Bryce Hoffman
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Lissa Qualls: 00:00:08 Welcome, welcome, welcome. We are so glad that you're here with us today. So, during the session, as questions and comments arise for you, please type them in the Q and A box. The chat box is where we will deliver information to you and we'll be garnering those Q and As, so we're very excited about that. My name is Lissa Qualls and I will be your host for Bryce's session today. We also have Lynn handling logistics in the background, beautifully I might add. At WBECS by Coaching.com, our mission is to significantly raise the global standard of coaching, and we do this by offering content from world class experts in leadership and coaching in an affordable and accessible way. If you'd like to discuss the content of this session with like-minded coaches in small groups, the implementation mastery session related to today's presentation will take place 30 minutes after the end of today's session, and also on next Tuesday. You can sign up for those by clicking the link that's being dropped in the chat box right now.

00:01:13 Now, back to today's session, in order to make the most out of your learning experience, we recommend that you turn off all distractions, prepare to take notes, and allow yourself to be fully focused and engaged with Bryce. Bryce Hoffman is the president of Red Team Thinking. He teaches individuals and organizations around the world to make critical and contrarian thinking part of an organization's strategic planning process. Named one of the top 100 leadership speakers by Inc. Magazine, he's also a best selling business author. Bryce is passionate about helping others to bolster their business against disruptions through stress testing strategies, identifying missed opportunities, and much more. Now, for a fun fact, Bryce is a recovering journalist, and with that, I will hand it over to Bryce.

Bryce Hoffman: 00:02:10 Thank you so much, Lissa, and thank you all for joining us today. As Lissa said, I'm going to skip who I am because you already know now, but I want to talk to you today about three things. First of all, what Red Team Thinking is. Second, where it comes from and the science and psychology behind it. And then finally, and really most importantly, how you as coaches can start using a little bit of Red Team Thinking right away with your clients to help them be more successful because as we all know, if you make your clients more successful, you'll be more successful too. So,

we've got a lot to cover. Without further ado, lets plough into this starting with what the heck is Red Team Thinking?

00:03:05 Well, Red Team Thinking is a cognitive capability that is designed to engage critical thinking, expose unseen threats as well as missed opportunities. And that's an important thing because there are a lot of methodologies out there, like Six Sigma for instance, which do a great job of helping identify opportunities for improvement or problems, but don't do much on the innovation side. Whereas, things like design thinking do a great job of helping people think differently and identify new opportunities, but don't do anything to help deal with problems or threats that you're existing... facing already. What it's also designed to do, and this is really important today, is enable distributed decision making, helping leaders drive decision making as close to the coalface as possible, which is so critical in today's world. And to, as part of that, encourage diversity of thought, which is so critical to ensure that everybody's voice is heard so that the best idea can win regardless of where it comes from inside the organization.

00:04:26 Red Team Thinking is both a mindset and a set of tools. And that's an important distinction because the tools themselves are designed to help you do things like navigate complexity, think more strategically, develop new ideas and perspectives, create plans with optionality in them that are more adaptive and resilient, and to make better decisions faster. But the mindset, developing a Red Team Thinking mindset is about looking at the world differently. It's kind of like if you think about the Matrix and the whole, swallowing the red pill and seeing what's really out there, what the world really is like, taking a hard unflinching look at the challenges and opportunities, as I said, that you're dealing with as an individual, as an organization, or that your clients are dealing with as a coach, is really a powerful game-changing lens that can help both you and your clients make decisions more rapidly than people who aren't, to build in options into plans so that they can withstand what the future throws at it. And that's so essential in today's world as we're going to talk about.

00:05:44 By doing these things, we're aiming at developing what we call the three Cs, which we think are the essential ingredients for any organization to be able to navigate this complex world that we live in today. The first of those is clarity. And if you think about it, a lack of alignment, a lack of a common vision, a lack of a common understanding about who we are as an organization, where we're going, and how we want to get there is really why we see so many business transformations fail. It's why we see so many problems in the workplace, so many disconnects between bosses and subordinates, between senior leadership and frontline managers, between the top of the house and the factory floor. So, having clarity, having that crystal clear vision of this is who we are, this is why we're doing what we're doing, and here's how we're doing it, and communicating that effectively to the entire team is critical, but that clarity isn't really worth a lot if you then don't have the capability to execute the plan that you're working towards together.

00:06:54 So, it's great that you've all are now rowing in the right direction, but if you haven't developed the necessary skills, to use the rowing example, if you don't have the necessary muscles to keep rowing, then you're not going to get there still. So, it's about developing the capability to get to that desired end state. But if you have both of those things, if you have clarity and you have capability without even trying, you will start to develop a culture that is innovative, that is flexible, that is adaptive, and that those things will make a resilient culture, which is I think what every organization and every leader is trying to cultivate today.

00:07:39 So, where does this whole thing come from? Well, it actually starts, believe it or not, with this gentleman up in the top left corner here, who for those who don't recognise is Socrates. The reason I start with Socrates is because Socrates was really, at least in the western intellectual tradition, the beginning of applied critical thinking. So, those who don't know their philosophy history, Socrates didn't espouse a theory, he didn't write a book, he didn't give speeches and tell people, "Here's how you should think." He asked questions and he never stopped asking questions, and the most common question he asked was why. So, when someone would come to him and say, "Hey, we should have a political system that works like this here in Athens." He'd say, "Why?" And they'd make their argument and he'd keep probing that to get down and drill down and force them to challenge their assumptions.

00:08:36 And that is really such a powerful approach. In fact, we call that approach today, that approach of the learning and getting at the truth through asking questions the Socratic method. And there's a great story that really illustrates why I elect Socrates as the first Red Team thinker. A group of Athenians went to see the Oracle of Delphi because Athens was dealing with a great threat from Persia, and they went to the Oracle of Delphi to find out what they should do about it. They made their sacrifices and they met with the Oracle and they said, "Oh, Great Oracle, we have this huge problem. Tell us what we should do about it." And she said, "You should go talk to Socrates because he is the smartest of all the Greeks." And they said, "Oh, well. Gosh! We could have saved ourselves a trip to Delphi."

00:09:29 They went back to Athens, went over to Socrates's house, knocked on the door and said, "Hey, Socrates, we went to see the Oracle of Delphi and she said that you are the smartest of all the Greeks." And he nodded, and he said, "Yes, it's true. I am smarter than all of you." And they said, "Oh." And he said, "I am the smartest of all the Greeks because I alone, among all the Greeks, know that I know nothing." Think about that for a second. In other words, he was putting himself in a position where he was not starting with any assumptions. He was just bringing questions, and those questions led to powerful understandings.

00:10:15 Now, jumping to the right here, we come to this gentleman, Pope Sixtus V, probably the best named pope in history. Not to be confused with Pope Fiftus VI. So, Pope Sixtus V had an interesting problem. He was the pope at the beginning of the Renaissance around 1500, and he had too

many saints and there were new saints being created every month. And just managing the whole calendar of feast days for the church had become an impossible task. So, Pope Sixtus V said, "Here in Italy right now, everyone's talking about this new thing, rational thinking. Maybe we should apply a little bit of this rational thinking to the process of appointing saints, anointing saints," as the case may be.

00:11:04 And so, Pope Sixtus V created an office in the Vatican that still exist to this day, most people don't realize this is a real thing called the Office of the Advocatus Diaboli, the Office of the Devil's Advocate. And the job of this office was to take every candidate who was put forward for sainthood and argue as strongly as possible that their supposed miracles had rational scientific explanations that their supposed good deeds were really just blatant self-interest motivated by a desire for fame or political advancement or what have you. And an amazing thing happened once the devil's advocate got to work. The number of new saints being created every year dropped by over 95%. And it has stayed at that historic pope because as I said, the Devil's Advocate still exist.

