

# Spark Summary

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**1-Sentence-Summary:** *Spark teaches you how to become an influential, un-fireable asset to your team at work by taking on the role of a leader regardless of your position, utilizing the power of creative thinking to make better decisions, and learning how to be more self-aware and humble.*

**Read in:** 4 minutes

**Favorite quote from the author:**



If I tell you to picture a leader, you probably envision a high-ranking person and has a high-paying salary. Great leaders are often only thought of as a rare breed who possesses a natural talent for leadership and is great at wielding power.

But the truth is, a good leader isn't defined by what job they hold. A good leader is a good leader because of the way they act. A leader doesn't need to be at the executive level; they can create a spark no matter what level they are at by their innovation and commitment that inspires others.

In the book *Spark: How to Lead Yourself and Others to Greater Success* by Angie Morgan, Courtney Lynch, and Sean Lynch, the authors give a comprehensive guide on how you can quickly become your organization's most valuable asset.

It doesn't matter if you're an administrative assistant or an executive officer— you have the power to inspire those around you and create a so-called spark within your organization that will make those around you to the next level.

These are 3 of the best lessons the book teaches:

1. Anyone can be an inspirational leader – a spark, regardless of their title.
2. Sparks make better decisions and connect with others more deeply because they think creatively.
3. If you want to be a spark, learn to admit when you're wrong, serve others, and become self-aware.

Let's dive right in!

## **Lesson 1: You can be a spark even if you don't have a leadership title.**

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Typically, leadership training is reserved for those with higher-up job titles like managers. But what would you think if an organization started offering it to every employee—salespeople, janitors, or mail clerks? Many people would say it would be a waste of company resources.

This is why most businesses only do this training for people who are promoted to managerial positions. But what they're missing is that leadership skills aren't only useful for managers because there can be leaders on any level of an organization.

These true leaders are what the authors call sparks because they create sparks that inspire others within the organization. These people take action and want to make things better. Sparks are at every level.

Angie Morgan, one of the authors, tells a story of a woman she worked with at a pharmaceutical company. She had great communication skills, knew what she was doing, and exceeded sales quotas. People loved working with her and saw her as a role model.

When Morgan complimented her on her leadership, the coworker said she was an employee. But Morgan felt that a spark like her was much more than her job title. She was the kind of spark companies need more of. **If companies want to stay competitive and innovative, they need to have employees that ignite inspiration on every level.**

## **Lesson 2: Being a spark means connecting with others more deeply and making better decisions.**

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Imagine you get in an argument with a coworker. Are you likely to sit down next to him in the break room that day? Probably not because most of us avoid awkward situations like the plague. But a spark would make the most of the situation.

A spark employs cognitive flexibility when fixing a problem. Instead of avoiding confrontations at all costs. Cognitive flexibility means altering your typical thinking patterns to find new solutions to problems. An example of cognitive flexibility would be thinking of other ways to toast your bread if your toaster breaks, such as using the oven.

The author used cognitive flexibility when she struggled with a colleague who she thought was overly sensitive and stubborn. One day, she decided to see the colleague from a different angle. She realized maybe she was communicating with the colleague too harshly when she gave feedback. So she changed the way she spoke to the colleague, and they formed a successful workplace relationship.

Another quality of a spark is that they have cognitive discipline. This means slowing down your thinking and halting instinctive reactions to have a more effective and intelligent response.

When we use this at work, our performance will improve. An example of where you can use it is when you receive criticism in the workplace. Many of us like to get indignant and defensive. But all this does is make things worse. **Spark trains themselves to respond constructively and ask for ways they can improve.**

### **Lesson 3: Becoming a spark requires that you become self-aware, serve others, and have a willingness to admit when you're wrong.**

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People love to pass the blame on to others. For example, when we get a bad grade, we blame the teacher. And it's natural. It turns out, when we see something as a threat, we divert blame as a survival mechanism.

But a spark realizes that they need to fight through this natural tendency to deflect the blame and take responsibility. When a boss says their performance has been sub-par lately, instead of blaming the company for new policies, a spark will accept they are probably at least partly responsible. **They quickly accept that there is a problem and work hard to ensure it gets fixed.**

Another quality of a spark is that they want to help others succeed too. They do best when they can focus on teamwork, and there is a strong sense of community. A spark won't wait for someone to ask for help. They are always striving to be aware of the needs of people around them.

Sparks also is aware of their shortcomings and learn from difficulties. Often in job interviews, rather than hear about why you're so qualified, interviewers like to get a gauge of how you handle obstacles. The ability to learn and rebound is an essential and invaluable leadership skill.

So become acquainted with your past and see what unique abilities you have that helped you overcome challenges. Try to remember these whenever you are presented with a new challenge.

### **Spark Review**

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What a fascinating book and idea! *Spark* has me filled with energy just thinking about all these new ideas I have to be a better leader. I hope everybody gets a chance to read this, I think it'll be a game-changer for sure!

## **Who would I recommend the Spark summary to?**

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The 36-year-old who just got into their first management position, the 18-year-old who wants to be a leader someday, and everybody who wants to level up their career whether or not they are a leader.