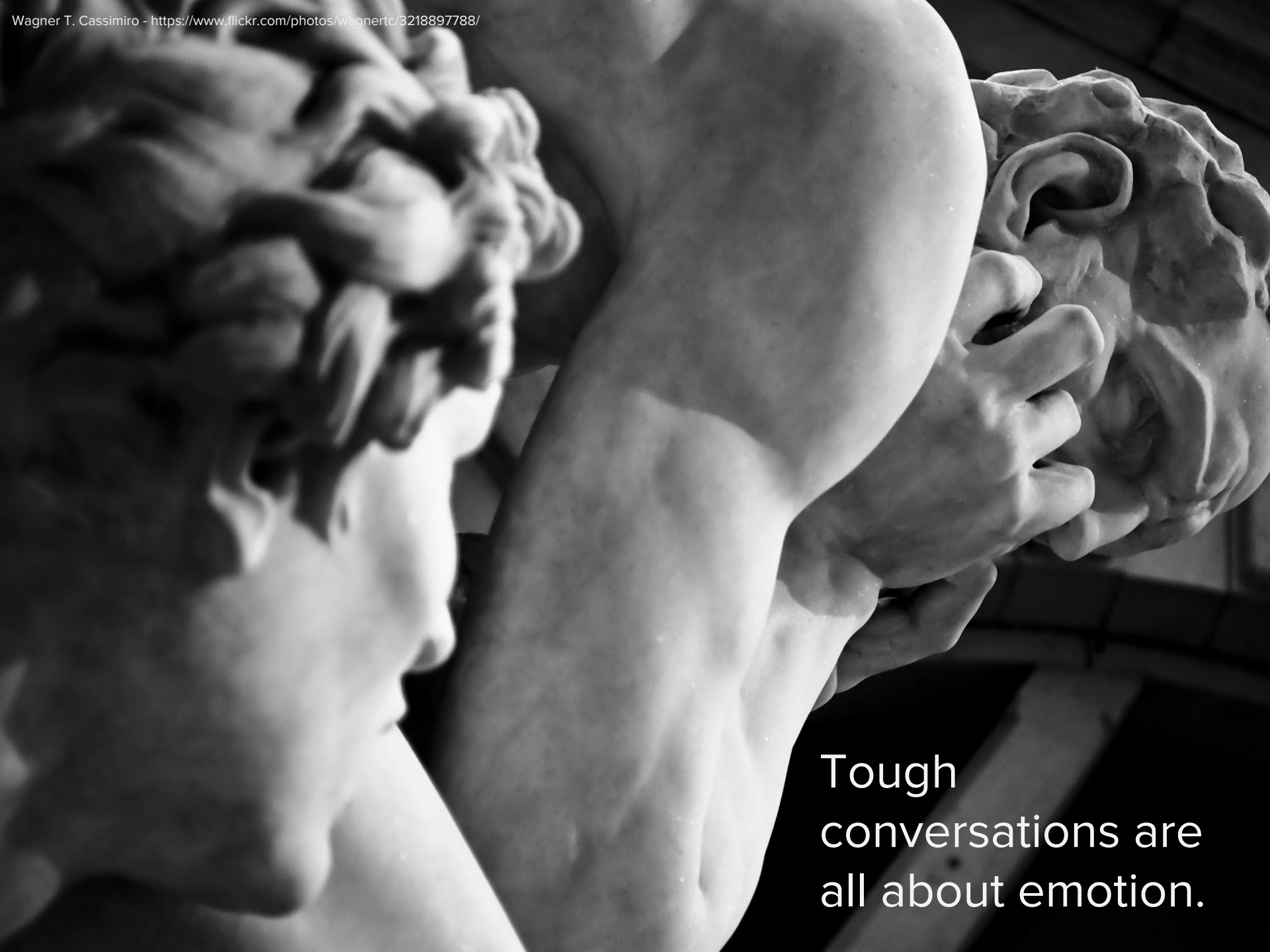


**Lynn Hoffman**

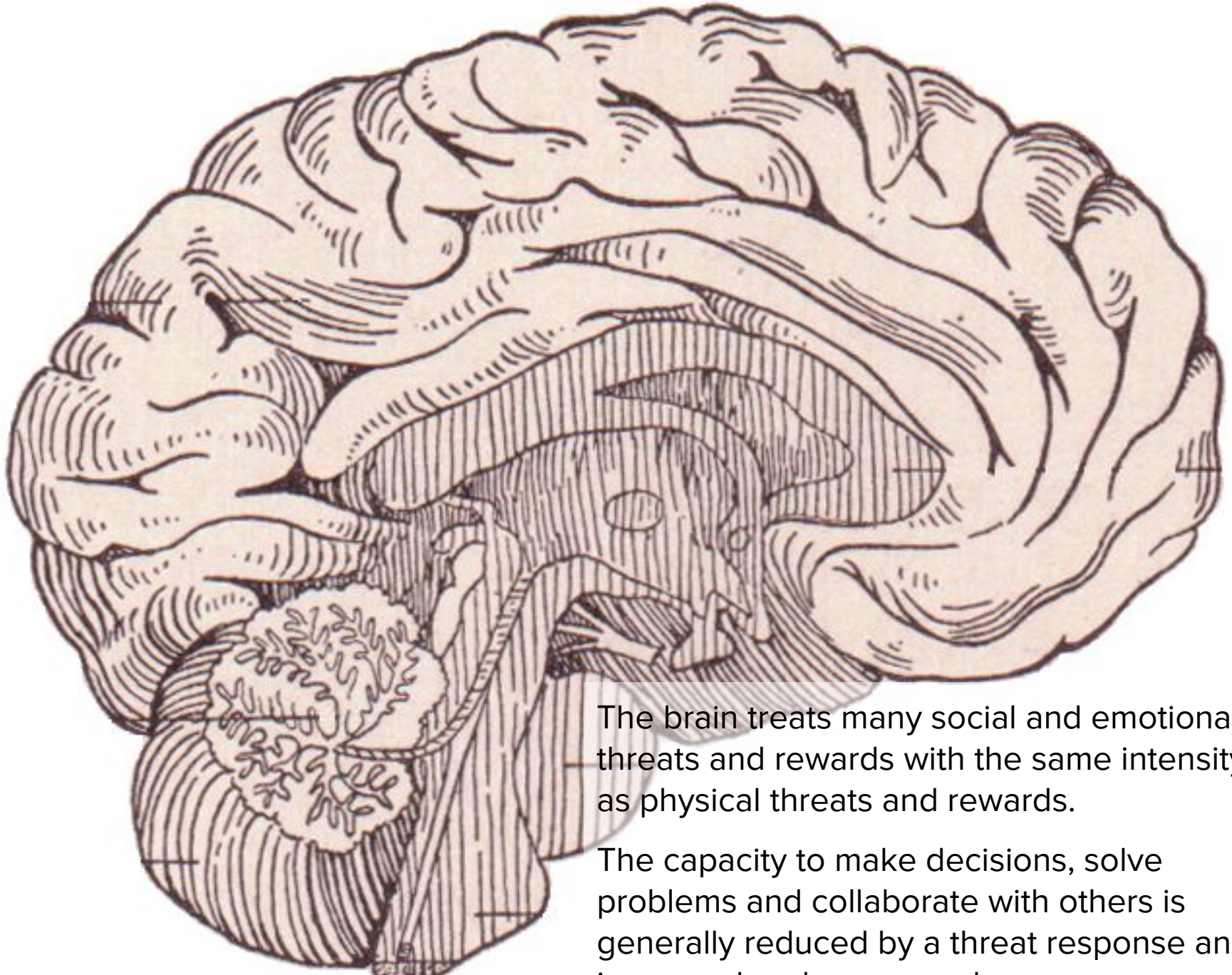
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Tough  
conversations are  
all about emotion.



