

ACCELERATE ***THRU*** **CONFLICT**



The Missing Conversations...
Before It's Too Late



DR. CRAIG OVERMYER
WITH MIKE MONTGOMERY

Praise for *Accelerating Thru Conflict*

“*Accelerate Thru Conflict* captures the insights gained from a seasoned coach working in the trenches with Scale Ups. Craig offers practical guidelines for executive teams and leaders at every level to put into practice the skill of productive conflict, especially when friendship and organizational politics make it easier to avoid these conversations.”

**Verne Harnish, Founder, Entrepreneurs’
Organization (EO) and author of *Scaling Up*
(*Rockefeller Habits 2.0*)**

“The skill of productive conflict is one of the most underrated qualities of a leader and the mark of a mature, highly engaged organizational culture. A culture where productive conflict is embraced is exceptionally prepared to navigate change and turbulence, and this book is a leadership treasure as it brilliantly inspires and educates readers on how to grow and thrive through productive, in-the-moment conflict skills.”

**Santiago Jaramillo, Emplify CEO/cofounder,
and Best-Selling Coauthor of *Agile Engagement***

“After reading dozens of books on influence, leadership, negotiating and sales to learn how to grow Allure Medical from 10M to 60M, I can honestly say I wish I had *Accelerate Thru Conflict* years ago. This book is the missing link and addresses a massively overlooked opportunity in a rapid growth company. Thank you for this book. I am buying it for my team and mid-leaders. Dr. Overmyer, your practical wisdom never ceases to amaze.”

**Theresa LaBranche, MS, PA-C, MBA,
Chief Operational Officer, Allure Medical**

“Dr. Overmyer has worked with Allure Medical on the concept of how to have healthy conversations around conflict management since 2017. During the time Dr. Overmyer has been involved with us, the company has increased 10x in size. He has led companywide keynotes on servant leadership, meditation and conflict management. He has also been instrumental in implementing positive changes through coaching key leaders within our company. I would recommend this book to any company that is growing and striving to have an amazing culture and unstoppable leadership structure!”

Traci Grossman, MS, PA-C, Allure Medical

“In an increasingly dark and polarized world where even the most powerful people in the world hurl insults at each other on social media and in the press, it’s too easy to just ignore conflict. Craig Overmyer persuasively argues that an understanding of how to use conflict as a business tool is a key to business growth.”

**David Meerman Scott, business growth strategist,
entrepreneur, and *Wall Street Journal* Best-Selling
Author of eleven books including *Fanocracy***

“This is good and well written. We have worked with Dr. Craig 10+ years and he has been instrumental in helping our company scale up and work to achieve our BHAG!”

**Jeff Kittle, President and CEO,
Herman & Kittle Properties**

“The role of all leadership in learning how to have ‘in-the-moment conversations’ and elevating conflict from passive aggressive to accountability and successful results is essential in any business that has in their business plan sustainable growth. Whether for-profit or not-for-profit, there is only so much one person, or even one team, can do. However, using a shared vision and creating the trust to have substantial conversations, hold each other accountable and work together for the entire organization excels the possibilities logarithmically.

“We need to, as leaders, slough off our social accountability ideas, avoid getting ‘sucked into’ daily operations and tolerating underperformance because it is more socially easier, but rather stick to the vision and continue to share this vision by perfecting our ability to acquiesce our non-conforming thoughts and restating our purpose because ‘as the leadership goes, so the whole company goes.’”

Dr. Ray Ingham, CEO, Witham Hospital

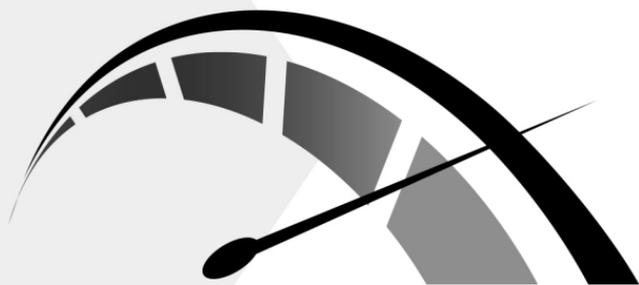
“This book provides guidelines for you to practice In-The-Moment Conversations for productive conflict solutions before it’s too late... with disengaged employees and underperforming teams.”

