

Karl-Johan Spiik

How to Create
a Team that Leads Itself

COMMUNITY- LED TEAM



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that Leads Itself



Karl-Johan Spiik has during his career worked for over a decade in community-led teams, usually in the role of a coaching leader. He has participated more than 60 projects in teams of different sizes. Karl-Johan trains teams and organizations to work in a more agile way in a continuously changing environment. Karl-Johan's basic values and knowledge focus on ways of avoiding hurry and stress by improving the working methods. Tools for all this are project leadership, his own experience, and community-led orientation.

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KARL-JOHAN SPIIK

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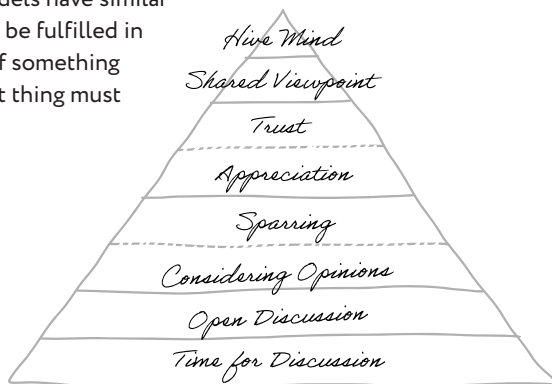
FOREWORD

During my own career I have worked for over a decade in community-led teams, usually in the role of coaching leader. I have taken part in about fifty projects with teams of different sizes. I have been involved in projects with teams and people from several organizations. In all cases and teams the same principles arise, communication being the cornerstone.

Some years ago, I started to work in an expert organization with no supervisor. I noticed that the model of working in a team functioned well not only in small teams but also in cases where there were hundreds of people cooperating. I wanted to develop my understanding of teamwork. Soon after starting the work, I began to make weekly notes based on my own experiences about team leadership. After some months a certain model formed that I returned to in all my notes.

First, I named that model the hierarchy of self-management. I have always loved Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs despite the criticism targeted at it. Both models have similar structures. The lower levels need to be fulfilled in order to develop the higher levels. If something isn't working on the lower level, that thing must be corrected first.

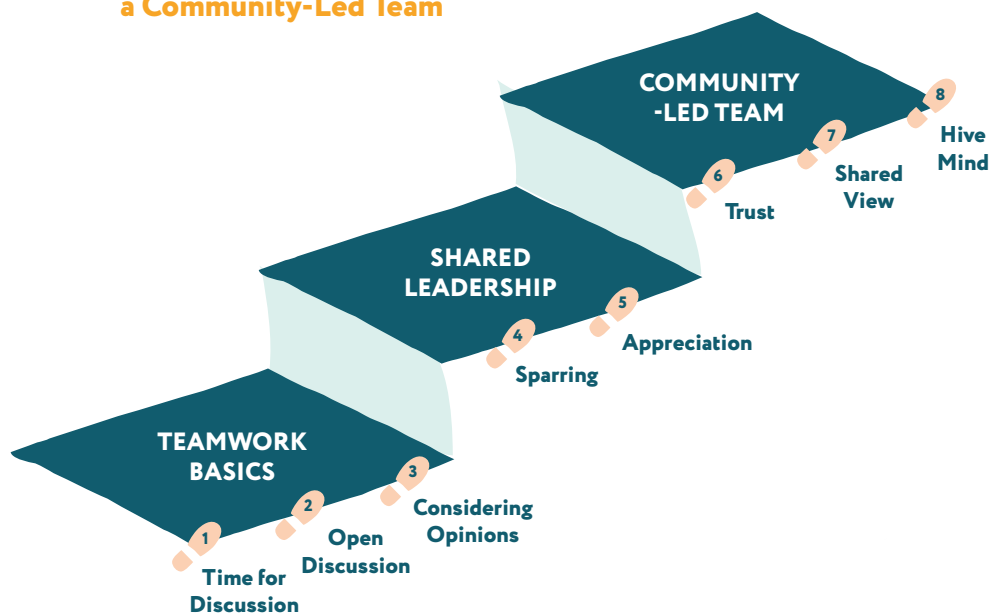
Later, when I was finishing my online course, a consultant helping me said that my model had too many levels. It looked confusing and the reader could not understand it. So, I then divided the eight basic levels into three stairs and each stair into steps. The model developed further, and it became more understandable, which helped to improve the planning of the online course.