00:12:02 So, for example, when Mother Teresa was put forward as a candidate for sainthood a few years ago, the Office of the Devil's Advocate called the famous British atheist, Christopher Hitchens, to testify against her. And he did his best to argue that she was a horrible person. He said that by feeding the poor of India, she had prevented the Indian government from developing the necessary social programmes to take care of its own people, and that she wasn't a saint at all. Now, he failed to convince them, and as a result, she became a saint. So, he later complained that A, they hadn't taken his argument seriously enough, and B, they hadn't paid him so he'd been forced to represent the devil pro bono. But this is really the first example that I've been able to find in my many years of research on this, of an organization coming up with a deliberate methodology for challenging its own thinking, but it certainly wasn't the last.

00:12:56 Jumping forward here again to the right, we come to the Prussians in the 1790s. They had a very different problem. The Prussians had just been defeated by Napoleon, and Prussia had become a vasal state of France. And if you were a Prussian general, there was no greater humiliation that you could conceive of than having been bested on the battlefield by a French corporal. So, the Prussians decided that they were going to figure out how to defeat Napoleon, but they were smart enough, they were self-aware enough to recognise that this was not going to be an easy task, after all, they'd already failed once.

00:13:32 So, what they decided to do was to come up with their best plan, their best strategy to fight Napoleon. And then, and this is an amazing thing, to divide their best officers into two groups and have one group play the Prussians and the other group play the evil French in a tabletop exercise trying out how the battle would unfold in a tabletop exercise before they executed it on the battlefield. And by doing this, they had an opportunity to work out any bugs in the plan to find any weaknesses in their strategies to strengthen their plan before they executed it. Now, I don't

know how many of you had Crayola crayons as children. I know that I did, and I know that my favorite color of Crayola crayon was Prussian blue. And Prussian blue got that name because back in the day, those Prussian officers wore these spiffy blue uniforms.

00:14:37 So, when they set up this tabletop exercise, they were the blue team. And since they were fighting these evil revolutionary Frenchmen, in their mind, they made the opposing force, the red team. And that's where the term red team and red teaming and Red Team Thinking all come from is this idea that the Prussians came up with of deliberately challenging your own plans, deliberately challenging your own strategies, deliberately challenging your own assumptions. And they certainly weren't the last, their method, which they called Kriegsspiel or wargaming, spread all over the world. It's still used to this day by every military force in the world practically. And it's really where this concept of having this intentional check of your strategies and plans comes from.

00:15:33 The last couple steps on our journey I want to talk about happened after 9/11 in the United States. Now, there's two things that happen as a result of 9/11 that relate to the origins of Red Team Thinking. The first is that on September 12th at about 12:04 in the morning, while they were still pulling people from the wreckage of the World Trade Centre and the Pentagon, the Director of the CIA, George Tenet, had a meeting of his staff and said, "Look, we should have seen this coming. We had so much intelligence that showed us that we were about to be attacked and we couldn't connect the dots until they were connected for us, unfortunately, by the terrorists." And he said, "It's very clear that we fail to challenge our own thinking, our own assumptions."

00:16:23 So, he stood up a group in the CIA that still exists called the Red Cell. And the job of the Red Cell was to take whatever the prevailing thinking of the CIA was, and use structured analytical tools and techniques to challenge that thinking, to try to argue that the opposite was true, to try to poke holes in those ideas, not because they were necessarily wrong, but because by doing that, they could make the agency's assumptions stronger, they could avoid blind spots, they could help each other see what they were missing. And obviously the work in the Red Cell is deeply classified. But one thing we can say, because the CIA says it on their website, you can go and see for yourself, is that the Red Cell has been directly responsible for preventing at least half a dozen major terrorist attacks against the United States since 9/11, that would've been bigger than the attacks on 9/11. And many of the tools and techniques that are part of the Red Team Thinking methodology were pioneered by the Red Cell. And we've taken them, we've adapted them, we've modified them to work in business in other context, the other thing that happened as a result of the September 11th terrorist attacks was the US invaded Iraq. And initially, from the perspective of the US military, the invasion went very well. Saddam Hussein was defeated. Not a political statement here, just saying that from the perspective of the US military, they considered it a success until about 12 months after the liberation or fall of Baghdad,

depending on your perspective, the wheels came off and the US found itself mired in an endless insurgency.

00:18:10 So, the president at the time replaced the head of the Army with a new Army Chief-of-Staff, and he charged him with trying to figure out how to extract the US from the morass that it found itself in. General Peter Schoomaker, who was the general who was put in charge, said, "I will do that. I will do my best" Can't make any promises here because we're pretty far down this road. He said, "But I will only do this if I also have permission to take steps to try to avoid similar mistakes in the future."

00:18:45 And so, he created a lessons learned team at the Pentagon to figure out what went wrong and how to fix it. And one of the key recommendations of that was to do something similar to what the CIA was doing and to create a training programme for senior military officers to teach them how to challenge their own assumptions, to challenge the organization's thinking, to make sure that other voices were listened to in the planning process, like say the Iraqi peoples. And to make sure that this type of colossal miscalculations didn't happen again. And to facilitate that, the Army stood up what it called the University of Foreign Military and Cultural Studies at the command in General Staff College at beautiful Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. That was really just a codename to confuse America's adversaries about its real purpose. It was known informally as Red Team University. And I spent the first half of 2015 going through the Red Team Leader course there, becoming the only civilian for to go through that course to graduate from that course from outside of government.

00:19:52 And that training I received there, plus working with others who were using this red teaming methodology around the world, formed the basis for Red Team Thinking. In 2017, I published my second book, Red Teaming: Teaching Businesses How to Use This Methodology and have continued to evolve it since then because this approach, this contrarian approach had been seen as game changing, not just by the US but by the British, the Canadians, the Australians, New Zealand, NATO. Every country that was exposed to this immediately adopted this approach because they saw how valuable and effective it was.

00:20:31 So that's great, but what does that have to do with business, which is where most of us work. Well, just as the military and intelligence community was dealing with some really unprecedented challenges after 9/11, so to are we all today living in what a lot of people refer to as a VUCA world? VUCA stands for volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity. A lot of academics add an H to it now for hyperconnectivity, because social media and the internet has made everything so interconnected that a change in one part of the world rapidly impacts organizations and individuals on the other side of the world in real time. And a lot of the traditional planning and decision making tools that we learned are not well-suited for this world.

00:21:23 And so we need new approaches, new tools to help us navigate this VUCA world. So, I'm going to ask you a question all, and if you haven't used Menti before, it's real simple. It's an online voting system. You can use your phone to scan this QR code on the screen. You can go to this link and type in this code in red, or you can go into the chat. You'll see a link that you can click on, and I'm going to ask you one question. It's going to be a word cloud thing. You can type in whatever you say. What skill do you think is the most essential skill for navigating this complex, interconnected world that I just described? Let's go have a look at that right now.

00:22:24 All right. 44 people have already voted, 47, 49, 50. Give everyone a minute to get your answers in.

00:22:55 All right. Let me put up the results here and see what we've come up with. Wow. Some great one-

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Bryce Hoffman: 00:23:00 Come up with, wow, some great ones here. Resilience, communications, adaptability, and I'm happy to see it down there, critical thinking. Great stuff. So we're going to do another vote in a bit here, but that's the one for now. Thank you all for putting your votes in. So if you look at this survey that was done by the World Economic Forum just under two years ago, they asked CEOs all over the world, what are the most important skill sets that you are looking for that you need to navigate the next 10 years? And look at what the number one of one was, critical thinking and analysis, which many of you selected. Problem solving, which many of you selected. And those are, it's not just CEOs who are saying that. It's HR directors saying that it's even McKinzie saying that. That there is this demand for applied critical thinking that is really the top of mind for what's needed in the world today.