**Mike Ellis, VP of Regional Managers
Herman Kittle Properties**

“Craig’s approach to “scaling up” through productive conflict, as described in this book, has been instrumental in Birge & Held’s growth from a small apartment owner with \$100M in assets to one of the largest multi-family apartment owners in the Midwest with over 1 Billion AUM.”

Tag Birge, CEO, Birge & Held

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THRU***
CONFLICT



The Missing Conversations...
Before It's Too Late

DR. CRAIG OVERMYER
WITH MIKE MONTGOMERY

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Dean Montgomery

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Dedication

To my wife Becky, my daughter Meghan and my granddaughter Hadley, whose loving presence teaches me to live mindfully in the moment. I hope this book will inspire a global community of mindful leaders who are dedicated to creating a future workforce that inspires meaningful work through compassionate people who are focused on a purpose greater than profit.

- Craig Overmyer

To those who trained me, tolerated my style and have my back.

- Mike Montgomery

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You Need

To Build An

In-The-Moment

Conversations

Productive Conflict

Habit

To Accelerate

Business Growth.

As everyone knows, owners, executive leaders and managers are saddled with the burden of helping all employees with communication skills for conflict resolution that reduces the drama of differing behavior styles and opinions.

Foreword

The golden rule has been handed down from generation to generation as we have been taught to *treat others as we want to be treated*. This is certainly a noble way that we should interact with others as it focuses on building harmony. Not only is this practiced inside the home, but it is alive and well inside in the workplace.

In my experience of working with hundreds of leaders and managers in organizations of all sizes, I have often seen how conflict is avoided at all costs by others within an organization to build harmony. In fact, having difficult conversations with their teams is one of the most avoided responsibilities leaders and managers have.

And yet, not having those difficult conversations in order to make simple course adjustments in behavior and performance can often lead to longer-term drama and disruption, not only on an individual level but it can also become a cancer to the culture of an organization.

There are many reasons managers avoid having difficult conversations. Some organizations haven't built the necessary trust within the organization that is key to having these important conversations. In other situations, the managers merely want to be liked by their teams and may believe this will help create positive morale and culture.

But the goal of building a high-performance team isn't just making sure everyone likes each other.

It should be building a team that has mutual respect for one another with each individual contributing to their best ability and in alignment with the overall mission and vision of the company.

A quick review of an income statement will show that personnel costs are one of the largest expenses in a business. Yet managing this significant investment is one of the least planned and ineffectively executed.

Rarely will you find a business that doesn't perform routine maintenance on their property and equipment to keep it at optimal performance. Yet this is not something that is applied to their people. The reason? Leaders and managers have not been properly trained on how to do this type of routine maintenance. They don't have the tools.

The old adage "iron sharpens iron" is exactly what Craig Overmyer and the contributing authors of *Accelerate Thru Conflict*—Mike Montgomery and the Cultures That Work team—teach leaders and managers.

Their *In-the-Moment Conversations and Productive Conflict* methodologies will sharpen leaders of an

organization to help it scale and grow more quickly and effectively. The leaders will have the tools they need.

Friction within every organization is unavoidable; however, reducing it is critical for the organization to run at peak performance. *Accelerate Thru Conflict* couldn't be more aptly named.

The reader will learn to have *In-The-Moment Conversations* using Craig and his team's research-based tools and methodologies, which will accelerate resolution and, ultimately, revolution.

For as conflict and friction are reduced and the organization is aligned with its overall vision, the business can scale more efficiently and effectively.

