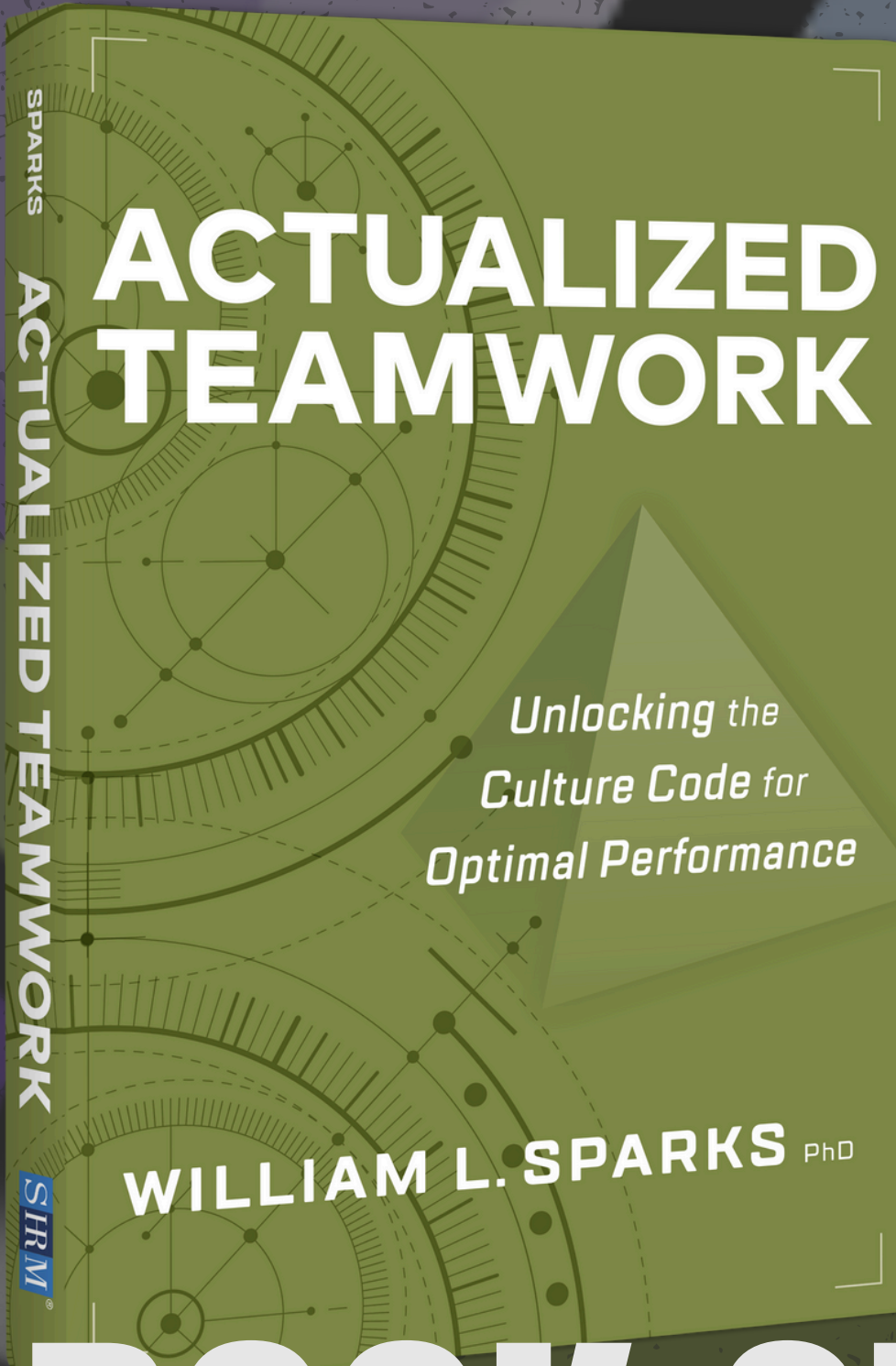


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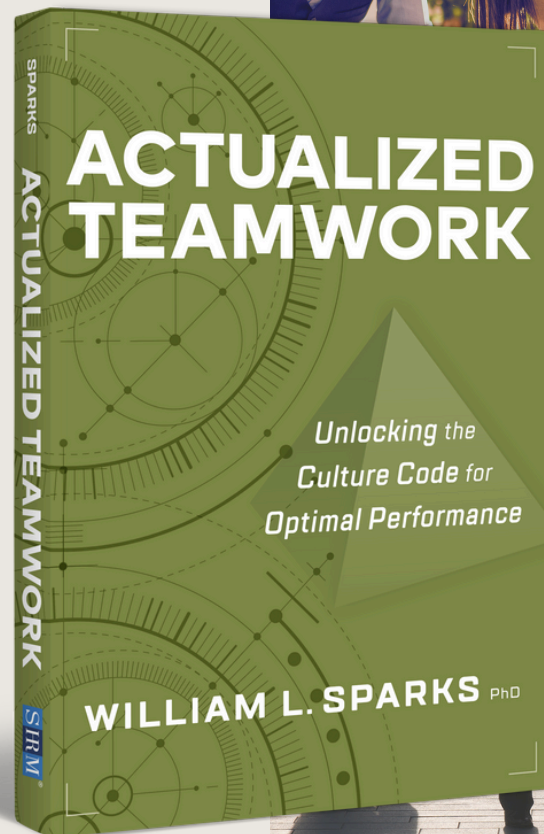
BOOK CLUB

WWW.ACTUALIZEDPERFORMANCESOLUTIONS.COM

The Amazon #1 bestselling author

DR. WILL SPARKS RETURNS
WITH AN INSIGHTFUL GUIDE
FOR TRANSFORMING TEAM
CULTURE AND PERFORMANCE.

This book club kit guide provides an overview of the book's major points, personal and team development guided questions and a recommended reading and playlist. We hope the ideas presented in this book, and the process outlined in this guide, will enrich your understanding of team culture and improve the quality of your experiences in any group setting.



ADVANCED PRAISE FOR ACTUALIZED TEAMWORK

Actualized Teamwork is the leadership book that needed to be written! A must read for anyone leading teams.

–**Jennifer LaClair**, Head of Global Business Solutions, Fiserv, and Director, Whirlpool Corporation and the Federal Reserve Bank (Richmond)

Dr. Spark's decades-long research has explored two of the most critical components of organizational success – culture and teamwork. In Actualized Teamwork, he translates his findings into insights for how leaders can optimize their team's performance and develop high-performing teams.

–**Dr. Pamela Davies**, President Emerita & Professor of Strategy, Queens University of Charlotte, and Director, Sonoco and the Center for Creative Leadership

Actualized Teamwork offers an integrated, research-driven approach for unlocking the process of exceptional team performance.