00:24:32 But here's the thing, folks. If you look at surveys that have also been done of hiring managers and HR professionals, those problem solving and critical thinking skills are the hardest skills to find in the marketplace today. That's why we need this cognitive approach to help our clients, to help ourselves be successful, help the organizations we serve to be successful in this world. Because in the world today, it is critical thinkers that have become the new superheros. And you can see that reflected in the survey results there that I just shared. So think about this as a coach. If you can help your clients develop these missing skills, that will make them more successful, and of course that will make you more successful as well. So that's why I think this is so important.

00:25:27 There's another reason I think this is very important though too, and that is because most businesses die from self-inflicted wounds. They don't die because of a new competitor or a new technology or a world event. You may look at this list and say, "Well, that's not fair." Let's take Kodak. Kodak didn't die from a self-inflicted wound, right? Kodak was put out of business by digital photography. They made film cameras and film and

photographic chemicals and paper and new technology came and put Kodak out of business, right? Here's the problem with that narrative.

00:26:05 Kodak invented the digital camera. Most people don't know that. Kodak invented digital cameras, invented the digital photography, filed the first patent for digital photography. And yet in the mid 1980s, as the possibility of making digital photography a ubiquitous thing began to be realized, Kodak had a conversation with itself. And that conversation, which we know from its bankruptcy filings went something like this. "Yeah, we have this new thing called digital photography. The world's turning digital. Everyone's getting a computer on their desk, but what are we? At the end of the day, are we a photography company or are we a chemical company?"And the folks who are running Kodak then said, "Well, we're a chemical company. Since we're a chemical company, let's not get distracted by this shiny new thing of digital photography. Let's focus on what we know. Let's stick to producing chemicals and photographic paper and photographic film." And then they went out of business.

00:27:13 Now, here's the great thing. This is almost like a controlled scientific experiment because at the exact same time on the other side of the Pacific, Fuji Film had the exact same conversation with itself. Now, Fuji didn't have Kodak's advantage. Fuji had not invented digital photography, and in fact didn't have any IP around digital photography. But they could see too that the world was changing. Everything was going digital. So as a result, Fuji had a conversation that started very much like Kodak's conversation. They said, "What are we? Are we a photography company or are we a chemical company?" They came to the same conclusion that Kodak did. They said, "At the end of the day, we're actually a chemical company." Their reaction to that answer was completely different though. They said, "Great, that means we can do all sorts of things that have nothing to do with photography."

00:28:08 So they made a decision to run their photography business into the ground. And by that I meant they continued to produce film and photographic paper and photographic chemicals. But they took all of the profits from that business, and they used it to create a division to provide chemicals to the pharmaceutical industry. They used it to create a division to provide chemicals to the cosmetic industry. They used it to create films for use in the automotive industry and other industries, protective films. And so they took their expertise and managed to evolve beyond photography. They also used their money to buy companies that had already figured out digital imaging. So they bought Xerox. They bought a 51% stake in Xerox. They bought Hitachi's medical imaging division. And FujiFilm has been year after year profitable since the mid 1980s, growing consistently, a very successful company, whereas Kodak went bankrupt. So who put Kodak out of business? Not digital photography, but Kodak's own failure to challenge its own thinking and challenged its own assumptions.

00:29:16 And I don't want to say that the folks who were running Kodak are stupid because they weren't. What they were proof of this statement that I'm going to share with you here, which is that Adam Smith was wrong. Now, what I mean by that is this: for the last three centuries, at least, ever since Adam Smith wrote The Wealth of Nations, people have believed, and by people I mean psychologists, economists, people who study how human beings make decisions, have believed that human beings make fundamentally rational decisions. In fact, Adam Smith's theory was called the Rational Choice theory. And the only times when we don't make fundamentally rational decisions is when one of two things happens. Either we're swayed by strong emotions like love or anger, or an unhealthy obsession with NFTs or something like that. Or more likely because we don't have the information to make the right decision, we lack information. And therefore, the solution for the better part of 250 years has been get more information and you'll make better decisions.

00:30:28 Unfortunately, in the past 40 years, a number of leading cognitive scientists like Dr. Daniel Kahneman, who won the Nobel Prize for his work in this area, have proven in literally thousands of experiments that that is completely wrong. That that's how we wish we made decisions. That in fact, our brains are little better than a machine for jumping to conclusions. And Dr. Kahneman and others have identified two fundamental ways that we think. System one thinking, which is unconscious and automatic. So if somebody kindles a fire in front of you, you don't have to think about whether it'd be a good idea to stick your hand in it or not. You just automatically and intuitively know that fire is hot, that ice is cold, that the person with gray hair and brown eyes who's about five foot two, is your mother. You don't have to look at every person you pass on the street and say, "Is that my mother? Is that my mother? Is that my mother?" No, it's automatic and intuitive. That's system one thinking.

00:31:28 System two thinking is what Adam Smith was talking about. It's deliberate and effortful. System two thinking requires us to stop and think. It's a little bit hard. And that's where the problem comes in. Because as Kahneman says, one of the main characteristics of our brains is that they're lazy. And so when we think often that we're using system two thinking, we're really using system one thinking. Or as the famous philosopher John Dewey said a hundred years ago, "Many people think that they are thinking when all that they are really doing is rearranging their prejudices."

00:32:09 So let me give you a simple illustration of that. I'm going to ask you to go to Mentee again. Just bear with me one sec because I forgot to stop sharing the last Mentee slide, and I've got to make sure that we have the new one queued up. Here. So let us present that. Excellent. Simple math problem here. Don't work this out on paper. Just do it in your head. You'll see the problem stated right there on the screen. This is the, oh, I haven't put it up yet, sorry. This is a problem developed by Daniel Kahneman. A bat and a ball cost a $1,10. The bat cost $1 more than the ball. How much does the ball cost? Just go and type your answer into Mentee. How much

does the ball cost? See how we're doing over here. Share my screen. Okay, 30 of you have answered it. See how many more? 31, 32. Don't overthink it. Just how much does the ball cost? Remember, this is completely anonymous. So if you're wrong, nobody knows.

00:34:14 All right, let's take a look at what people have come up with. The number one answer by far that most of you came up with is 10 cents. Almost all of you came up with 10 cents. And that's not surprising because almost everybody comes up with 10 cents. Unfortunately, it's wrong as I will show you in a second here, it's 5 cents and there's the math for you. Now, before you start feeling too bad about that, as Kahneman says, over half the students at Harvard, MIT and Princeton put down 10 cents when they are asked this question at his classes. And as he rather elitist puts it, students at less selective universities, over 80% put down 10 cents. It's just a simple example though, that shows us how he's right, how our brains really are machines for jumping to conclusions. And as I said, it doesn't mean we're stupid, it's just the way we're wired.

00:35:32 Because what Kahneman and other scientists like him have proven is that all of us, no matter how smart we are, no matter how well educated we are, no matter how successful we are, we all fall victim to a dizzying array of cognitive biases and heuristics, which is really just a simple, fancy, scientific word for mental shortcuts that skew our thinking in ways that we're not aware of. I'm not going to go through this whole list, though I really encourage you to look into this because it's something that will really help you with your clients, but I just want to go over a couple of them.

