

Silos, Politics and Turf Wars Excerpt

Test Number One

Jude spent much of that evening preparing for the next morning's session with Lindsay and her team. By the time he arrived in the conference room at the hospital, he was feeling pretty confident that his theory was more solid than ever. But that confidence was offset by the reality that a new group of executives could change everything.

As soon as the team of eight was seated around the table, Lindsay introduced Jude and succinctly explained the reason he was there. "We need to start working as a hospital, and not as separate departments that happen to share a building."

Everyone seemed to be in agreement with the goal.

Jude then went to the front of the room and asked the group a series of questions about their behavior as a team. How comfortable were they in being open with one another? How much did they engage in honest debate? That kind of thing.

After an awkward few minutes, the team opened up. Soon enough Jude came to the conclusion, as Lindsay had suggested he would, that there were no blatant personality clashes among the group and that the silo issue was probably more structural and organizational than interpersonal. So Jude moved to his pitch.

First, he asked them for examples of crisis situations they had been in, and for the next ten minutes helped them come to the realization that teams often perform at their best when their backs are up against a wall.

He told the group about his wife's emergency room experience, which not only was helpful in driving the point home, but seemed to help them come to know Jude as a person rather than just a consultant.

As the lesson was beginning to take hold, out of nowhere Jude asked a rhetorical question of the group, one he decided should be a staple of his workshops in the future: "Why wait for a crisis?"

It was as though he had just told them about electricity.

He continued, with more enthusiasm than he had yet demonstrated to a group of clients. "Why not create the same kind of momentum and clarity and sense of shared purpose that you'd have if you were on the verge of going out of business?"

That set off an outbreak of nods and raised eyebrows from the suddenly engaged audience. Now that he had them where he wanted them, Jude decided to get right to the meat of his session and asked the \$64,000 question: "What is the single most important accomplishment that this team needs to make in the next six or nine months?"

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