–**Dr. Shawn Bergman**, Professor, Founder and Director of the HR Science Research Team, Appalachian State University

Actualized Teamwork is a must-read for anyone who wants to become the type of C-suite executive who can guide a best in class organization while also being an example for others to model.

–**Pete Guelli**, Chief Operating Officer. Buffalo Bills & Sabres

OVERVIEW AND MAJOR POINTS OF THE BOOK



The Actualized Teamwork framework uses a psychodynamic lens for examining and understanding team culture and group dynamics. This approach considers the impact of the collective unconscious emotionality of the team on performance and member engagement.

In order to get the most out of the book and this guided discussion kit, it is highly recommended that you complete either the Full or the Free Actualized Team Profile (ATP) assessment so that you are better connected to the concepts and ideas related to your leader style and shadow. The Free ATP may be completed at:

<http://www.atpfree.com>

01.

MAJOR POINT #1: The book introduces the term “team-actualization” (as opposed to “self-actualization”) to describe the process and “culture code” necessary for teams to reach their highest collective potential.

02.

MAJOR POINT #2: Team culture, defined as “the perceived attitude and group dynamic that results from the dynamic interplay between the overt task and the collective group shadow,” exists at both visible (conscious) and invisible (unconscious) levels. In order to realize or actualize the team’s collective potential, attention must be aimed at both levels.