00:36:08 Let's talk with one. Normalcy bias is one that organizations have been dealing with a lot over the past couple of years. The headline on this newspaper here is from January 3rd, 2021, over a year and a half ago. This is the year we will defeat COVID. It's scientifically provable that whenever you're dealing with a crisis that most people, and they quantify this, that brought, 70% of people, will be unable to imagine just how bad things are likely to get because of normalcy bias, because of the way that our brains are often wired is to prevent us from seeing just how bad things could get. Because otherwise, a lot of people will become paralysed by fear.

00:36:56 But the problem with normalcy bias is that it makes it hard for us to take as aggressive measures as we need to take to deal with crises, to deal with problems. Here's another example. Optimism bias, which refers to our tendency to overestimate our abilities, underestimate our shortcomings, and importantly, exaggerate our ability to predict the future. So here's a fun fact. Most small businesses, most people who start small businesses in the United States, over 60% say that they have a, I say most small business founders in America put their odds of success at 60%, and a third of them put their odds of success at a hundred percent, and yet only 35% of small businesses in America, even last five years. So you could say, well, that's ridiculous. But here's the thing. Kahneman calls

optimism bias the engine of capitalism. He says, "If we didn't have this bias, we'd all still be living in caves and banging rocks together."

00:38:12 Because what leads people to innovate? What leads people to take risks, what leads people to try to fly an aeroplane after the last 12 people who tried to jump off a cliff with a wing crashed and were killed or horribly injured is optimism bias. The belief that you're going to get it right where everyone else fails. And in most cases, you're not. But those of you who do are going to change the world. And so there's a good reason we have these biases is what I want you to understand. The problem comes in when we don't check them, when we are not aware of them, and we don't think about the ways they may be influencing our decisions. By thinking about these and by making your clients aware of the cognitive biases that may be influencing the decision making that they're engaged in, you can help them make better decisions and that can make you a much more valuable ally to them.

00:39:08 Now, when you get people together in groups, all of this gets magnified because you get everybody's cognitive biases firing at the same time. But you also get other things like groupthink, like satisficing, like bureaucracy, and of course, internal politics and careerism all negatively impact the way organizations make decisions. So what Red Team Thinking is is a methodology that's designed to help overcome all of these things, to counter unconscious biases, to engage system two thinking, to help us actually think, to surface alternative perspectives. Because there's a great Japanese proverb that says, "None of us is as smart as all of us." So by getting additional perspectives out, we overcome the blind spots of the individual. And it also allows everybody's voice to be heard, to challenge our own assumptions. And all of this is enlisted in an effort to make better decisions faster in today's complex world.

00:40:19 So how does it work? Well, the tools and techniques behind Red Team Thinking are more involved than we could explain in a 90 minute session. When we train people in these tools and techniques, we usually spend about three hours minimum explaining each tool and learning how to use each tool. But I just want to give you an overview of what some of them are, and then we will talk about some things that you can do to apply some of this Red Team Thinking right away. I'm not going to go over these in detail, but this will just give you an idea of what I mean by tools and techniques.

00:40:52 So we have a group of tools that we call analytical techniques, which are designed to break plans and strategies down into their underlying assumptions, and to challenge those assumptions in a deliberate way, and to look at the different ways that the future could unfold. Imaginative techniques, which are designed to look at how plans could fail so that we make sure that they succeed and how different stakeholders view the situation that we're dealing with so that we make sure that we're not just looking through our narrow lens, but looking through a broader lens so that we can either enlist stakeholders and make them allies in achieving

our goals and objectives or blunt their opposition if we can't do that. And also to understand the different ways the future could play out.

00:41:37 And finally, an array of contrarian techniques that are designed to stress test strategies and plans to surface alternative perspectives and to avoid doing self-defeating things like Kodak did. I'm going to explain now how we can start using this, but before I do, I want to just open it up for a few questions about what Red Team Thinking is and where it comes from. Lissa?

Lissa Qualls: 00:42:02 All right, very good, thank you. So Diane is asking how do we encourage and empower leaders to allow and engage in asking questions as well as allowing their teams to consistently ask questions without leaders fearing they will lose their power and authority?

Bryce Hoffman: 00:42:19 Oh, such a great question here. Thank you so much. You've hit the nail on the head right there. It's fear that keeps leaders from doing this. The fear that it makes them look weak. Yet what we find and what we adamantly believe is that it's a sign of a strong leader that can go to their team and ask them, What do you see as our major problems? What do you see that we should do about it? Because I will tell you, as Lisa said in the introduction, I'm a recovering journalist. I was a business journalist for over 20 years before I started doing what I do now. And I have never been in a company and I have been in hundreds of different companies around the world. I have never been in a company or any organization where the answers that were needed, the answers to the problems that they were dealing with did not reside in that organization.

00:43:14 That there weren't people in that organization who knew exactly what the problems were and how to solve them. And my mentor is Alan Mulally, the former CEO of Ford Motor Company, former president of Boeing. My first book was American Icon, Alan Mulally in the Fight to Save Ford Motor Company. And one of the things that I learned from Alan is that the job of the leader is not to come in with all the answers. The job of the leader is to find the people in the organization who have the answers and to be like an icebreaker that clears a path for them.

00:43:46 Now, to your point of your question, you can't do that if people don't have the psychological safety necessary to speak up and to share those answers. So a lot of our approach is to do things that are kind of like training wheels on a bicycle. And the way that we do that, Diane, primarily, is through anonymity. A lot of our tools and techniques involve anonymous feedback or writing things anonymously in ways that can't be identified with the person who came up with the idea. Because that allows you to artificially create psychological safety.

00:44:24 But here's the thing: once people start doing that, once people start, and I'll tell you a simple way to do that right now. We have some very elaborate ways to do it, but there's a very simple way. You pose a question as a leader or you could advise your clients to do this. Say, here's a problem we're dealing with. I'd like to know what you all think is the

best way to proceed with this. I'm going to give each of you an index card and a blue ballpoint pen and in block letters so no one can identify anyone else's handwriting, write your answer on that card. Then the leader collects that, shuffles them, and passes them back out to each person. Maybe someone gets the card that they wrote, maybe they get their neighbor's card, doesn't matter. Nobody knows whose card is whose anymore. And then each person reads the card that they have. Right there, you've made it possible for people to start sharing things that they might not otherwise have shared. You've made it possible to start surfacing ideas that need to be heard. So that's how you do it. And what we find yet again, is that when you start doing these things, you can take the training wheels off at a certain point because people start to see the value of openness and honesty. Leaders start to see, wow, this is amazing. This makes me so much more successful as a leader. And people see that the leader is valuing their open and honest feedback. Then they start to ask, they start to be open about sharing that. So great question. That's how you do it.

Lissa Qualls: 00:46:01 Excellent. So Margaret has a question that's basically this-

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Lissa Qualls: 00:46:01 Excellent. So Margaret has a question that's basically just one step back, and that question is, what is the biggest lever to convince a leader to invest the time and resources to engage in Red Team Thinking and how do they recognise the individuals who unexpectedly produce the answers?

Bryce Hoffman: 00:46:20 Another great question. So the second part of it is very much I think, related to what we just talked about, but the first part is, boy, that is a tough question because everyone is super double busy right now, right? At least that's what they tell themselves. But what most organizations are dealing with in this VUCA world that I described is an unprecedented level of uncertainty and ambiguity. And so a lot of leaders feel themselves kind of standing on a shifting iceberg, shifting a piece of ice, and they're afraid to move to the left or the right because they might topple into the ocean. And so their default action is to hire one of the big four consulting companies and tell them what to do.

00:47:06 We believe don't outsource thinking, think for yourself, because as I said, you have people on your team who know better than any of those folks what needs to be done and how to do it.