This book is long overdue in the leadership and management curriculum as it provides practical advice and steps on how to begin developing the skill that is lacking in many managers and leaders.

It's time to move your organization from congenial to collegial by having great tools at your side so you can be aware of what's real, reflect on what's ideal, gain insight for solutions and take action for ideal results.

As the CEO of a high-growth HR business and author of the Amazon best-selling *Go Slow to Grow Fast*, I am proud to offer this foreword and strongly support the outstanding work provided herein.

- Brent Tilson

Introduction

“Only three things happen naturally in organizations: friction, confusion, and under-performance. Everything else requires leadership.” - Peter Drucker

What if... leaders who were accountable for functions and processes that drive your business successfully had the courage to seek accountability and hold one another accountable? Imagine a workplace without drama and the need for an intervention by someone with ultimate authority, such as a boss, an owner, a CEO or President, *even* if they are prepared to do so.

In this book, you will discover how to raise the quality of conversations to **accelerate thru conflict** by learning how to create the habit of putting into practice *In-The-Moment Conversations*[™] productive conflict solutions *before* it's too late; that is, before the stakes are high, disengagement rises and performance slacks off, requiring a critical conversation with the manager or boss.

Why? The momentum of compounding success as you scale up depends on it!

Everyone must face the natural “friction, confusion, and underperformance” of growth when scaling up.

Moment by moment, the quality of conversations and how everyone in your culture deals with conflict accelerates or decelerates the momentum of “the flywheel effect”¹ for exponential growth.

At Cultures That Work, we help busy leaders at every level of your organization learn practical tools for having brief, impactful conversations with colleagues and peers to encourage each other to seek accountability to do what matters most to achieve exponential growth.

Your leaders and managers are probably **not participating** in effective conversations for productive conflict solutions. Also, you're probably **not training** employees with the skill of practicing productive conflict solutions with their colleagues through the self-leadership it takes to transform "friction, confusion, and underperformance."

Why This Book Is for Scale-Ups

When scaling up, the increased complexity of adding new people, upgrading systems and evolving processes increases the natural experience of “friction, confusion, and underperformance.”

It is crucial to overcome the cultural entropy that results from scaling up. The head of the company and executive leadership team need to model how to courageously give and receive feedback through In-The-Moment Conversations productive conflict.

Leadership is not just a functional role. It is defined as anyone who “takes responsibility for finding the potential in people and processes, and who has the courage to develop that potential.”²

Mindful leadership is the capacity to be fully present and engaged in the moment, with equanimity. High-quality conversations are based on assuming mutual trust, respect and accountability.

This is a *guidebook* for increasing the momentum of compounding success through mindful leadership at every level. You can learn to accelerate thru conflict and make it safe for colleagues to encourage colleagues to achieve the higher purpose of your growth firm.

Why Practice Productive Conflict

The owner and executive team need to be focused on “fusing” their culture with their brand to create a unique presence in the marketplace³ which can only be achieved when they are free from being dragged

into daily operations. The owner and executive team must focus primarily on making new deals, on rapidly changing market dynamics and on the customer experience of value. Then, they can fulfill the higher purpose and expectations of the business.

The vice presidents, directors and managers need to focus on coaching teams to seek accountability with one another as colleagues so the managers can continue to refine systems, processes and procedures.

The executive leadership team must strive to also be a cohesive team, modeling for everyone in the culture how to be trustworthy, master conflict, make commitments, hold one another accountable and focus on collective results.⁴

After the essential skill of creating vulnerability-based trust between colleagues in the senior executive team is in place, the most challenging competencies for the culture to put into practice are the communication skills to master conflict so that the owner and senior team are free to do market-facing activities.

Why This Is a Challenge

The senior executive team's ability to debate and have productive conflict is an essential competency for cohesive teams.

The executive team must model the ability to practice candid productive conflict. Then, everyone else in the culture will know what it means to seek accountability for the collective results of the company.

