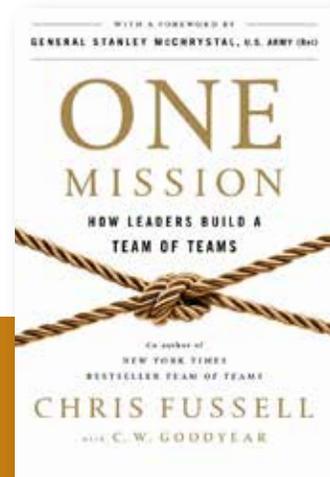
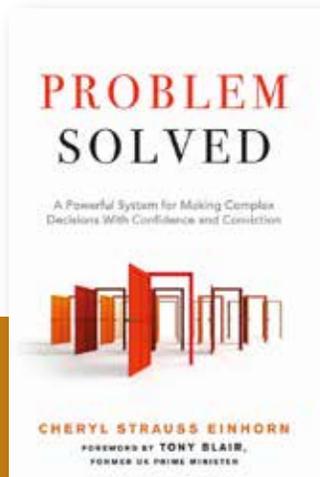
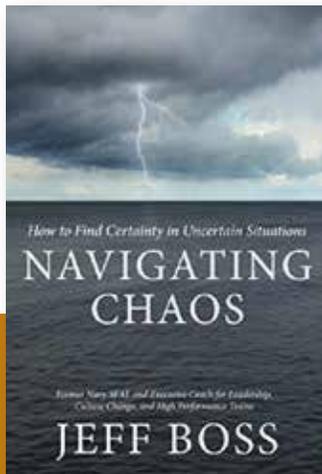


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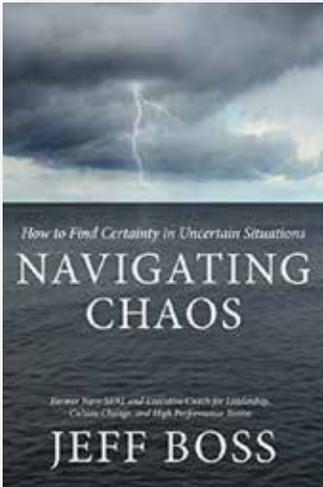
“What shifts must take place in my leadership in order to raise the productivity of my team?”



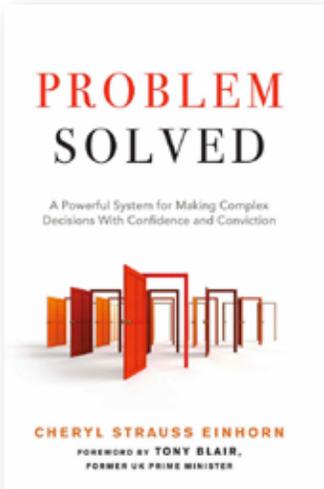
# EXECUTION

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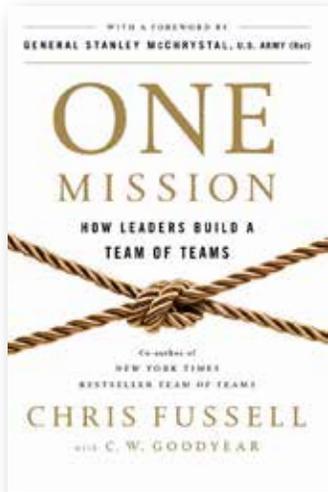
What shifts must take place in my leadership in order to raise the productivity of my team?



Jeff Boss, former SEAL veteran and now leadership and business performance coach, believes that leaders must keep the performance capacity high.



Cheryl Strauss Einhorn, award-winning investigative journalist and strategic consultant, believes leaders must make thoughtful, confident decisions.



Chris Fussell, former Navy SEAL and co-author of Team of Teams, thinks that teams are led best when leaders build a single aligning narrative.

**Problem Statement:**

*What shifts must take place in my leadership in order to raise the productivity of my team?*

Leaders must learn how to make the future in the midst of volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity. It is hard to even think about the future if you are overwhelmed by the present, but that is exactly the time when foresight can be most practical. Looking to distant possibilities can provide new insight for the present.

Some leaders will judge too soon and draw simplistic conclusions while others will decide too late and pay a price for their lack of courage or inaction. Some will be overwhelmed by a sense of helplessness while others will become cynical and question everything around them.

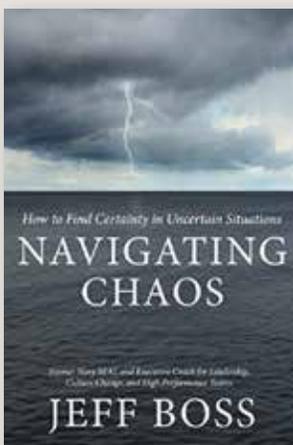
Leaders need not be overwhelmed by the volatile world around them. They must have the skills to take advantage of those opportunities, as well as the agility to sidestep the dangers.