00:47:18 So I think in some cases what we see, a lot of the people who come to us as leaders, they're coming to us because they understand that they don't know the way ahead. They understand that they are facing this tremendous disruption in their industry and their organization and they're looking for new ways to try to find that, but they don't want to just give that to someone else. They want to actually lead. And so that's why that's the case I would make to folks that you're working with is instead of outsourcing your job as a leader, embrace your job as a leader.

Get your folks the skills and the support that they need to think and to act on what they think and then that will make you a much more successful and powerful leader.

Lissa Qualls: 00:48:08 Thank you. So the next question shows that you are in a room full of coaches. Terry is asking, and with the example the leader said, Here is a problem, could it be open more to say what is going well or what could be improved?

Bryce Hoffman: 00:48:23 Absolutely, Terry. Absolutely. It's one of my favorite questions, what's working and what's not. There's simple ways you could do this. I mean, one of the simplest ways you could do it too that I practice this all the time myself as a leader, is looking at what we're doing and asking my team, if we were starting over from scratch, would we still do this? Yes or no? We're starting over from scratch, will we still do this? If we had a clean slate, will we still do this? It's amazing how many times the answer is no. And then if the answer is no, then the solution is simple. Stop doing it. A lot of times we keep doing things that we know aren't working. So another one of the biases that I didn't talk about is sunk cost bias. And it's one that is one of the worst biases for business. Everywhere I've ever been in every country.

00:49:15 And sunk cost bias refers to the fact that we have a real hard time letting go of things that we've already invested time and energy and especially money in. So you're a company, you open a new footwear factory in South America, you find out that the demand for your product isn't there, that there's logistical problems that you didn't account for. There's labor issues in the country you're dealing with. The factory is losing money quarter after quarter. What do you do? In most cases, you invest another hundred million dollars in that factory when the right answer is just stop. It's not working. Now I'm not saying that you just give up when you encounter resistance. That's not what I'm advocating at all. But I'm saying you need to ask yourself, now that we've seen this, is this still the right thing to do? If the answer is yes, then maybe you do need to invest more in it. But if the answer is no, we need to cut our losses. But that's the hardest thing for people to do is cut their losses.

Lissa Qualls: 00:50:17 Thank you. So you had mentioned something a moment ago even about bias, and Diana is asking, what about listening without bias, critical thinking, without listening to cues, without bias undermines critical thinking?

Bryce Hoffman: 00:50:30 Absolutely. So one of the things, again, why I like anonymity is because if you have people share their ideas anonymously, then you are able to judge those ideas independent of the person that's giving those ideas. I'll tell you a great story, Deanna. The very first time that the army held a for real red teaming exercise, after they stood up the school and started training people to do this, their very first time that they held an actual exercise, the Pentagon decided to review the United States Military strategy, National Military Strategy, which is the overarching military plan for the United States. And the Red Team School said," Got to do this

differently than you've done it in the past. We're going to bring in one person from every officer rank there is." So they brought in a three star general, a two star general, one star general, a colonel lieutenant, colonel, major, captain, lieutenant, second lieutenant.

00:51:32 For those who don't know, a second lieutenant's 24, 25 year old, maybe at most maybe 23. Three star general's probably in their sixties, different ranks, different levels of experience. All the tools that they used for this analysis were anonymous and the whole process was conducted anonymously. It was a huge success. They came up with three major recommendations on how to alter the US military strategy. They presented it to the joint chiefs of staff. The joint chiefs of staff said this is the most impressive review that has ever been done that any of us can remember. They immediately authorized the changes.

00:52:10 They started their work on a Monday, they ended on a Friday. After their out brief on that Friday, the three star general in the group said, "All right, all right." Everyone was done congratulating each other. He said, "I know that we've done all this stuff anonymously all week and I understand why and I don't want to expose anyone, but I'll tell y'all right now, none of you went with any of my ideas. But I would like to know before we all go our separate ways, who were the three people that first surfaced the issues that ended up being the ones that we recommended, came up with our recommendations about?"

00:52:49 There's quiet in the room and then very sheepishly this 20 something second lieutenant raised his hand and the general said, "Son, which of these ideas did you come up with?" He said, "All three sir." And the general leaned back and crossed his arms and said, "Well son, I'm not going to lie to you. When I met you on Monday, if it was 11:59 and my stomach was growling and you told me it was time for lunch, I would've told you you didn't know what the hell you were talking about." And that's the point is by doing these things anonymously by creating that disconnect between the idea and the person who services that idea, you allow people to judge ideas based on their merits and ensure that the best idea wins regardless of who has it. But you see, it doesn't just about the best idea winning that general learns something important there. He learned to value his junior officers that maybe they had more to add than he recognised.

00:53:57 We just did a programme with the British government a few months ago, and in that programme, after that programme, we were contacted by a couple of young women of color who had been appointed to this cabinet office as part of a "diversity initiative". And the reason I say that in air quotes is because what they said to us is we were brought in to create diversity in this leadership team, but all we've done since we were brought in has been made to sit in the corner of the room and keep our mouth shut. So yes, some box may have been checked somewhere, but there's been no diversity added to the equation except for today. They said, "Today was the first time that our ideas got considered and acted upon because of the way we approached it and allowed everyone to

share their ideas and allowed everyone to consider their ideas." And that was, again, a big learning because when those ideas forward, one of those women said, "That was my idea and this is why I felt strongly about it." The head of that cabinet office was like, "Wow, I had no idea you were so talented." "Well, why'd you hire me then?" She said, And that's the point. So you're absolutely right. That's how we help overcome these biases and it's so important.

00:55:15 One more question.

Lissa Qualls: 00:55:16 Beautiful. As we had time for one more. So Marie Claude is asking, how about intuition?

Bryce Hoffman: 00:55:23 Well, that's a very good question, Marie Claude. And one of the folks that we've worked with a lot to develop Red Team Thinking that you may be familiar with is Dr. Gary Klein, who is the father of naturalistic decision making and a big believer in the power of intuition. And he's a famous friend of me of Daniel Kahneman's in the sense that he believes that there's more value in system one thinking than Kahneman does. But they both agree with each other's approach, generally speaking. And they both are big believers that cognitive biases are the most important threat to good decision making. Even your intuition needs to be checked against bias, against cognitive bias.

00:56:10 So if you look at Malcolm Gladwell's book Blank, almost all of it was taken from Kahneman's, I mean, no, from Klein's work. And so Klein says value intuition, but check it. And that goes back to something, like I said, I used to be a journalist and one of the first things I learned as a journalist, in fact, my very first editor had a sign that he put over my desk when I was just a 20 something journalist and said, "Make sure you read this every day." It was an old famous quote from a famous newspaper editor of the early 1900s that said, If your momma tells you she loves you, check it. And that's the point is check everything. So test your assumptions, it doesn't mean disregard it because it's intuition, but check it.

00:56:55 These are great questions, but I also want to get into how you can start doing some of this. So some practical advice here. I want to teach you three ways that you can start using Red Team Thinking today. And then I'm going to have one of my colleagues come up and we'll model a short coaching session using these three approaches.

00:57:17 Now, these are simplified ways of doing this. Like I said, the tools and techniques that we teach, unfortunately, we don't have time to teach those here, but they'll at least give you some things that you can start with and you'll see how effective just doing these simple things can be. The first is real simple as I said. Challenge your assumptions. Now, what do I mean by that? When you're working with a coaching client, help them develop a list of the stated and unstated assumptions that underlie their planner strategy. There's nothing wrong with assumptions. We have to make assumptions every time we make a decision, but the problem comes in from not examining our assumptions. So go through and say,

Right, what are the assumptions here? And you can go through with a highlighter if it's a written document and help them highlight that, those assumptions, but also look for the unstated assumptions, reading between the lines, so to speak.

