

THRIVING IN THE MIDDLE PRESS KIT

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HOW THE BEST MANAGERS
CREATE MUTUAL SUCCESS

THRIVING IN THE MIDDLE

MIKE COOK

“There is no 'done' with management development, there is no 'over,' no graduation, no final certification. There is today, and what we did or did not do, and what we can learn from it in either case. There is the love and challenge of managing, and setting yourself up to enjoy managing.”

- Thriving in the Middle, Page 8

How does your company train its operational-level managers? Do they go offsite, learn new information from a management expert, receive a training manual, or something similar? Most businesses fall into this development category, treating managers as our academic system treats students. The results, unfortunately, consist of short-lived bursts of enthusiasm and little measurable improvement, in part due to the lack of day-to-day applicability and personal accountability.

Thriving in the Middle looks to replace this ineffective version of management development with a more culturally founded, experience-dependent model. Based on decades of leadership experience and breakthrough studies, Mike Cook establishes the case for "Distributed Development Communities," in which application takes place in a near-real-time, experiential environment using actual situations faced. In this model, process-driven development is more frequent and delivered in small doses, and operational-level managers are coached and groomed to become great operational-level managers without the subtext of upward advancement. Learn the attributes and processes of better management improvement. Your bottom line and your front line will thank you for it.

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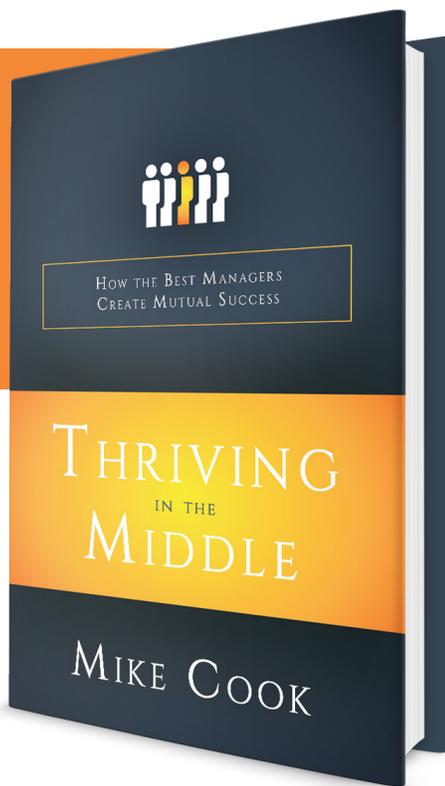
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About Mike Cook

A former Human Resource professional for Standard Oil of California, Mike now works primarily with senior leaders and teams to develop and implement communities of collaborative performance. With his 30+ years of consulting and coaching experience, operating in a wide range of industries, Mike enjoys working with diverse client teams at all levels to build alignment and enable change that is sustainable and strategic. His experience includes initiatives in petroleum refining, telecommunications, financial services, healthcare and insurance systems. With a Masters Degree in Human Resources and Labor Relations, Mike maintains his connection with education as an adjunct MBA professor at the University of Western Washington near his home in Anacortes.

"Management development is an emergent phenomenon, only visible in the moment of action, never finished, and virtually unmeasurable. It's much more process than destination

Unmeasurable makes us very uncomfortable. In fact, unmeasurable makes us so uncomfortable that we would rather measure the wrong thing than go forward on faith having measured nothing at all.

If that notion makes you uncomfortable, this one will make you more so. The greatest untapped asset in any organization may be the embedded knowledge base of the management community. If you can accept this assertion on faith, you are on the road...

This is a book for developing managers. It is not about how to manage. It is about a way to develop managers that corresponds to the way managing unfolds on a daily basis; more a tutorial for building a framework of development. There is no "done" with management development, there is no "over," no graduation, no final certification. There is today, and what we did or did not do, and what we can learn from it in either case. There is the love and challenge of managing, and setting yourself up to enjoy managing. At its heart, managing is about people. It's about the time of their lives, making that time worthwhile, and making a buck at the same time; oh yes, and the contribution that you are driven to make as well. This book is about thriving in the middle of it all and being proud of it. "

From *Thriving in the Middle*