Leadership is more preparation than planning. Planning relies on predictability. But preparation helps leaders stay clear amid uncertainty. Planning assumes continuity; preparation equips leaders to be flexible enough to seize opportunity.

This issue of SUMS Remix looks at small shifts in your leadership that can help achieve actionable and intentional ministry results. The solutions include:

- Keep your performance capacity high
- Make thoughtful, confident decisions
- Build a single aligning narrative

***Solution #1: Keep your performance capacity high***



**THE QUICK SUMMARY**

Jeff Boss has faced and overcome uncertainty in the most tumultuous circumstances. As a Navy SEAL, he worked in some of the most unforgiving environments on earth and faced enemies that constantly changed, much like today’s business landscape. In a world of chaos, how do individuals and teams stay together to find certainty in a world where there is anything but? This book reveals how. Using anecdotal experiences from both the military and business worlds, Boss highlights the individual mindsets, team practices, and organizational considerations for how people and companies can forge certainty amidst inevitable chaos.

**A SIMPLE SOLUTION**

Albert Einstein reportedly said, “We can not solve our problems with the same level of thinking that created them.” Others have restated that thought as, “What got you here won’t keep you here,” or something similar.

No matter how you say it, that line of thought is very true in the church you lead as you face the complexities of ministry that seem to be changing all around you – every day – and speeding up!

How do you plan for the unknown? You can’t really, but you can definitely have the confidence to try.

*The typical organizational response to chaos is to become more efficient – to improve productivity – and the byproduct is increased stress for each and every employee. Greater stress levels lead to toxic environments, impatience, communication challenges, and short-term focus – the very antithesis of superior performance.*

The secret is to keep the performance capacities (physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual) fulfilled, as doing so sustains energy levels to perform, to adopt, and to lead.

The three elements of performance, adaptability, and leadership are the principles and behaviors that will make you and your organization successful. The PAL Model© refers to the way in which any team – whether at work, on the athletic field, or even at home – can borrow this dynamic from the SEALs and apply it toward their own efforts toward success.

The most fundamental of the skills needed is Performance. Does each and every member of your team have the skillset in place that is needed to advance the team’s collective cause?

The next skill is Adaptability, which enables any team to tackle the unknown and strategically improve their position at a moment’s notice.

The final skill is Leadership. Without effective leadership in any situation, communication breaks down and things rapidly spin out of control.

– Jeff Boss, *Navigating Chaos*

**A NEXT STEP**

When was the last time you reviewed performance markers for your team when jobs or financial implications were NOT involved? How up-to-date are the team’s job descriptions and your review process? How do the mission and values of your organization, coupled with a long-range view of God’s better future, impact who does what in your church?

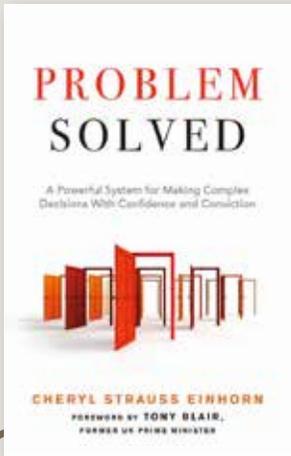
Non-stress, everyday conversations are the best time to ask these questions and make the necessary adjustments BEFORE the problems force quick action. Set up a 1-1 with each of your team members and ask the following three questions, try your best to simply listen and ask appropriate follow-up questions.

EXECUTION

1. What one thing do you wish I knew about your role in our church?
2. What is one thing I can do in the next three months to help you lead?
3. In what way do you feel like you are most fulfilling our mission?

After a season of prayer and thoughtful reflection, make the necessary adjustments to your leadership. If needed, begin an intentional and well-timed process of recalibrating the roles and responsibilities of team members. Do not rush this and make this a healthy season. Allow misplaced or under-performing team members time to improve or seek other ministry options.



**Solution #2: Make thoughtful, confident decisions****THE QUICK SUMMARY**

It can be messy and overwhelming to figure out how to solve thorny problems. Where do you start? How do you know where to look for information and evaluate its quality and bias? How can you feel confident that you are making a careful and thoroughly researched decision?

Whether you are deciding between colleges, navigating a career decision, helping your aging parents find the right housing, or expanding your business, *Problem Solved* will show you how to use the powerful Area Method to make complex personal and professional decisions with confidence and conviction.