However, most of us are conditioned, through social norms, to be friendly with colleagues and peers at work and avoid conflict. This avoidance will lead to destructive conflict behaviors.

It is much more comfortable to be congenial and friendly at work than to engage in much-needed productive conflict. It is much more of a challenge to be collegial, without concern for roles. Productive conflict solutions need to be more about being collegial and less about being congenial.

Why This New Habit for Your Culture

David Rock, who coined the term *NeuroLeadership*, defines company culture as “shared everyday habits.”⁵

For firms that are scaling up, we align with the concept of *Mastering the Rockefeller Habits* by Verne Harnish.⁶ Rockefeller Execution Habits are focused on the most important priorities and using data to confirm the achievement of those priorities. The habit of maintaining meeting rhythms will synchronize teams to be mindful to measure and achieve the shared vision.

When scaling up, it is especially important to practice high-quality conversations. The opportunities for these conversations arise when there are possible indications of misalignment. This could occur ad hoc, or after daily huddles, and during weekly, quarterly and annual planning meetings.

Every day, moment by moment, between colleagues, there are innumerable interactions that impact the

achievement of the higher purpose of your company to meet or exceed the expectations of your customers.

During these moments, giving and receiving feedback could create a threatening, stressful mental state, causing colleagues to often waver between unproductive, productive and destructive conflict.

In an article on this subject, “Using Neuroscience to Make Feedback Work and Feel Better,” David Rock and his coauthors summarized the research on the science behind giving and receiving feedback and found that “by switching from giving feedback to asking for it, organizations can tilt their culture toward continuous improvement.”⁷

After thousands of hours of coaching and training, it is our experience as coaches that colleagues want and need feedback as they face the complexity of scaling up.

Just like organisms in nature that need feedback to survive, scaling up organizations need feedback to stay alive and well when facing the inevitable changes in systems and processes when battling the natural friction, confusion and underperformance during growth.

However, the research cited in this article indicates that the stress for colleagues who need to give feedback is actually more stressful, neurologically, than for those receiving feedback.

Our Four STEP In-The-Moment Conversations provides a systematic method that will equip colleagues to ask for and seek accountability to keep getting better together.

**In-The-Moment
Conversations™
is a brain-friendly
feedback tool that
alleviates the threat
caused by giving and
receiving feedback.
These high-quality
conversations are
essential for scaling
up your organization;
accelerate thru
conflict to accelerate
the momentum of
business growth.
These are the missing
conversations.**

In-The-Moment Conversations is defined as a collaborative methodology to guide colleagues through a systematic process for timely productive conflict solutions.

How does it work?

Clear your mind from the background noise to expand **awareness** of the real challenge before you.

Reflect on possibilities for ideal conflict solutions and discover an energizing shared vision of possibilities.

Inspire and capture new **insights** from successes and/or failures, and then commit to be in alignment toward the shared vision.

Seek mutual trust, respect and accountability to **execute** new habits for accelerating growth momentum.

Four STEP In-The-Moment Conversations Guidelines

1. Seize the Moment and Regain Focus

- Clear your mind from the background noise
- Expand awareness of the real challenge

2. Remember the Future and Craft a Shared Vision

- Reflect on possibilities for ideal conflict solution
- Discover an energizing shared vision of possibilities

3. Learn from the Past to Build Organizational Alignment

- Inspire new insights from lessons learned
- Commit to alignment toward the shared vision

4. Seek Accountability to Champion Execution Habits

- Seek mutual trust, respect and accountability
- Execute new habits for accelerating growth momentum

Seize the Moment and Regain Focus: become aware of the real challenge

Suppose someone experiences a challenging conflict that creates the need for a conversation between colleagues. Take a time-out, to observe the realities, even the brutal facts, by using data or feedback. Stay even keeled. Think of the real conflict or challenge as news, not necessarily bad news or good news. Just news.