00:58:15 Once you've developed that list, ask them how certain they are that these assumptions will prove true. That's amazing. Just asking that question sometimes will lead people to say, well, actually, yeah, there's not much chance that's going to happen. Because oftentimes what we mean by assumptions is really just wishful thinking. But then don't stop there. Also ask them what could they do? How could they modify the plan? What additional steps could they take to increase the likelihood that a weak assumption will prove true? And if you can't do that, because you can't always do that, at least help them then develop some contingencies that they can have in their back pocket if that assumption fails to prove true. So they're not surprised, they're not sandbagged, they have a plan that's got optionality built into it. Very powerful just to do this simple thing.

00:59:14 Number two, contemplate failure. Now, I mentioned Dr. Gary Klein and he, he's the father of a tool that we use called pre-mortem analysis. In fact, we've worked with him to develop a more advanced version of it. And the reason he developed pre-mortem analysis he'll tell you is because he realized in his decades of research that people, once they come up with a plan, once they come up with an idea, they almost never ask themselves, if this fails, what does that failure look like? And when I say fail, I don't mean we fell short of our goals or we missed our sales targets by 3%. I mean, catastrophic failure. Because if you do that, you can work backwards from there and identify the things that led to that catastrophic failure. And then you can modify your plan, modify your strategy to reduce the likelihood that those things happen. You can also make a list of them so that if you see them occurring, you know to apply the brakes and think, do we want to continue down this path? Because when I thought this through before, it was one of the things that led to catastrophic failure.

01:00:36 So just spending some time upfront thinking about how a plan can fail, can go a long way to preventing that failure from ever occurring. And finally, and this is so important, is consider the alternatives. This is the whole devil's advocacy approach that I talked about. When you come up with a plan, don't just satisficy it. I used the term satisficing before and I realize that many people may not know what that means. This is a term that cognitive scientists use to describe how most organizations make decisions. Satisficing means working on a problem until you come up with the first workable solution and then executing that solution without spending another second thinking about whether that's really the best solution or if there isn't a better way. And this goes back to the question that we just had about how do you convince people to do this when they're so busy? People will say, "I'm too busy to spend even five more minutes on that."

	01:01:38	And yet if you do that, you miss the opportunity to see if there's a way to strengthen that plan. If you come up with just one more idea, and I don't mean a straw man, I don't mean like a purposely bad plan so you can tick the box and say, I did this. Really try to just spend a few minutes saying, "What's something else that we could do that would solve the same problem in a different way?" And then weigh those two and ask yourself, "Which of these is really the best?" And then look at those two together and say, "Is there a third way? Is there a third option that could combine the best ideas of both of these things?" And that's often the most powerful option.
	01:02:26	So these are just three simple things that you can do to start applying a little Red Team Thinking with your clients to help them think differently, to challenge their assumptions, to contemplate failure and to better navigate their complex world. Because when you do that, you'll be that superhero that they need. So I'm going to ask my colleague Tim Durkin, who is himself an experienced coach to join me and like to model for you a little bit. Hello Tim.
Tim Durkin:	01:02:59	Hello Bryce. Good to see you again and welcome everyone.
Bryce Hoffman:	01:03:03	So Tim, and I'd like to model for you how you could use these three approaches that I've just described here with one of your clients. So Tim, you are my coaching client. Tell folks who you are and what you do for a living.
Tim Durkin:	01:03:23	In this particular real play, I am a CEO of a hundred bed hospital located about 35 miles west of Fort Worth, Texas. And-
Bryce Hoffman:	01:03:37	Excellent Tim.
Tim Durkin:	01:03:38	I, like many hospitals, have a few major problems that we are trying to get our arms around.
Bryce Hoffman:	01:03:46	What's your biggest problem, Tim?
Tim Durkin:	01:03:50	Our biggest problem is staff shortages, particularly in the area of nurses and particularly in the area of med surge nurses. Med surge nurses are the nurses that you would encounter in the emergency department or if you are ever in a hospital, they are the nurses that would be at the bedside, they would be the nurses, as different from nurses that are in marketing, nurses that are not at the patient bedside.
Bryce Hoffman:	01:04:24	So Tim, I understand you've come up with a plan on how to solve this problem though?
Tim Durkin:	01:04:29	Well, we have, and my plan is that I am wishing to create our own nursing school that would provide us a almost unrestricted flow of nurses for not only our hospital but other hospitals in the area that we could train them, have access to them and we could use them, they would be used to our culture.

Bryce Hoffman: 01:05:00 Well, there's a lot of heavy lifting in that plan there. It's probably a lot of assumptions that you're making there. What do you think some of the assumptions that you might be making with that plan are?

Tim Durkin: 01:05:13 The biggest assumption that I face right now is that my board of directors will approve it.

Bryce Hoffman: 01:05:19 So you're not even sure that your board's going to go for this.

Tim Durkin: 01:05:23 Right. Because there will be costs involved, there will be issues around recognition involved and the good name of the hospital, which we currently have. So-

Bryce Hoffman: 01:05:35 Well, let's stop on that point of recognition that you just mentioned because I think that's an important one. How confident are you that accredit that you could set up a nursing school that would be approved by accrediting authorities in a reasonable timeframe?

Tim Durkin: 01:05:52 Yes. I think if we make the presentation right, we are currently what would be called a four star hospital out of five stars as rated by CMS. And being a four star hospital means we already have a pretty good reputation. And I would think that with our recent JCO scores, the last three years of JCO scores, which is the evaluation agency of hospitals, most hospitals, I think we could, I probably put it at 90%, probably above 90%, but certainly not a hundred.

Bryce Hoffman: 01:06:29 So you're making an assumption there that the accrediting bodies for nursing schools, which are completely different than the accrediting bodies for hospitals, are going to simply accept your high scores as a hospital as sufficient to get accreditation that's dependent on the caliber of instructors, the caliber of curriculum, meeting industry standards. There's a lot of assumptions there, aren't there?

Tim Durkin: 01:06:58 Well, yes, and one of the assumptions, I think it's not a bias as you were talking about before, but it's the halo effect. We're thinking that our good scores as a hospital will transport to our good scores as a potential nursing school. So we would have to work at a presentation making presentations and making our case around that for sure.

Bryce Hoffman: 01:07:21 Or maybe before you even get down to making a presentation, you should have your team spend some more time understanding exactly what's going to be involved in getting accredited by accrediting agencies and making sure that that's even something that's doable. Right?

Tim Durkin: 01:07:42 Right. I think we need to put a tiger team together, and as you talk about it, I think I need at least one, if not two members of the board, current members of the board to be part of that team to do that heavy lifting, as you say.

Bryce Hoffman: 01:07:59 Now you're making another assumption there too, aren't you, that even if you got accreditation and could get board approval and get this stood up, that people would sign up for this programme?

Tim Durkin: 01:08:11 And that's a very big question. The one thing that we have in our favor is that as we survey high school students around the area in Fort Worth and in the area where we would draw from, we still see the nursing profession as high on the list of future job opportunities, if you will, for young men and young women as well. So the desire to become nurses is still strong in high school students. And we want to build on that.