Einhorn's Area Method coaches you to make smarter, better decisions because it:

- Recognizes that research is a fundamental part of decision-making and breaks down the process into a series of easy-to-follow steps.
- Solves for problematic mental shortcuts such as bias, judgment, and assumptions.
- Builds in strategic stops that help you chunk your learning, stay focused, and make your work, work for you.
- Provides a flexible and repeatable process that acts as a feedback loop.

Life is filled with uncertainty, but that uncertainty needn't hobble us. *Problem Solved* offers a proactive way to work with, and work through, ambiguity to make thoughtful, confident decisions despite our uncertain and volatile world.

**A SIMPLE SOLUTION**

Leaders must learn to navigate the space between deciding too soon, or deciding too late, and lean toward action.

Careful reflection is critical in the decision-making process, so you don't judge too prematurely and risk judging incorrectly.

On the opposite side, deciding too late is the classic mistake of those who love to study but have trouble getting around to deciding what to do with their research results.

Leaders need to lean toward action and not just lean back and ponder the dilemma they face.

One way to do that is to have a process that will help you and your team with an intentional decision-making process.

*Decision-making is about ideas, but ideas aren't enough. There is an important gap between having ideas and making good decisions about what to do with those ideas. Use the AREA Method to help navigate the decision process.*

The first “A” stands for “Absolute,” which refers to primary, uninfluenced information from the sources at the center of your research and decision-making process.

The “R” stands for “Relative,” and refers to the perspectives of outsider around your research. It is secondary information, or information that has been filtered through sources connected to your subject.

The “E” stands for “Exploration” and “Exploitation,” and they are the twin engines of creativity – one is about expanding your research and the other is about depth. Exploration asks you to listen to other peoples’ perspectives by developing sources and interviewing. Exploitation asks you to focus inward, on you as the decision-maker, to examine how you process information, examining and challenging your own assumptions and judgment.

The second “A” stands for “Analysis,” and synthesized all of these perspectives, processing and interpreting the information you’ve collected.

– Cheryl Strauss Einhorn, *Problem Solved*

### A NEXT STEP

Work through the AREA decision-making process outlined above with your team by choosing a decision you are facing. Discuss the questions below, writing answers to each area on a separate chart tablet.

#### A – Absolute

- What are the critical entities involved in this decision?
- Who are the critical people at these entities? What is their involvement and impact?
- What does it mean as it relates to your decision?

#### R – Relative

- What information is available from outside sources concerning the factors of your decision?
- Does the emerging story explain why and how these factors will affect your decision?
- What are the source’s incentives or biases? How are they reflected in the stories told by the source?

#### E – Exploration

- What kind of answers do I need to make the decision?
- What do I want to find out and why?
- How do I expect to use the information I gather?

#### E – Exploitation

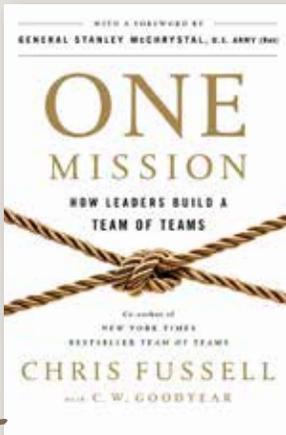
- How might you display your decisions “big picture” and or details?
- Can you connect your new information to existing knowledge in a chart, table, or graph?
- Can you craft questions that you still need answered?

#### A – Analysis

- What could cause the decision to fail?
- What actions might you take if one or several of the events that could cause failure begin to play out?
- At what point might you need to reevaluate the decision?

By following the AREA Method, your team will be able to better articulate your path to success. The thoughtful, confident decisions, anchored in research, will help you articulate the what, why, and the how of your decision-making in ways that resonate with others.



**Solution #3: Build a single aligning narrative****THE QUICK SUMMARY**

Too often, companies end up with teams stuck in their own silos, pursuing goals and metrics in isolation. Their traditional autocratic structures create stability, scalability, and predictability – but in a world that demands constant adaptation, this traditional model fails.

In *Team of Teams*, retired four-star General Stanley McChrystal and former Navy SEAL Chris Fussell made the case for a new organizational model combining the agility, adaptability, and cohesion of a small team with the power and resources of a giant organization. Now, in *One Mission*, Fussell channels all his experiences, both military and corporate, into powerful strategies for unifying isolated and distrustful teams.

This practical guide will help leaders in any field implement the *Team of Teams* approach to tear down their silos, improve collaboration, and avoid turf wars. By committing to one higher mission, organizations develop an overall capability that far exceeds the sum of their parts.

From Silicon Valley software giant Intuit to a government agency on the plains of Oklahoma, organizations have used Fussell's methods to unite their people around a single compelling vision, resulting in superior performance. *One Mission* will help you follow their example to a more agile and resilient future.