Using a sports metaphor, often there is a need for the team to take a time-out to make sure everyone is aware of the realities, such as the score, some misalignment with the intended play or the amount of time left on the clock. Such a defining moment warrants a time-out, to clear your mind of distractions and regain your focus as a team seeking to accomplish a common goal.

A metaphor of a real challenge is the physical feeling you get when the wheels of your car are out of alignment, causing some vibration and difficulty in the steering. The alignment activity is regular maintenance to transform friction, confusion and underperformance.

For airline pilots, it's the need for a captain and copilot to have a conversation about a dilemma or conflict—perhaps a warning light or some other indicator—that needs to be resolved before it becomes a crisis.

These are the moments to have the missing In-The-

Moment Conversations to address misalignments before it's too late.

Remember the Future and Craft a Shared Vision: reflect on the ideal vision

Rather than being gripped by the friction, confusion and underperformance that create conflicts, focus on possible solutions. How do you focus on solutions? By remembering the future!

Most sports coaches give a pep talk, helping the team remember the goal and what it will be like and feel like when the goal is achieved.

When we are just focused on the problem, the stress response sets up a fight or flight state. The brain chemistry is overwhelmed by the sympathetic nervous system response of cognitive, perceptual and emotional impairment. When faced with complexity from growth, individuals or teams can be stressed.⁸

Describing the vision in detail activates a brain chemistry in the parasympathetic nervous system, a response that is characterized by renewal, energy, positive mood, increased engagement and higher levels of performance.⁹

It is vital to get into that optimal performance zone and to avoid becoming overwhelmed by the “friction, confusion and underperformance” experienced by scale-ups.

Remembering the future (a vivid vision) is about staying energized toward meaningful work and overcoming the inevitable barriers to growth caused by the complexity of scaling up.

Learn from the Past to Build Organizational Alignment: gain insights from lessons learned

During this stage of the conversation, new insights will emerge. Literally, new neural pathways will be developed over time.¹⁰

Like the sports coach drawing up a new play on the clipboard, the individual or team gets back into alignment.

This occurs because each person in this dialogue is self-evaluating and asking themselves, “What lessons did we learn? What could I do, or what could the team do, to improve? What have we learned from both successes and failures?”

The best coaches stimulate insight in others and don’t just tell people what to do. They inspire a growth mind-set. They know the difference between “Hear-to-Fix; Tell-to-Solve” and “Listen-to-Learn; Ask-to-Empower.”

In this “Listen-to-Learn; Ask-to-Empower” dialogue, you will listen to learn the perspectives of others. Each person should create a climate where it is safe to speak up, welcoming differing opinions. This is the time to ask questions to empower each other to gain

insights about the new possibilities for solutions to do what matters most.

Everyone agrees to be in alignment to do what matters most and are ready to make a promise to seek accountability.

Seek Accountability to Champion Execution Habits: accelerate the momentum of growth by executing the “if-then” habit formation

When team members are engaged in productive conflict solutions by using this model for a collaborative dialogue, it generates an energy to act and champion higher performance.

Most great coaches are so good at this kind of dialogue that when the team breaks from the huddle, the energy can be amazing. The team keeps getting better together to overcome great obstacles.

Now, magnetized to achieve the shared vision, with everyone in alignment, intense motivation has been tapped into and will inspire team members to do the hard work and take actions to execute on the plan to achieve the shared vision.

Remember, this dialogue is not about just hearing what the conflict is and then fixing it. That approach can stimulate immediate short-term compliance at the expense of long-term engagement.

Listen to learn the perspectives of others, and then ask open-ended questions to empower them to think. This will inspire discretionary effort, to do that little bit of extra beyond what is expected.

This is the time to build new habits using the “if-then” habit formation technique that can accelerate the momentum of business growth.

Not Casual, Not Crisis

In-The-Moment Conversations are not yet in the zone of crisis conversations, nor are they casual. They are important conversations most of us have never been trained to practice!