The brain treats many social and emotional threats and rewards with the same intensity as physical threats and rewards.

The capacity to make decisions, solve problems and collaborate with others is generally reduced by a threat response and increased under a reward response.

# SCARF: a brain-based model for collaborating with and influencing others

Status - rank, expertise, experience

Certainty - predictability

Autonomy - agency, control

Relatedness - belonging, acceptance

Fairness - justice, transparency

**AVOID threats to:**

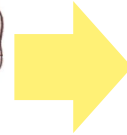
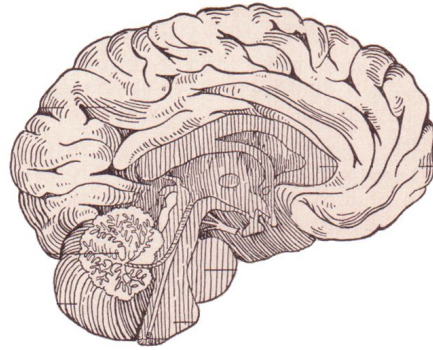
**Status**

**Certainty**

**Autonomy**

**Relatedness**

**Fairness**



**SEEK rewards of:**

**Status**

**Certainty**

**Autonomy**

**Relatedness**

**Fairness**

# Facilitation is...

Activity-based

Respectful of different modes of participation

Directed, but not directly persuasive

# Roles of a Facilitator

## **Managing the process**

Acting as a resource

Remaining neutral

- Striving for consensus
- Keeping members on task
- Following the agenda
- Focusing on problem solving
- Controlling the flow of contributions
- Rewarding and motivating group members

# Roles of a Facilitator

Managing the process

**Acting as a resource**

Remaining neutral

- Advising on problem-solving methods
- Providing on-the-spot training in group process techniques
- Protecting group members from personal attacks



# Roles of a Facilitator

Managing the process

Acting as a resource

**Remaining neutral**

- Staying emotionally uninvolved
- Keeping out of the spotlight
- Becoming invisible when the group is facilitating itself
- Keeping silent on content issues



