

# Team Of Teams Summary

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**1-Sentence-Summary:** *Team Of Teams* reveals the incredible power that small teams have to manage the difficult and complicated issues that arise in every company and how even large organizations can take advantage of them by building a system of many teams that work together.

**Read in:** 4 minutes

**Favorite quote from the author:**



In today's world of technology, things can change in an instant. Maybe your computer gets a virus and crashes. The stock market could plummet. Or maybe your competitor unexpectedly comes up with an invention that out-competes your product.

The bottom line is that you just never know what's going to happen next. So how can you prepare your business for such events? By ensuring that you have the right teams in place.

In *Team of Teams: New Rules of Engagement for a Complex World*, authors Stanley A. McChrystal, Chris Fussell, David Silverman, and Tatum Collins came together to answer one question: how can a big organization possess the cohesion and adaptability of a small team?

Their advice is that organizations should set themselves up to operate as a team of teams. By doing so, companies can effectively transform into a cohesive and adaptable organism with a single vision.

Here's the book summarized in just 3 lessons:

1. If you want to solve problems in our complex world, you've got to work on teams.

2. The key to getting a bigger organization to work together is by forming a larger team comprised of smaller teams.
3. An efficient team of teams controls decision making while their leader focuses more on culture than daily operations.

Ready to see the power of teams working together? Let's go!

## **Lesson 1: Working in teams is the solution you need to solve problems in our complex world.**

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Do you remember in school when your teacher would divide the class into groups to perform certain tasks? This is because a group has the ability to solve problems that a person on their own isn't able to. This concept applies to companies as well.

Looking at problems as a team rather than as individuals will better prepare an organization for tackling complex challenges. Many organizations care more about efficiency and structure themselves in a way that everyone follows one person's commands. The problem with this is that one single person can't grasp the complexity that comes with modern problems.

An example of this is the plane crash at Portland International Airport in 1978 that killed 10 people. When there was a minor malfunction, the captain prolonged safety preparations until they ran out of fuel, even though his crew members were warning him of the fuel levels. It was clear that they should've been working as a team.

What makes a team so good at navigating complexity? Having mutual trust and purpose. As opposed to bosses and subordinates, team members share a common purpose, and sharing experiences inspires trust. **This trust enables them to respond quickly when they need to.** They all understand what the desired outcome is and what each person needs to do to achieve it.

After the Portland plane crash, United Airlines realized a plane's technology was much too complex for one person to handle alone. So they introduced the Crew Resource Management program that consisted of teams to handle such situations. The emergency landing on the Hudson River in 2009 where everyone survived is just one example of the benefits of this change.

## **Lesson 2: If you have a larger company and want the power of teamwork, build a team of teams.**

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You might be wondering how you can feasibly run an organization with teams when you have a company of thousands. It's simple: build of team of teams

Too many people in a team will make it ineffective. So for companies larger than 150 people, break things down into multiple teams. When you build your smaller teams, make sure they work together with the other teams as a larger team.

Teams are great at creating cohesiveness. But they also come with the problem of needing to exclude those outside of the team. If you have multiple teams, make sure they all share the same overall processes and purpose, otherwise, there will be things that are only partially done and things missed.

Another tip for having a team of teams is to make sure that information is always shared. **If a team doesn't share an understanding of the context of their work, they will make choices good for the team, but not necessarily good for the whole organization.**

As a commander in Iraq, the author made a point to share information so his Task Force members could all access relevant information about what operations were happening. He also televised weekly Operations and Intelligence briefings to make sure everyone could follow how all of the operations worked together to a common goal.

Another piece of advice to help support relationships between teams is to make sure they have an opportunity to share experiences. Provide experiences for them to work together to ensure they can work beyond their own team.

### **Lesson 3: Give your team of teams the power to make decisions on their own and have managers take care of culture rather than daily operations.**

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Often decisions in organizations are made by just one person. But the problem is, in today's world where things change at such a fast pace, it's essential that teams are able to make decisions on their own.

Just like the world is ever-interconnected through technology, a team can also share this interconnectedness. But this seamlessness isn't possible if teams aren't allowed at least some autonomy.

When the author created his shared consciousness program, he realized that giving things his approval was just starting to be a matter of protocol alone. They already had what they needed to make good and informed decisions, they just needed a signature.

**He realized all this protocol was doing was slowing things down.** Because of this, he started what he called empowered execution, where teams were allowed to handle situations that needed quick action.

Before employing empowered execution, make sure the team has sufficient information to make decisions, otherwise, it can be disastrous. This means ensuring a free flow of information and shared consciousness.

## **Team Of Teams Review**

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What an interesting concept and book! I think *Team Of Teams* is going to be best for managers of large companies because that's what it focuses on most. But the idea it teaches of using the power of teams to solve complex problems in our day is something that anybody can apply and see great results from!

## **Who would I recommend the Team Of Teams summary to?**

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The 32-year-old entrepreneur who wants to build a large business, the 48-year-old manager that would like to get better at finding solutions to their company's problems, and any business owner that wants to make their employees as effective as possible.