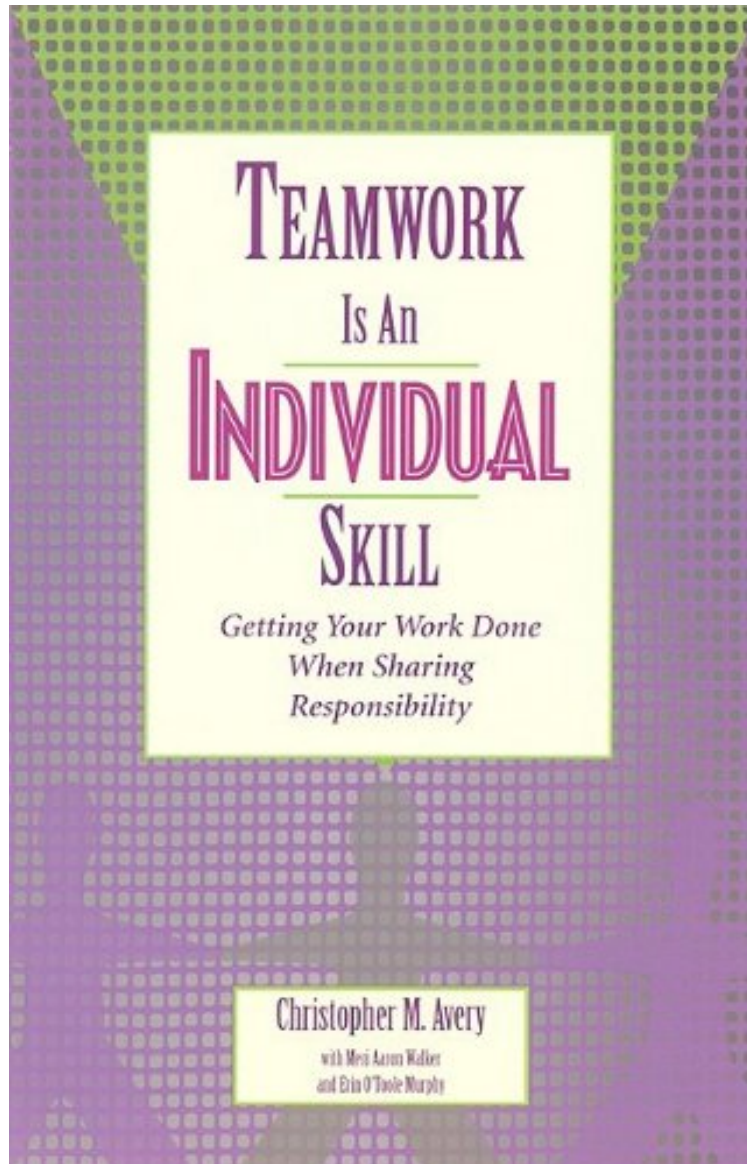


Teamwork Is an Individual Skill: Getting Your Work Done When Sharing Responsibility

Christopher M. Avery, Meri A. Walker, Erin O. Murphy
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Christopher M. Avery, Meri A. Walker, Erin O. Murphy : Teamwork Is an Individual Skill: Getting Your Work Done When Sharing Responsibility before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Teamwork Is an Individual Skill: Getting Your Work Done When Sharing Responsibility:

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Individual Responsibility ExposedBy L MillerMany of us charged with leading teams are expected to take the role of 'scapegoat' for team performance. While most of us agree that the

team leader does contribute (critically) to the team's success, each individual member can and does impact the team's performance. This book provides a validation that individuals impact teams and goes further to explain that every team member has an obligation to provide for the success of the team. This book helps empower those that want to make a difference in their teams. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Great book for everyone who wants to understand meaning of responsibility and to work effectively with teams. By Anton I really like basic idea: "teamwork is individual skill". So, every team member should train this skill work together. This idea opened for me new ways of thinking about teamwork. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars. By setsiri settaphakorn It is one of many good books I have read. I like the stories he shares in the book.