Your culture needs to equip everyone to address conflicts—concerns that matter the most—moment by moment, throughout the workday, before it’s too late, employees disengage, and business momentum decelerates!

Here are examples of concerns, those “defining moments” of conflict:

- Customer experience is substandard
- Lack of follow-up on promised deliverables
- Personality conflicts create intense drama
- Miscommunication between departments
- Avoidance of accountability or responsibility

- Disengaged employees
- The necessity to conduct hard conversations when someone is not holding to the standards

Too much friction, confusion, and underperformance negatively impact employee engagement.

In-The-Moment Conversations productive conflict solutions begins when the executive team becomes healthy and aligned.¹¹

Often, friendships, organizational politics or familial relationships lead to false harmony and unproductive or destructive conflict.¹²

Unproductive conflict is false harmony where the conflict is hidden. It's comfortable to avoid issues, but it is artificial.

Destructive conflict occurs when conflict events trigger automatic assumptions, biases and beliefs that lead to destructive responses, disengagement and underperformance.

Productive conflict requires self-awareness, self-leadership, self-management and empathy for colleagues by honoring each other's styles. This makes it safe to speak up and face challenges by practicing In-The-Moment Conversations.

Part 1

Conflict Impacts Momentum

“The better able team members are to engage, speak, listen, hear, interpret and respond constructively, the more likely their teams are to leverage conflict rather than being leveraged by it.”¹³

-This is a quote from Craig Runde and Tim Flanagan, authors of Becoming a Conflict Competent Leader, a must read for anyone interested in the subject of conflict!

Accelerating Momentum

Tag Birge and Andrew Held are real estate attorneys by trade and childhood friends. When they launched Birge & Held (B&H) in 2008, it was exciting. Their first strategic plan was on the proverbial napkin from the coffee shop!

When they closed their first deal on an apartment complex, they realized, “Wow, we need lots of people to help!”

As a startup, the pressure to lease and manage the property was like pushing this “giant, heavy, enormous flywheel.”¹⁴

Have you been involved in a startup? If so, you know the enormous pressure and what it feels like to get the flywheel started, and to keep it going.

Back then, Andrew and Tag kept *pussssshhhhhhing* to execute the newly formed strategies and keep cash flowing from an increasing number of happy tenants in new locations. The momentum of B&H business growth ***accelerated*** quarter by quarter!

Tag and Andrew learned that the pushing of the B&H flywheel could only continue to accelerate momentum only if they trained others to *pussssshhhhhh*. They couldn't do it on their own.

Today, they are diligently training the key leaders in business acumen and leadership skills. Tag and Andrew engage the executive leadership team to practice In-The-Moment Conversations for Productive Conflict solutions.

As of 2019, B&H owns over \$1,000,000,000 in assets, at 45 well-managed properties, located in 7 states, with over 275 employees and counting! The momentum will keep going only if Tag and Andrew create a feedback-rich culture of accountability by using the Mindful Leadership at Every Level Training.

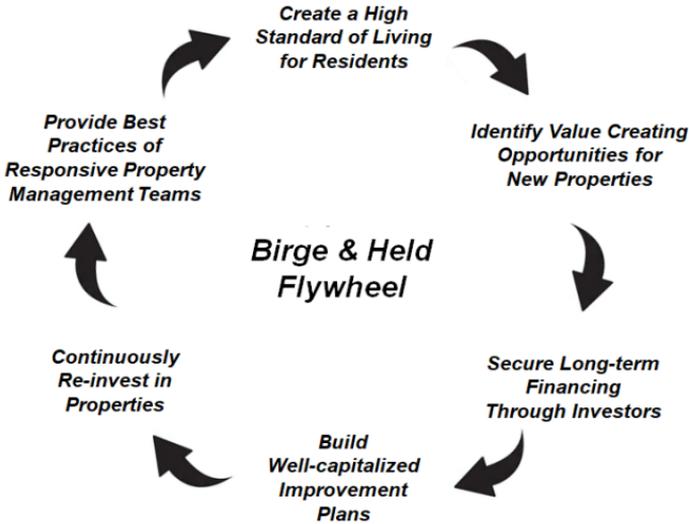
The strategy is no longer on a napkin; it's on Aligntoday's virtual platform for the Scaling Up Scoreboard. The B&H executive leadership team practices quarterly strategic thinking/execution planning by following the system found in *Scaling Up* by Verne Harnish.¹⁵

