



The Blind Men and the Elephant: Mastering Project Work

David A. Schmaltz

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If you work, you probably manage projects every day-even if "project manager" isn't in your official title-and you know how frustrating the experience can be. Using the familiar story of six blind men failing to describe an elephant to each other as a metaphor, David Schmaltz brilliantly identifies the true root cause of the difficulties in project work: "incoherence" (the inability of a group of people to make common meaning from their common experience).

Schmaltz exposes such oft-cited difficulties as poor planning, weak leadership, and fickle customers as poor excuses for project failure, providing a set of simple, project coherence-building techniques that anyone can use to achieve success. He explains how "wickedness" develops when a team over-relies on their leader for guidance rather than tapping their true source of power and authority-the individual.

The Blind Men and the Elephant explores just how much influence is completely within each individual's control. Using real-world stories, Schmaltz undermines the excuses that may be keeping you trapped in meaningless work, offering practical guidance for overcoming the inevitable difficulties of project work.

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