

Discussion Guide for

Management Unleashed: Leadership Lessons from my Dog

This group discussion guide includes questions for enhancing book club discussions, study group conversations, life coaching and for anyone who would like to delve more deeply into the content of this book. The suggested questions will help your group find unique and interesting topics for your discussion, enhance your enjoyment of the book, and improve your ability to apply its principles. *For more information, see www.managementunleashed.com.*

Background Information

In the book the main character, Marti, is a young manager learning to lead her team effectively in today's fast-paced and rapidly-changing environment. Partly autobiographical and partly fiction, this fable provides insights to help you better understand behavior.

Throughout their leadership careers, the authors frequently marveled at similarities in motivation and performance outcomes based on analagous techniques with team members, children and dogs. After all, we share common motivators: praise, attention, rewards and caring relationships.

A quick read with lasting, immediately-applicable insights, you'll find yourself recognizing behaviors in your employees, children, and pets. These principles will enable you to deal effectively with professional and personal situations.

Topics & Questions for Discussion

The following questions will help you get discussion flowing and increase everyone's learning.

Overall questions about the Book:

1. What is the significance of the title? How does it relate to the contents of the book? What other title might you choose?
2. Why do you think the authors chose to tell this story?
3. Did the book capture the environment of today's fast-paced work world? How?

Characters:

4. Did any of the characters remind you of yourself or someone you know? How?
5. Which characters in the book did you like best? Which characters did you like least? Would you want one of these characters on your team? Why or why not?
6. Were there any moments where you disagreed with the choices or actions of any of the characters? What would you have done differently?
7. Did you think the ending was appropriate? How would you have liked to have seen the book end?

Learnings or Insights Gained from the Book:

8. What scene resonated most with you personally in either a positive or negative way? Why?
9. What similarities in behavior do you see with pets and people in general?
10. How might your new insights from the book help in your daily activities as a manager, leader, parent, or counselor?
11. Share a favorite quote or principle from the book. Why did this quote or principle stand out for you?
12. How does the analogy of a short leash for a puppy or new employee, and an invisible fence for a more experienced employee, apply to empowerment of individuals—whether they are team members or family members?
13. In Chapter Two, the following principle is introduced: “Unclear expectations lead to confusion, frustration, insecurity, and mistakes.” Give an example of how this applies to your work or life in general.
14. Without trust you can’t build a positive, long-lasting relationship. Do you believe this principle to be true and why?
15. When is it important to establish yourself as “Top Dog?” When is it NOT appropriate?

16. “Constructive feedback improves performance and it doesn’t cost a dime.” So why isn’t it used more?
17. “Always give constructive feedback in private.” Relate an experience relevant to this principle.
18. “Address sub-standard performance promptly and firmly. One firm correction is worth 10 tugs.” Do you agree? If so, how does this principle apply to employees, children and people in general?
19. How can “inconsistency lead to discipline and morale problems?”
20. “Motivation is driven by anticipated rewards, consequences, and the probability that they will occur.” Do you agree? How does this relate to dogs, kids, and employees?
21. “Hold yourself accountable first. Lead by example.” Give an example of how Marti holds herself accountable and leads by example.
22. How can you remove obstacles to empowerment?
23. Are there additional principles the authors should have included?
24. Which principle would you like to work on to improve your effectiveness? How do you plan to incorporate it into your everyday life?