*The hierarchy of self-management – the eight basic levels of a community-led team
The team starts from the lowest level and progresses upwards level by level.*

The online course based on my team model was ready in the beginning of 2021. I wanted to be the first to provide a practical tool for the activity of a community-lead team.

The Model of Activities for a Community-Led Team



The model for a community-led team: three stairs and eight steps. The team will start from the bottom and go forward upwards. If the requirements of one step are not met, then the team has to return to a lower step.

A model is a model, and it is not supposed to be read literally. This team model gives a good grasp on how one's own team is placed in relation to its own development. At its best, it is a fine tool that the team can use to develop itself and to improve cooperation. The most important thing is to remember that the activities of the whole team are based on well-being and trust.

INTRODUCTION

The community-led team model describes how the teams function. It demonstrates where the team is on its path of development and provides clear tools to develop itself.

The model does not include changes within the team itself, because in a community-led team the new members are quickly integrated into the team's activities. However, if over half of the team members are replaced, most likely the team's development needs to start all over again.

The model comprises three stairs: Teamwork Basics, Shared Leadership, and Community-Led Team. On the first stair Teamwork Basics, all the basic matters needed for a functioning team are inspected, irrespective of the presence or absence of supervisors in that team. On the second stair Shared Leadership, various matters concerning teamwork and cooperation are trained. This middle stair is also suitable for traditional teams with a supervisor. The third stair Community-Led Team covers the aspects of coaching leadership and not having a supervisor.

On the two lower stairs, the team's requirements, and possible negative consequences if those are not met, are inspected. Sometimes some requirement is not met at all, but the team can still proceed to the next step. Each team can agree on which consequences are acceptable within the team. In work life projects, there are often recognized risks. The threats presented in this book are to be considered in the same way. It is advised to make a plan of recovery, which will be initiated in case a risk becomes reality.

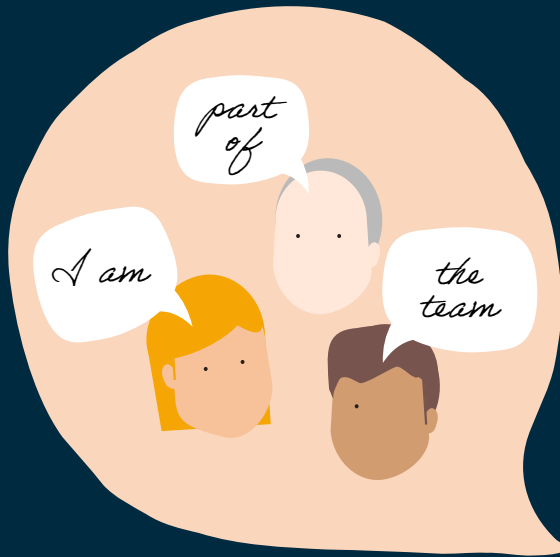
On the top stair of this model, there are no requirements presented for the team anymore, but some characteristics of a community-led team. That team is based on the internal motivation of its members and their willingness to

work together without any supervisor. When the team reaches the top level, the meaning of the requirements and the model itself fades away, as the team gets inspired into the state of flow and notices that it has now reached the top step.

Each step has concrete actions as examples for how to make the team meet all the requirements or characteristics needed.

After the presentation of the stairs, this book will cover how the model is applicable to different teams, what roles there are in the team, and how the model can be used to support the teamwork. The model is mainly meant to be introduced to the teams during the monthly reflective workshops.





TEAMWORK BASICS



Time for
Discussion

s. 14



Open
Discussion

s. 18



Considering
Opinions

s. 22

A group should work as a team, but one team member doesn't show up at meetings, another is doing all the work of the others, and nobody in the team dares to give critical feedback. Usually these problems are handled by a supervisor. What if the team worked as a community-led team, without a supervisor?

Working in a community-led team challenges the team members to grow as people and to take responsibility for the whole group. The key word here is communication.

This book presents the model of a community-led team, which can help a team to learn step by step to work without a supervisor, and to further develop the team's previous working methods.

"With the help of this model, we started to understand what teamwork is about. We lacked many of the basics, and therefore we couldn't cooperate in a natural way around work tasks. By focusing on the right matters, we fixed the team's internal communication, and we are able to react quickly to changing situations."

Personnel of a start-up company



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