As their Scaling Up Coach, I guide them to leverage the Scaling Up Growth Tools, including the Rockefeller Habits Checklist and the famous One Page Strategic Plan.

The Birge & Held Flywheel Components

Identify Exciting Multi-family Opportunities

- Create a High Standard of Living for Residents
- Identify Value Creating Opportunities for New Properties
- Secure Long-Term Financing through Investors
- Build Well-Capitalized Improvement Plans
- Continuously Reinvest in Properties
- Provide Best Practices of Responsive Property Management Teams



“Once you fully grasp how to create flywheel momentum in your particular circumstance, and apply that understanding with creativity and discipline, you get the power of strategic compounding.”¹⁶ - Jim Collins

Disciplined People

The flywheel is a way of thinking to determine how your growth firm creates momentum for strategic compounding. The B&H executive leaders developed a strategy that creates an almost unstoppable momentum as they strive toward achieving their 2028 Big Hairy Audacious Goal (BHAG)¹⁷ of 450 Leaders serving middle-class families in 30,000 apartment homes.

What decelerates this momentum? The answer is the same for you as well!

Destructive conflict and false harmony will decelerate the momentum of your flywheel and force the owner, leaders and managers to pusssshhhh!

The #1 habit from the Rockefeller Habits Checklist is this: **the executive team is healthy and aligned.**¹⁸ When we started the coaching process, the B&H executive team read *The Five Dysfunctions of a Team* by Patrick Lencioni. Then, to go even deeper, the executive team took John Wiley & Sons, Inc. online assessment and training program *The Five Behaviors of a Cohesive Team*, which is based on Patrick's work. They were able to compare their team with the measurements from the research on 6,400 leaders of the most cohesive teams. This process revealed three areas for improvement:

1. **Trust** One Another
2. Engage in **Conflict** around Ideas
3. Hold One Another **Accountable**

These dysfunctions are issues for many scale-ups facing the complexity of growth!

The B&H Executive Leadership Team members learned each other's styles and realized how important it was for the executive leaders to practice the disciplines of cohesive teams: "as the leadership team goes, so the whole company goes."¹⁹

Of course, it goes without saying that trust is the foundation for all relationships. The B&H team

wanted to build trust and learn to improve how they engage in conflict around ideas.

Overcoming the fear of conflict is often the behavior that needs to improve for most of the senior leaders of scale ups. Many factors impact the scaling up momentum.

The research from Daniel Goleman, Richard Boyatzis and Annie McKee confirms that the Emotional Intelligence competency of Conflict Management is one of the most challenging leadership competencies to master.²⁰

Unproductive avoidance of conflict or destructive conflict will negatively impact momentum, even if you have significant levels of trust!

Lack of development of productive conflict solutions makes it unlikely you will fully develop the much-needed skill of seeking accountability.

When unproductive or destructive conflict occurs, the founder of a startup, the CEO or President will *pusssshhhhh* the flywheel themselves through their own efforts and that of a handful of loyal people.

Fill in this statement:

“If this is going to get done right, I’ll just do it ____!”

If you automatically thought *myself*, then I challenge you to assess and develop your Emotional Intelligence competency of Conflict Management.