MAJOR POINT #3: The 5 Dimensions of Teamwork represent the five most important elements that impact team culture, member engagement and performance. Using an iceberg metaphor (see below) three of the five dimensions exist above the waterline and are visible: Communication, Conflict Management and Engagement. These three dimensions mostly emphasize questions of what (“what is our deliverable?”) and when (“when is our deadline?”) The remaining two dimensions, Purpose and Trust, exist below the waterline and are invisible. They primarily emphasize questions of how (“how are we working together?”) and why (“why have we come together as a team?”).

03.



04.

MAJOR POINT #4: Team culture is usually thought of as something that an individual inherits when he or she joins a team. And while that is partially true, culture isn't just something that happens to you. You happen to it! And the more influence, formal or informal, that you have on your team, the more impact that your style and shadow have on the culture.

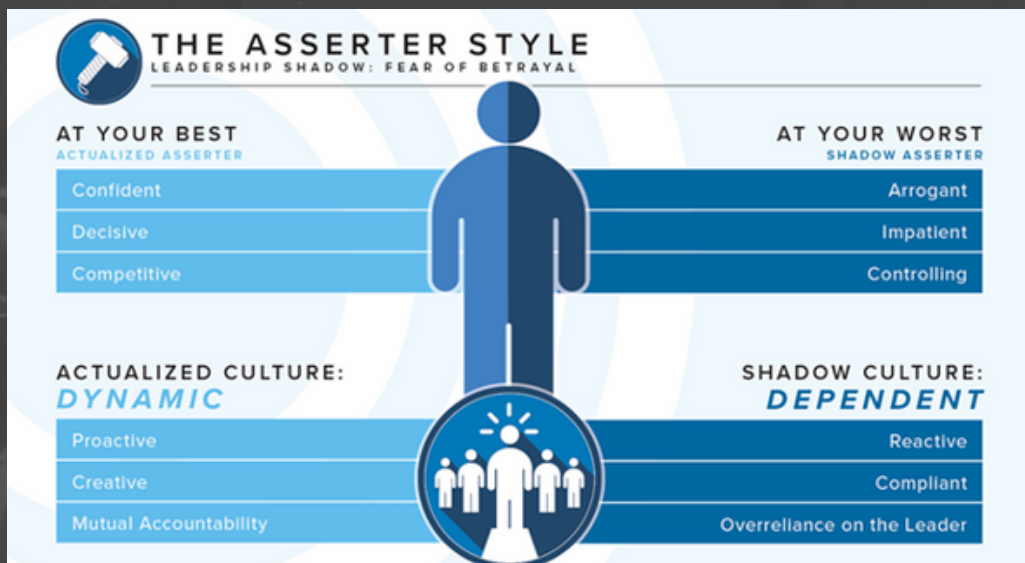
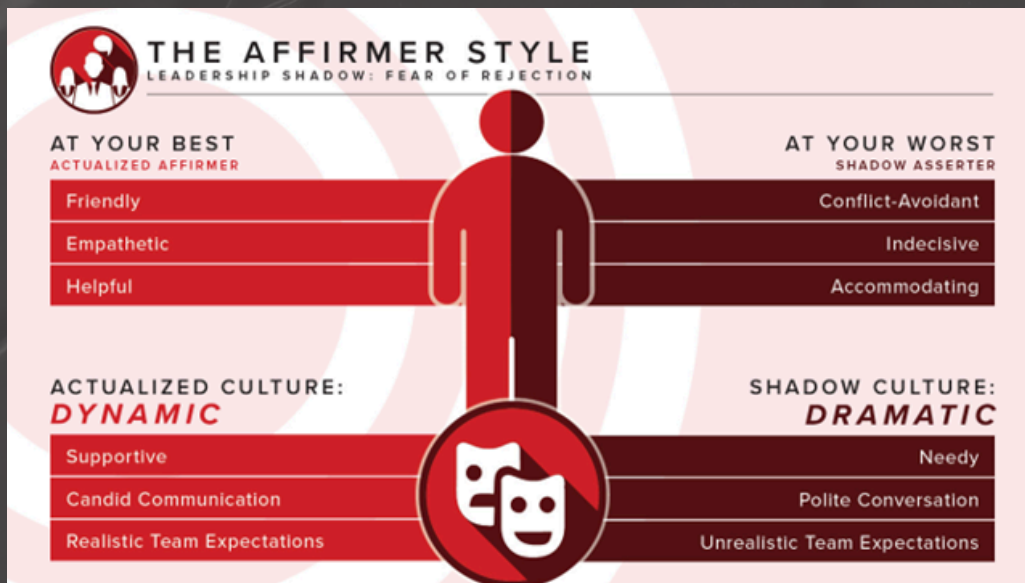
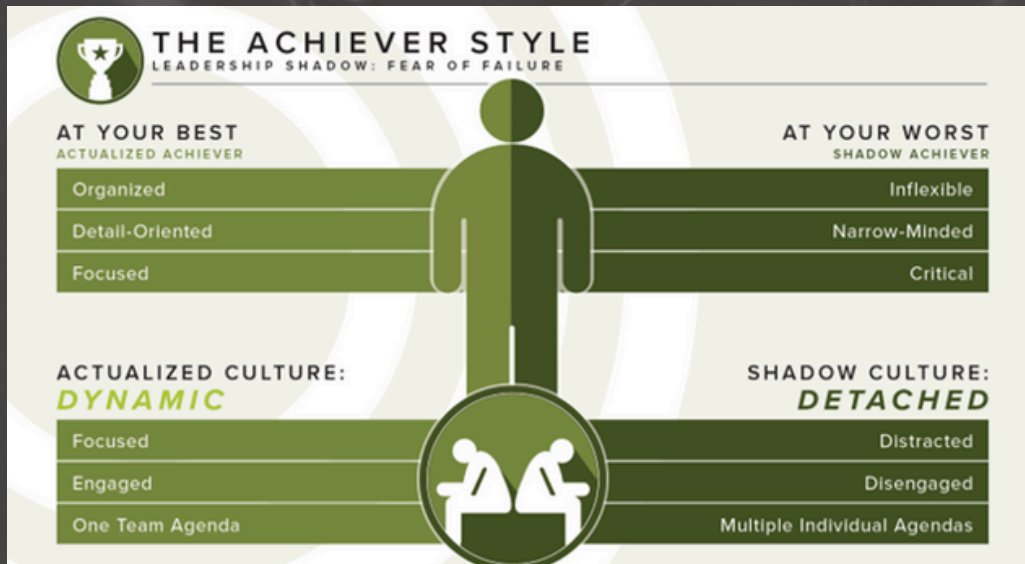
MAJOR POINT #5: Leaders that are driven more out of a need for self-actualization and the abundant and resilient mindset that corresponds to self-actualization are much more likely to create more Dynamic team cultures with greater levels of team member engagement and higher levels of productivity and performance.