LOVE



REPENTANCE



HAPPINESS



HORROR



TERROR



SCORN

Remaining neutral > Staying emotionally uninvolved

Remaining neutral > Keeping silent on content issues



# Facilitation Tools and Activities

Ground rules

Power of the pen

Stacking

Silence

Gradients of agreement

Parking lot

Unpacking Baggage: Mental Models

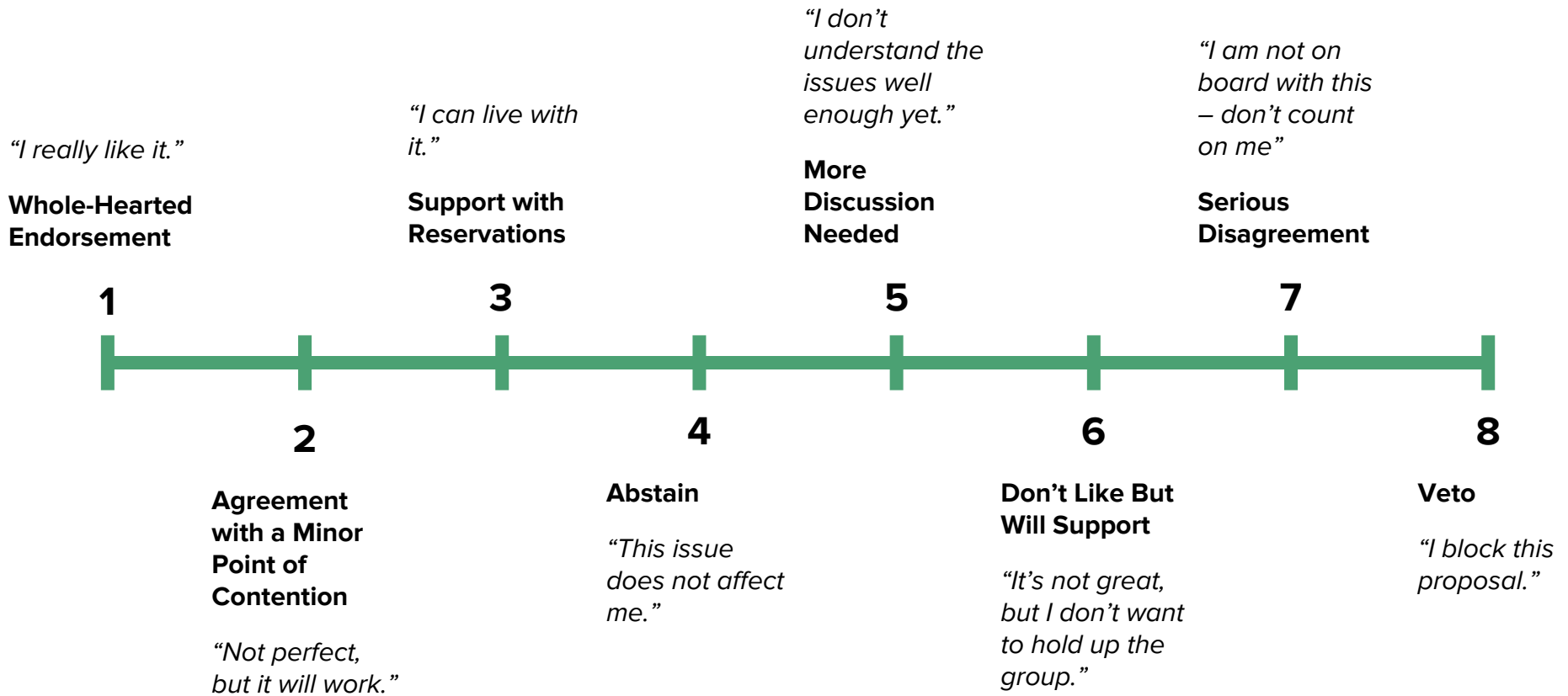
Brainwriting

Hopes and fears

Affinity process/silent sorting

Process mapping

# Facilitation Tools – Gradients of agreement



# Consensus

I believe the group understands my point of view.

I believe I understand the points of view in the group.

This might not have been my first choice, but I can live with it.

I will support this decision because it was reached in an open and fair manner.

# Unpacking Baggage – Five Whys

“If we do it that way, we’ll get in trouble.”

**WHY?** – “Because we aren’t supposed to do it that way.”

**WHY?** – “Because so-and-so said we aren’t supposed to do it that way.”

**WHY?** – “Maybe because it was their personal preference?”

**WHY?** – “Because they tried it lots of different ways and thought this was best.”

**WHY?** – “Because the circumstances were different when they made decision.”

**What does that tell you?**

Maybe we can try some other ways to do it and come up with a better way for the circumstances today.

# Facilitation Activities – Hopes and Fears

Ask people to share their hopes about the process or about the subject at hand.

After all the hopes are on the table, ask for fears.

If the fears outweigh the hopes, or if you start to hear fears disguised as hopes, you might want to jump to “What’s the Worst That Can Happen?”



# Resources

Altman, Louise. *The Intentional Workplace*. (blog: <https://intentionalworkplace.com/>)

American Society for Training and Development. *10 Steps to Successful Facilitation*. (ASTD Press, 2008; 978-1562865382)

Kaner, Sam. *Facilitator's Guide to Participatory Decision-Making*. (Jossey-Bass, 2014; 978-1118404959)

Lencioni, Patrick. *The Advantage: Why Organizational Health Trumps Everything Else in Business*. (Jossey-Bass, 2012; 978-0470941522)

Patterson, Kerry et al. *Crucial Accountability: Tools for Resolving Violated Expectations, Broken Commitments and Bad Behavior*. (McGraw Hill, 2013; 978-0071829311)



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