Bryce Hoffman: 01:08:46 But you're making an assumption there that what they put down on their survey, their high school students put down their surveys is going to translate into action. And I want to step out of my role here and just share with folks, this is a major problem that decision makers make all the time in my-

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Bryce Hoffman: 01:09:00 ... problem that decision makers make all the time in my experience, is they look at a survey or they look at a focus group and say, "Oh, 70% of people in our focus group loved widget 2.0, so at least half of our existing customers will upgrade to widget 2.0 when we release it in the market." And failing to recognise that there's often a big disconnect between what people say they will do and what they will actually do.

01:09:35 I want to jump forward to, just because we don't have a lot of time, if I was doing this in earnest with Tim, we would spend a lot more time developing the assumptions there because there's a lot of them in that plan. There's a lot of assumptions about whether we can even find the faculty to teach, whether we can-

Tim Durkin: 01:09:54 A lot of biases too.

Bryce Hoffman: 01:09:55 A lot of biases. Whether we can create a compelling marketing story to sell this over other nursing programmes that are in the area, et cetera, et cetera, et cetera. But I want to go in and ask Tim now. Tim, I'd like you to look into your crystal ball. I know you love this plan and I understand why it checks a lot of boxes for you. But look, just imagine you have a crystal ball there. I'm not asking you how this plan could fail. I'm asking you to look in your crystal ball and imagine it's five years from now. And my gosh, Tim, it's not a pretty picture you're seeing in there. This plan hasn't just failed to meet its goals, it's a disaster. What would that look like? What do you see in your crystal ball there?

Tim Durkin: 01:10:53 Well, as much as I would hate to look into that crystal ball, what I see is not the field of dreams, the field of nightmares, that we build it and nobody came. All right.

Bryce Hoffman: 01:11:07 I love it.

Tim Durkin: 01:11:07 We would have a 35-person allocation for each year and we never got above 12, 13, maybe 18 one year, but generally averaged around 12, which would not be sustainable.

Bryce Hoffman: 01:11:24 Absolutely. That's-

Tim Durkin: 01:11:25 So, it would be the lack of applications and a lack of students.

Bryce Hoffman: 01:11:30 I love it. Instead of the field of dreams, the field of nightmares. What would lead to that? What are some of the things that would lead to a lack of applications and a lack of students?

Tim Durkin: 01:11:44 Not building community support, not only in our community here in Granbury, but also in communities nearby, which could really, really be helped, like Stephenville, Tolar, Fort Worth, Crescent, all the small communities, that we don't build the excitement in the community, and we don't build it in the high schools where we would draw most of our students, but there's an awful lot of people who look for a change in career in their twenties and thirties that also become nurses. So, that would be one case. And because there are so many, if you want to talk about VUCA environment, there's nothing more VUCA in the US that I'm aware of than healthcare. And-

Bryce Hoffman: 01:12:31 Well, before we get into that, what's another way specifically that this plan could fail?

Tim Durkin: 01:12:41 That it doesn't stay a priority. In other words, we turn our attention away from building the nursing school to revamping an ER department or an ED department. That we get another pandemic and all we're trying to do is serve the community. And so distractions and a moving-

Bryce Hoffman: 01:13:03 Taking the eye off the ball.

Tim Durkin: 01:13:05 Yes.

Bryce Hoffman: 01:13:06 So, not building community support and taking the eye off the ball. We've identified those as two things that could lead to catastrophic failure. And again, as an aside, folks, you see what I'm focusing on here is not the end state. It's the steps that led to that that are important in this exercise. Tim, what's something, and we just have a minute here, so let's just do this quickly if we could. What's something that we could do to make sure that we don't take our eye off the ball?

Tim Durkin: 01:13:40 I think one of the things that we could do, and it's a real strong Plan B, would be to joint venture, to joint venture with one of the local community colleges which have nursing programmes. There's also a major university that has a very good nursing programme that's not too far. We could joint venture with them, mitigate some of our risk and excite them and bring them in as full participants and use it. Then we wouldn't have to worry as much about finding pupils, finding nursing candidates.

Bryce Hoffman: 01:14:15 It was a great idea. Excellent. Again, this is just a very simple example, folks. Tim, thank you very much. Appreciate your assistance with that. Good luck with your nursing school. I just wanted to give folks just a real quick look at how you might apply what I'm talking about here. And again, as I said, we didn't have time to get to it. But also considering the alternatives, like Tim did there at the end, coming up with another way forward. That's Red Team Thinking at a 30,000-foot level. I hope that you at least understand what it is, where it comes from, have a little bit of an idea of how it works. And most important of all, that you've got a few ideas that you could take away from this and use with your clients. With that said, thank you very much. I would love to hear your questions. Lissa.

Lissa Qualls: 01:15:16 All right, thank you very much. Let's see, which one do we start here? Beth is saying, "Sometimes it's good to know who is willing to put their name on their comments. I know you talk a lot about the being anonymous. Can you speak a little to that?"

Bryce Hoffman: 01:15:32 Yeah, I mean, I do think it's important for people to have that opportunity as well, Beth. The reason that we start with anonymity, as I said, is to kind of create the framework for being able to do that, to create the psychological safety necessary to be able to do that and to understand that some people need that as a first step, but they're not going to need that forever. And you'll see in the organizations that we work with, very quickly, they move away from that and start just doing this openly because everyone sees the value in it, everyone sees the value in the approach.

Lissa Qualls: 01:16:16 Thank you. Jeff is asking, "When this approach fails, what are the common reasons why?"

Bryce Hoffman: 01:16:23 Very simple, Jeff, when this approach fails, it's because the senior leader beats it down with a baseball bat. Now, fortunately, I've only seen that happen a couple of times, but there's been a couple instances where I've worked with leaders who've said that they want this, they want to hear from their teams, they want to challenge their own thinking, they want to encourage diversity of thought. And as soon as people speak up, they start arguing with them and say, "You don't know what you're talking about. My plan is brilliant, I don't want to hear that. I don't want to be challenged." And I always take them aside out of the room and say, "I'm afraid that you've just made this impossible in your organization." Because now everyone is afraid that if they speak up, if they share what they're thinking, they're going to be penalized for this.

01:17:14 So that's why, when we... I want to separate out working with organizations and working with individuals. Working with individuals, I don't think there's a huge risk with this because you're helping them. No one needs to know that your clients are using Red Team Thinking. Nobody needs to know that you're using Red Team Thinking with your clients. It's simply another tool, set of tools in your toolkit that you're using to help them think through their problems, make better decisions, be more effective leaders.

	01:17:42	But if you're doing it in a group setting, then you have to make sure that you have buy-in from the leader whose group you're working with. Because if you don't, it's a suicide mission. But if you have that buy-in, it's transformative. So, a lot of times when we work with organizations, we have different tools that we do, that right out of the bat, put the leader on the spot and give them an opportunity to step up and solicit that feedback, welcome that feedback, and respond to that feedback. I can tell you that when that happens, cultural transformation's already started because people are like, "Wow, the boss really does want to know what I think and I've shared what I think. And he's responded favorably," or, "She's responded favorably to it." I think at the end of the day, what most people want is to make a positive difference in whatever they're doing. And so that's really validating when people see that in action. So, in a group setting, this succeeds or fails largely on the strength of the leader.
Lissa Qualls:	01:18:58	Thank you. Diana's asking, " Bryce, do you believe the younger generation of leaders will be more open to embracing asking questions from themselves and their teams, especially now that our organisational cultures are going through a transformational change?" Curious your thoughts there.
Bryce Hoffman:	01:19:12	I'm sorry, couldn't hear the question there. Tim, would you mind muting your microphone?
Tim Durkin:	01:19:18	Yeah, that wasn't me.
Bryce Hoffman:	01:19:19	Oh, okay.
Lissa Qualls:	01:19:19	I'm sorry. I'm sorry. I was on do not disturb and somehow my phone took it off. My apologies. Bryce, do you believe the younger generation of leaders will be more open to embracing asking questions from themselves and their teams, especially now that our organizational cultures are going through a transformational change? Curious your thoughts here.
Bryce Hoffman:	01:19:40	Absolutely, a hundred percent. I think that there's honestly almost a baseline expectation that they will be able to, is what I see on the part of younger leaders, particularly those who are in positions where they're advancing rapidly in stuff like this. They're not content to just kind of bite their tongue and wait their turn.
Lissa Qualls:	01:20:04	Perfect. Sven is asking, "Is there a risk in asking people to focus on the potential catastrophe? Does this not switch people from creative to limbic brain thinking? And how do you avoid that?"
Bryce Hoffman:	01:20:17	Oh, it's such a great question because a lot of times, people, you're absolutely right, they don't want to contemplate failure because it's uncomfortable. And the important thing that I always explain to people... I never spring this stuff on people. I always explain to them what I'm doing and why I'm doing it. And the important thing to explain to them here is that we're contemplating failure so that we can make sure it