Why? Because as you scale up, if you're a boss, the complexity makes it impossible for you to fix everything. Also, for colleagues, friendship bonds are formed when facing the inevitable scaling up battles, and that makes it even more challenging to have healthy conflict with those friends who have gone into battle with you!

“In essence, your executive team needs to have a level of trust that permits true debate and constructive conflict. What prevents this in large companies is politics; what prevents it in growth firms is friendships. Members of the team must embrace its diversity (the more the better) and be willing to challenge each other in making decisions and exposing the brutal facts.”²¹

What about you and your executive team? Do you have healthy debate and constructive conflict?

Engaging Productive Conflict

Tag and Andrew made the decision to replicate the newly developed productive conflict solutions discipline practiced by the executive team with leaders at every level.

For example, they had training for those who were accountable for complex processes such as new acquisitions and asset management. In addition, B&H had processes that moved across functions such as construction teams, property management teams and facilities maintenance teams.

Regional Managers and the Property Management

teams are accountable and responsible for day-to-day actions that drive the economic engine described in the B&H flywheel. These leaders were trained to practice the discipline of productive conflict solutions.

Tag and Andrew wanted to create a disciplined culture “with less hierarchy” as described by Jim Collins.²²

Therefore, they lead In-The-Moment Conversations productive conflict solutions with their executive team. These leaders become a model for the culture to address conflict before it becomes a crisis. Like that, the Regional Managers and Director of Training are accountable to ensure productive conflict solutions becomes an integral habit of the leadership DNA of the culture that impacts high-level functions and key processes that drive the flywheel momentum.²³

Productive Conflict Profile

Our social conditioning makes it a “threat” state to be in conflict with friends and to face organizational politics. Often at work, we will opt for false harmony to avoid the pain of dealing with conflicting opinions, priorities and styles.

Or, we will launch into destructive conflict through our automatic negative thoughts (ANTs), judgments, biases and perceptions of others.²⁴ (More about this later!)

It is important for you and your teams to understand each other’s styles during conflict and uncover the hidden strengths and challenges that each person must face when engaged in a conflict.

The Productive Conflict Profile by John Wiley & Sons, Inc. is refreshing and new. The profile generated uncovers how destructive conflict can be like a cancer throughout your culture.²⁵ Destructive conflict will fuel disengagement that decelerates your economic engine described by your flywheel.

An important focus of this book is to help you understand how executive teams and managers who are accountable for functions and processes across departments, divisions or teams may accelerate thru conflict. Then they model how to engage in productive conflict solutions to colleagues throughout the culture. This inspires the whole culture to keep building the momentum of business growth as it scales up, without the intervention of a boss.

In pages 46 through 57 of *Scaling Up*, you will get help completing the Function Accountability Chart (FACe) and the Process Accountability Chart (PACe).²⁶ These tools are essential to answering the following questions: Who is accountable? Who is responsible? Who has authority?

Even if you have not developed your flywheel, your business is either accelerating or decelerating the momentum for scaling up, at every moment, through every interaction, by all your employees.

Whatever it takes to build momentum to grow your business, you're likely to face the same problem, the missing conversations.

In-The-Moment Conversations™ Named

Alycen Williams, an exceptionally skilled Regional Manager at Birge & Held, shared this idea with me after a training event.

Alycen said, “I’m working with a manager who has not mastered conflict and just doesn’t know how to have an **in-the-moment conversation.**”

When I heard Alycen use that term, I was inspired to use that name for the intellectual property developed by the CTW team and our partners. The Birge & Held managers were trained to make it easier for them to master In-The-Moment Conversations that result in proactive productive conflict solutions.

The rest of this book is designed for you to discover how to equip colleagues at every level to **Accelerate Thru Conflict.** You will learn how to implement the Four STEP model for In-The-Moment Conversations productive conflict solutions in your organization.

Are you leveraging conflict, or is conflict leveraging you? The answer to that question will impact the momentum of your business flywheel, the engagement of your teams and your personal well-being at work.