05.

MAJOR POINT #6: There are three team shadow cultures, Detached, Dramatic and Dependent, that correspond to the three leadership styles and shadows, Achiever/Fear of Failure, Affirmer/Fear of Rejection, and Asserter/Fear of Betrayal. See image descriptions below:

06.

THREE TEAM SHADOWS



07.

MAJOR POINT #7: We have developed a quantitative way to measure and operationalize team culture using the Full Actualized Team Profile (visit www.actualizedperformancesolutions.com for more information) that generates a team culture “score.”

This score is then compared to the “Culture Code” ranges of optimal performance (see below). When a team’s Culture Code is examined in conjunction with the team’s scores on the 5 Dimensions of Teamwork, a detailed and precise roadmap emerges for not only describing the team’s current state, but also the necessary steps necessary for transforming culture.

TEAM DEVELOPMENT QUESTIONS

- 1. What is your ALP style and Leadership Shadow?**
- 2. How have they impacted your team’s culture in a positive way?**
- 3. How have they impacted your team’s culture in a negative way ?**

TEAM DEVELOPMENT QUESTIONS

- 4. How “Dynamic” is your Team?**
- 5. Which of the 3 Team Shadows is most descriptive of your team?**
- 6. Which dimension of teamwork is the most important for your team to explore and enhance?**
- 7. What behaviors will you publicly commit to in order to create a more Dynamic team culture?**

A Conversation with Will Sparks



Why did you write “Actualized Teamwork?”