doesn't occur. And that if we spend some time upfront thinking about how this failure could occur, we're going to make so much progress in terms of preventing failure from happening. We're going to sleep better tonight.

01:20:59 I see that all the time when we work with clients that are working on actual strategies, working on actual plans. They come up with these failed state scenarios and they are like, "Wow, I am so glad that that occurred to me because I didn't in a million years see that coming. Now that I see that that's a potential point of failure, I can do something about it. I can course correct, I can take steps right now and I'm going to sleep better at night."

01:21:33 I'll give you an example of what I mean by this. I was working with one of the big Wall Street banks. I had never done this before, encountered this before. I was working on my first $1.5 trillion strategy, with a T. And this was a big bank that was embarking on an entirely new investment product that they estimate over the next 10 years is going to generate one and a half trillion dollars in revenue for them. They've been working on it for 18 months. And I came in, one of the things I never do is I'm not a consultant. I don't have any answers. I come in and help them look at their plan, look at their strategy. They do the work, just as I was doing with Tim there. Even that was a little bit more me kind of leading things on because for the sake of time. But we really try to just use these tools that we have to help them come up with these things themselves.

01:22:31 Well, we did a pre-mortem analysis, which is a much more detailed version of what I just described there in terms of contemplating failure. The business unit leader whose plan it was, she after the session, called a break, and went and talked to the CEO and came back and she said, "I want to continue the analysis of this plan, but I'm going to tell you right now that I've just gone and asked to delay the launch of this new plan for six months." When we were done, she looked pretty ashen, when we were done, I said, "I'm really sorry. I hope this didn't cause you too much stress." And she's like, "No." She said, "I am stressed but I can't tell you how thankful I am because we may have just avoided a half a trillion dollar problem here. I was ready to pull the trigger on this. I hadn't seen this, no one on my team had seen it. It's clear as day to me now that we have to address this problem before we launch this strategy."

01:23:43 So, I think when you frame it in the right way and when people see the impact of it, it's a very positive thing. These are great questions. What's next, Lissa?

Lissa Qualls: 01:23:54 They always have great questions. Here's one from Carrie. "We heard about anonymity. What else is essential in a corporate culture to support Red Team Thinking?"

Bryce Hoffman: 01:24:04 A willingness to learn, a understanding that you've never solved the problem permanently. That's something that's really key, is one of the things that we believe is that decision-making should be a practise, not a

process. If you think about it, a process is something, you do step one, step two, step three, step four, you make your decision, you're done. Great. You go off and do something else. The world doesn't work that way anymore. You have to be willing to recognise that every decision is provisional. The right decision today may be the wrong decision tomorrow. So, if you think about the difference between a practise and a process, a practise is something that you do consistently, ideally.

01:24:51 If you think about yoga for instance, you don't do yoga once and now you're nimble and your back feels great. Problem solved, great, I'm done with yoga. Did that. No, you do it, ideally, you keep doing it every week, multiple times a week, whatever it is. Because the more you do it, the more benefit you gain.

01:25:13 What I mean by decision-making being a practise is not to keep second-guessing yourself in a insecure sort of way, but continue to revisit your decisions. Just spend a minute and check-in, say, "Right, is this decision we made still leading us in the desired direction? Is it still the right decision? If not, we need to make a little course correction here because the circumstances have changed so that we can move forward with confidence." And so that's again, it's a skillset, it's a mindset that's not what has been taught traditionally in business schools, but it's what's needed to navigate the world today.

Lissa Qualls: 01:25:50 We have time for one last question and this is the one that I'm going to put is from the questions that are coming in that we didn't get to and stuff, I can tell that there are a few coaches who are probably wondering how they can deepen their learning on the Red Team coaching. Is there any way that they might be able to do that? Can you share?

Bryce Hoffman: 01:26:09 Well, I don't want share specifics. I think what I would feel comfortable saying is simply this. We are working with coaching.com on potentially putting together a Red Team coaching programme. If that's something that people are interested in, if you just put yes or Y in the comments, we can give you more information in the future as that develops.

Lissa Qualls: 01:26:36 Excellent. Thank you so much. We are at the end-

Bryce Hoffman: 01:26:40 Thank you, Lissa.

Lissa Qualls: 01:26:41 Oh, Tim. Yes?

Tim Durkin: 01:26:42 Yeah. I'd just like to make one comment that I think will benefit all the coaches. In our role play that Bryce and I went through, when we were talking about assumptions in the very beginning, he asked me to come up with assumptions. As I explained it, he found assumptions within my assumptions and asked about that. And what that reflects is that Red Team thinkers become very adept at noticing assumptions when and if they are made and then they keep digging in. And it is one of the most valuable tools of Red Team Thinking is to develop the assumption radar, as Bryce demonstrated. I hope that people would consider going back

and watching that particular segment because it's a very valuable skill. Challenging assumptions.

Lissa Qualls: 01:27:35 Thank you very much. That's very good. Thank you for sharing that. An amazing session. Oh my goodness, Bryce, there was so much wonderful stuff. Tim, thank you so much for being a part of that and letting us to watch into all of that.

01:27:47 So, now, as we get ready to close, be sure to share your feedback with us on today's session so that we can continue providing you with services you love. The survey will pop up on the screen when you leave the webinar. And thank you again for the today's session. Amazing stuff. We have a dedicated post to the summit community to discuss Bryce's session and we are dropping the link right now into the chatbox, so make sure that you grab that. Now, Bryce has graciously said that he will drop it into the community over the next day or two to answer questions that we couldn't get to in today's session. So, if you have any more questions, please post them in there and then we'll drop the link to that specific post right now in the chatbox. If you're not logged into the community, then you'll need to log into the WBECS member areas first and then you'll be able to access it.

01:28:37 And finally, for those IM Sessions, Implement Mastery Sessions, today related sessions will take place 30 minutes soon as we're done here and also on next Tuesday. And these sessions will be available in English and Portuguese. So, you can sign up for the IM Sessions by clicking the link, you know it, in the chatbox. So go have a look and go ahead and post on that.

01:28:59 Now, for next week, please remember to register for next week's sessions with Ruchira Chaudhary, Reese Haydon and Hannah Murphy. We also have the coaching.com session on Stay Connected to Key Business and Client Metrics. So be sure you sign up for those. Those are wonderful as well.

01:29:17 Thank you and have a wonderful rest of your day. Thank you again to everyone for showing up and participating. Hope to see you again on another WBECS seminar. Bye-bye.

Bryce Hoffman: 01:29:26 Thank you all.

PART 4 OF 4 ENDS [01:29:35]