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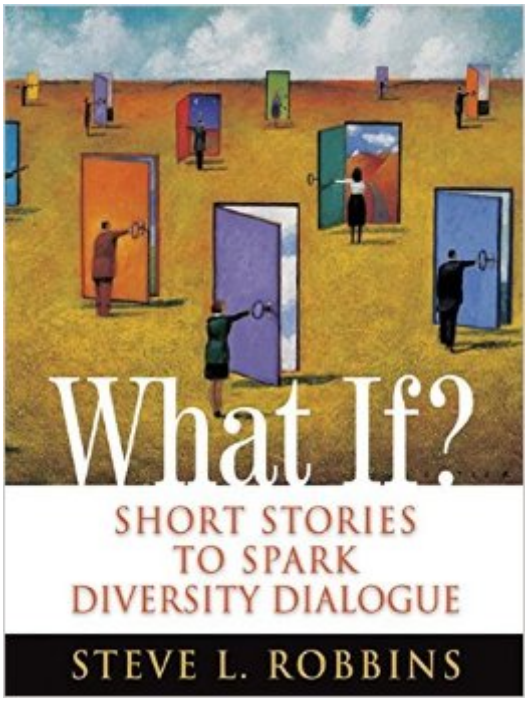
What If?: Short Stories To Spark Diversity Dialogue



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Synopsis

What If? delivers a highly creative and innovative new way to explore the issues that dominate today’s multicultural, multiethnic workplace. To the twenty-five witty yet inspiring stories in this collection, Steve Long-Nguyen Robbins has added tips and suggestions for putting these key learnings into action. Combined, What If? offers a powerful lens into the human experience.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

First, let me say I purchased this book after hearing Dr. Robbins speak at a conference. He is an outstanding speaker with a tremendous message. Unfortunately I didn’t feel his talents translated well to written form. Far from the "inspirational, lively, and sometimes deeply personal" stories promised on the cover, the actual stories are just average.It seemed like Dr. Robbins was reaching to present the everyday events of his life (of all of ours, really) as if they were profound in some way. For example, the story about his failed attempt to write his favorite songs to a CD was hardly inspirational. The story about his young son’s inability to correctly pronounce "Buzz Lightyear" was cute, but really didn’t grab me by the lapels. And he stocked a pond with fish and they died because he didn’t take care of them. Yes, he connects these every-day occurances to larger, important principals, but the connections felt forced and somewhat contrived.See him in person: DEFINITELY! He’s the best speaker you will ever hear.Read his book: maybe. Just understand that the written form is not nearly as good as the real thing.

This book isn’t of the typical academic nature that makes you groan about having to learn more

about diversity and inclusion in a work environment. It’s an enjoyable read of 26 short, humorous stories that provoke thought in a way that gently challenges those who have never engaged in meaningful I&D dialogue. Complimenting each story is a set of discussion points and exercises that can be done in small groups - again, in a way that isn’t invasive or intimidating.I do think that certain diverse communities aren’t as covered in this book as much as others, but it’s still fantastic!

I facilitate mandatory training - largely when on-boarding new staff. We cover off all the foundations that are important in a large organisation. Ethics and values, Classification of work output, Intellectual property, Data security and this (as a component of our Respect, Equity and Diversity framework. Everyone knows that the training is a mandatory, tick and flick exercise and it’s hard to keep people motivated because all they have to do is show up and they are compliant. So, I’ve been searching for a way to incorporate storytelling into the workshops to make them compelling and engaging. These stories work! I’ve got people leaving the workshops taking about the Diversity issue, and often coming back to me weeks later saying - Hey, what would you suggest about this issue? I still teach the same material, the same package - the only thing I am now doing differently is adding one of these stories and using it in small group discussions. HIGHLY RECOMMENDED.PS. Universal design and user experience practitioners would also benefit from this book!

The first personal story of The author was a successful introduction to the subject. It highlighted the difficulties he encountered being a non WASP. But the other stories, despite the author’s efforts to make sense out of them, weren’t attractive. Luckily the book is short and can be read in a few hours.

I thought Dr. Robbins’ book was very insightful, easy to read, and provided an opportunity for personal and group reflection that could actually bring about change in one’s attitude toward others. His stories were often humorous and I felt like I got in inside view into the author’s life, which I enjoyed, especially since Dr. Robbins has experienced the importance of inclusion first-hand. I would recommend this book to anyone who wants to have a better understanding of "diversity" and how to change one’s own or one’s organization’s perspective about why inclusion matters.

Over twenty-five inspiring lively personal stories anthologized in "What If? Short Stories to Spark Diversity Dialogue" deftly illustrate concepts of diversity and inclusion in the workplace, using anecdotes and visions to put key learnings into action in a business structure. Each story is paired

with questions, an activity and an assignment to reinforce ideas, making for a fine, light business reading title.

I purchase a copy for each team member. Each member was assigned a chapter to present. It sparked much conversation, and saw much better interaction among different members. Chapters are short, interesting stories and how they relate to the workplace. Very thought provoking and a good conversation starter.

I enjoyed this book very much, so much that I'm prompted to attend a workshop held by the author at his center in Michigan. The stories (as well as the story of his life) were very moving. I recommend the book for everyone.

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