**A SIMPLE SOLUTION**

Some of the most difficult parts of taking action and moving forward takes place before you are required to take action. You may glimpse a solution to a problem, but don't hit the gas pedal yet – is your team aligned?

For the church, being out of alignment means severe limitations to missional effectiveness and efficiency.

*If we were to become a hybrid model that maintained top-down alignment while also empowering our individual teams to make coordinating autonomous decisions, each team would need a deep enough understanding of strategy to operationalize it without top-down direction. To do this, we would need to create a powerful narrative that not only would unite our teams on our organization's single mission but would also tell them how to achieve that mission.*

The idea of strategic alignment is not new; for years, bureaucratic organizations running on a traditional model have worked to make sure their teams are strategically aligned. However, in most cases, this alignment comes from the top; experiences has shown the traditional top-down approach to vertical alignment can actually mask horizontal misalignment and further fuel narrative divide among teams.

In typical organizations, as complexity increases, so do horizontal gaps and resultant mistrust among silos. The belief is that strategic leadership announces a goal and that it cascades down to the operational level and further down to a tactical level.

Unfortunately, an open-ended, vaguely unifying objective actually serves to reinforce disconnects among teams because it can mean different things to different subordinate silos, which worsens horizontal alignment.

With little transparency and few direct lines of communication between teams and leaders, each of us could use the organization's overarching objective to feed our myopic view of the fight.

In openly addressing the need to demonstrate more informal interconnectivity, defy tribal barriers, and eschew reserve in favor of transparency, our leadership began to model a new type of behavior consistent with its still-developing aligning narrative.

Every day, our aligning narrative and its associated behaviors became increasingly ingrained in our thinking, a product of the repetition of messages coming from our leadership and of observing the impact that this new approach begin to have on the battlefield.

– Chris Fussell, *One Mission: How Leaders Build a Team of Teams*

## A NEXT STEP

How does your organization currently measure horizontal alignment among its teams and functional silos? Often leaders make the assumption that their team is organized and moving in the same direction so that everybody's efforts align toward the same purpose.

As we all know, that is seldom the case.

Using the phrases below, review your team's alignment. Write the phrases on a chart tablet:

- Communication is clear
- The team is working in alignment
- The "Win" has been defined
- Operating environment is understood before taking action
- Skill and performance standards exist

First have your team write down their individual rating on a scale of 1-10, where 1 represents total absence and 10 represents total agreement.

Then, discuss everyone's rating, arriving at a consensus score for each of the five statements.

If there are statements with a composite score of 7 or below, develop action plans to move the score up in the next three months

Your teams might claim to trust and have open lines of dialogue with one another – but can they demonstrate examples of how this trust is helping accomplish your organization's strategy?

Based on the above exercises and questions, how would an aligning narrative be best emphasized and contextualized for your teams?

### CONCLUSION

This issue of SUMS Remix looked at solutions that help you achieve actionable and intentional ministry results. The solutions included:

- Keep your performance capacity high
- Make thoughtful, confident decisions
- Build a single aligning narrative

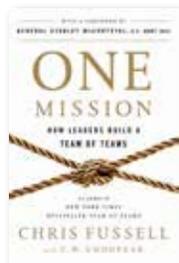
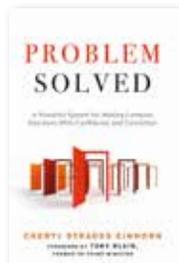
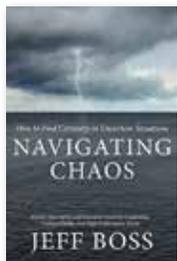
### Featured Books

Jeff Boss. *Navigating Chaos*, Archer, New York, NY, 2015.

Cheryl Strauss Einhorn. *Problem Solved*, Career Press, Wayne, NJ, 2017.

Chris Fussell. *One Mission*, Penguin Random House, New York, NY 2017.

### Amazon Links



**Recommended Resources Links**

*Auxano Founder and Team Leader Will Mancini talks about performance traps that subvert healthy leadership.*

*Will Mancini quoting pastors of fast-growing churches on the importance of vision and alignment.*

*Download a free chapter of Navigating Chaos from author Jeff Boss' website.*

*Download resources to help apply the AREA method from author Cheryl Strauss Einhorn's website.*

*Listen to a conversation about One Mission with author Chris Fussell and General Stan McChrystal.*

If you would like to learn more about helping your team stay productive and focused on the **execution** of your organization, [\*\*read more\*\*](#) about Auxano's break-thru process for Vision Clarity in your church.



**Start a conversation  
with *our* team.**

We're glad to offer  
our input. Your  
vision is at stake,  
so let's talk.

Auxano's mission is creating break-thru clarity with church teams to realize their vision. We offer six services.



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