Knowing how to work effectively in and through groups may be the single most important skill anyone can develop in today's collaborative, team-based workplace. Unfortunately, all of the resources available on teamwork put the emphasis on group process and ignore the role of—and benefits to—the individual. But effective teamwork isn't only a group skill set; it's an individual skill set as well. *Teamwork Is an Individual Skill* shows readers how to develop the skills to thrive on any team, under any circumstances. No longer will readers find themselves complaining, "I got assigned to a bad team." Instead, they'll know what to do to make any team work for them. Drawing on over twenty years of experience successfully developing professional teams in product development, RD, and high-tech environments, Christopher Avery and his coauthors use brief thought-provoking essays, personal and teambuilding exercises, case studies, and insights from business leaders to teach readers how to build responsible and productive relationships at work. The authors show how and why your ability to assume personal responsibility—for your own work on a team and for the team's collective work—is the most important factor in ensuring a productive team experience. Teambuilding, the authors point out, is essentially a series of conversations between people who share responsibility to get something done. *Teamwork Is an Individual Skill* describes the way these conversations typically progress, and shows the reader how to predict and direct these conversations so that they can maximize the benefits to both themselves and to their team. Designed for easy access and for use by both individuals and groups, *Teamwork Is an Individual Skill* will equip readers with the mental skills and behaviors that will help them achieve personal goals while contributing to their team's success.

From the Publisher *The Alchemy of Teams* By Terry O'Keefe A review of *Teamwork Is An Individual Skill Getting Your Work Done When Sharing Responsibility* by Christopher M. Avery with Meri Aaron Walker and Erin O'Toole Murphy For all of you who have had your fill of touchy-feely exercises and teambuilding retreats, Christopher Avery brings some welcome news: Teamwork does not depend on group "bonding" or on some group facilitator's magic art. Teamwork, says Avery, is based on individual skills and attitudes that team members learn to bring to the team table. Avery is a well-known teamwork consultant. His interest in how groups work dates back to his doctoral studies on the Communication of Technology. Avery's passion is about uncovering what makes teams function and what makes them great. That's a question of growing importance in the business world, as corporate hierarchies flatten and the old command-and-control structures dissolve into self-directing teams. (The book points out that in progressive companies like General Electric, there are often no more than five levels from the CEO to the most junior clerk.) Avery's ongoing research into team performance has convinced him that great teams are built around a series of "conversations" that help to define each individual's role, agreements, and commitments to the team, and vice-versa: * Shared Focus. Having each member explore and agree on shared purpose - why the team exists and what it aims to accomplish - is the first step in building a top team. Avery notes that full consensus really counts: "When groups pursue a direction determined by majority or authority, those who dissent (either vocally or silently) can lose energy." Therefore, people with Team Wisdom reach out to dissenters with the question: "How can we change this proposal so that it works for you?" * Individual Commitment. Matching motivation, Avery says, is far more important than matching skills: "...if members don't have the required skills, a high performance team will improvise. The same is not true for motivation, however. Every team performs to the level of its least invested member." * Shared Agreements. Successful teams make agreements about team behavior - what each person owes to to each other with regard to performance, accountability, and relationship. For Avery, honest but fair feedback about behavior is crucial to team success: "In a team, when you let another person break an agreement and don't call them on it, you are just as responsible for the blow to group performance as the person who let the agreement slide." * Harnessing Differences. Breakthroughs in thinking arise not from unanimity of thought but from diversity of opinion: "The goal is to produce synergy through the discussion and appreciation of different perspectives. Teams must create explicit opportunities for team members to participate and add value." Based on those kinds of steps, the outline for high performance begins to emerge: Teams choose their own members. Members come to clear and complete agreement on their shared purpose, and on their personal stake in the outcome. They make explicit performance commitments, and hold each other accountable with regular feedback. They exploit their differences to achieve breakthrough performance. They agree to be rewarded on team rather than individual achievement. The book's bottom line is that teams don't have to "team build" separate from the work they do together. Just following this kind of process with commitment and integrity can't help but build

powerful teams and outcomes. Calling this a book about teamwork runs the risk of putting it into far too small a box. It contains more practical information and advice about the conditions under which we human beings optimize our work together than any other book you are likely to have read. If there is a book about the consciousness of working together, this is it. You don't have to be in the team-building business to benefit from Avery's book - any organizational structure and any work situation will do. Copyright Terry O'Keefe 2001

About the Author Christopher M. Avery, Ph.D., is president of Partnerwerks and has consulted to Charles Schwab Co., IBM., Motorola, 3M, and many others. Meri Aaron Walker's firm, Between the Lines, helps businesses locate their most powerful communication channels and build two-way messaging mechanisms that link them with audiences. Erin O'Toole Murphy is an organization designer.