WS: I wanted to “close the loop” between leader and team development. My personal view is that you can have meaningful team development only in conjunction with the leader, and vice versa. I wanted everyone, and especially leaders and managers, to realize that culture doesn’t just happen to you; you happen to it! And the more power and influence you have in a team setting, the more impact your style and shadow have on creating and sustaining culture.

What is the most important distinction between this book and your previous book “Actualized Leadership?”

WS: When it comes to team culture there actually is a “benchmark” (what I refer to as the “Culture Code”) that can be assessed and explicitly defined. As such, you actually have a “score” that you can improve and, in doing so, improve your performance and satisfaction as a team member. In the Actualized Leader Profile, there is not a specific “benchmark” that one should strive for, other than trying to enhance and increase self-actualization.

In what way are they the most similar?

WS: Both books and both assessments, the ALP and the ATP, are grounded in a psychodynamic approach for understanding human behavior. This simply means there is a recognition of the unconscious element that drives behavior in both individuals and teams and that in order to improve performance and realize or actualize one’s full potential, confrontation and integration of the shadow (either at the individual [ALP] or team [ATP] level) must occur.

How long have you worked with your team assessment in applied settings?

WS: This book was very nostalgic for me in a sense because I revisited my dissertation research which I started almost 30 years ago. I have been using this team culture assessment (the current ATP and earlier versions) for over 25 years in applied settings, working with boards of Fortune 500 companies, executive teams, shop floor production shifts, professional and collegiate sports teams and nonprofit organizations worldwide. Both the ALP and ATP are available in nine languages.

What is the most important takeaway for your readers?

WS: It's crucial for teams to take time on the process aspect of working in groups – the HOW and the WHY – in order to improve their productivity and performance – the WHAT and BY-WHEN. This book is designed to allow teams to accurately self-assess their culture, determine which of the 5 Dimensions of Teamwork needs to be addressed, and to develop a specific and tactical plan of action for improvement. Also, you DO NOT need to be a psychologist to use this framework. Rather, you simply have to have an appreciation that unconscious emotionality is real, even if you can't see it, and that it must be acknowledged and addressed if you are going to truly improve performance and realize the full collective potential of a team.

What's next?

WS: My next effort will likely turn to Actualized Coaching. Combining these last two books, we have a valid and robust framework for identifying the styles and shadows of both leaders and teams. The next step will be to develop a comprehensive framework to engage the coaching process to help elevate performance inside the Actualized Performance Framework.



RECOMMENDED READING AND PLAYLISTS

Books:

Bion, W.R.(1961). *Experiences in Groups*. New York: Basic Books.

Harvey, J.B. (1988). *The Abilene Paradox: And Other Meditations on Management*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

Harvey, J.B. (1999). *How Come Every Time I Get Stabbed in the Back My Fingerprints Are on the Knife?: And Other Meditations on Management*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

Jung, C. (1912). *The Psychology of the Unconscious*. New York: Dover Publications.

Jung, C. (1969). *The Structure and Dynamics of the Psyche, 2nd Ed.* Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Kets de Vries, M. & Miller, D. (1984). *The Neurotic Organization*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

Books, Continued:

Schein, E. (2016). ***Organizational Culture and Leadership, 5th Ed.*** Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Sparks, W.L. (2019). ***Actualized Leadership: Meeting Your Shadow & Maximizing Your Potential.*** Alexandria, VA: Society for Human Resource Management Publishing.

Harvard Business Review Articles:

"The Leadership Odyssey," May-June 2023. Herminia Ibarra, Claudius A. Hildebrand & Sabine Vinck. *How to become a less directive leader and, in doing so, become more strategic and create a more Actualized Team.*

"How to Equip Your Team to Problem Solve Without You," March 2023. Luis Velasquez, Kristin Gleitsman. *How to break the cycle of micromanaging ("umbrella management") and allow your team to grow and flourish to their full potential.*

"Fixing a Self-Sabotaging Team," March-April 2023. N. Anand & Jean-Louis Barsoux. *How to apply a psychodynamic approach, specifically through the lens of Wilfred Bion, for identifying and managing underlying emotionality in team settings.*

Spotify Playlist:

Fink: Looking Too Closely

Rush: Bravado

John Mayer: Shadow Days

Basia Balut: Tall Tall Shadow