

FIRE STARTER

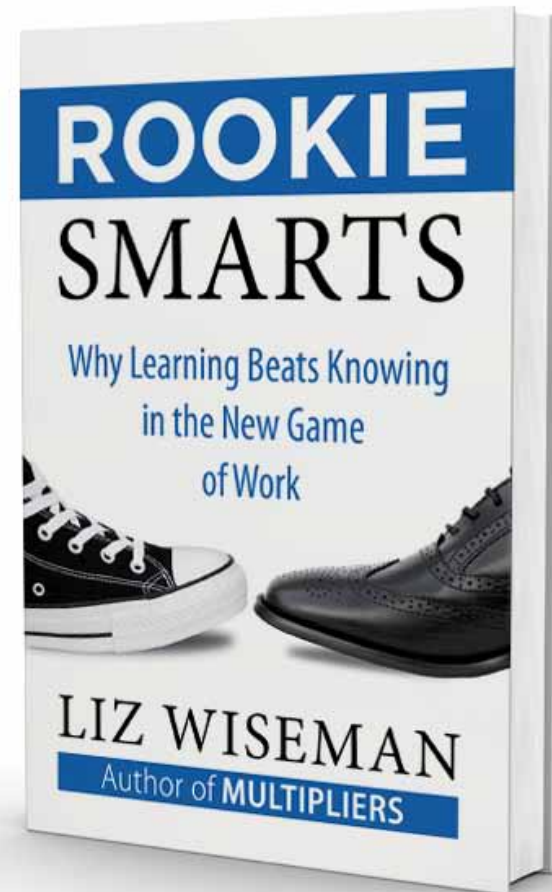
DISCUSSION GUIDE & ACTION PLAN

— LIZ WISEMAN —

ABOUT THIS BOOKLET

This booklet is an accompaniment guide for *ROOKIE SMARTS* by Liz Wiseman.

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ROOKIE SMARTS by Liz Wiseman
Available where books are sold.

Visit **www.RookieSmarts.com** for additional information, resources, and to sign up for Liz's free tips email newsletter.



THE ROOKIE SMARTS FIRESTARTER



If you want to facilitate a group discussion or take a more personal introspective look at *Rookie Smarts*, this guide can serve as your personal firestarter kit. The questions and action-based activities will help you exchange ideas, raise issues, and discuss new possibilities, either by yourself, as a book club, or as a team in the workplace.

To get started, make sure you have your copy of *Rookie Smarts* and either read it in advance or read it as you utilize this guide.

In this booklet you will find:

- A. Warm Up
- B. Teleport Yourself Experiment
- C. Firestarter Questions
- D. Rookie Smart Itineraries

WARM UP

Warm up by asking yourself or your team to summarize your key take-aways, ideas, and insights from *Rookie Smarts*.





ROOKIE SMARTS EXPERIMENT

TELEPORT YOURSELF

Set the tone for the conversation by running the Teleport Yourself experiment.

Transport yourself in time and place to when you were starting your first professional job after college. Remember how you felt, what you did, and how you approached the work. Use this insight to provide leadership to your team, a new college graduate, an employee in a rookie assignment, and even to renew your own work.

ROOKIE SMART MODE

Backpacker

MINDSET

Unencumbered

RETURN	Identify a time when you were a rookie (inexperienced, new to an important task)			
	When was it?	Year:	Month:	Day:
	Where were you?			
RECALL	What were you nervous or worried about?			
	What didn't you worry about?			
	What were you hopeful about?			
	What could you see that others couldn't?			
	Who did you seek out for expertise or guidance?			
	What did you do to prove yourself quickly?			
	How did you get feedback and stay on track?			
	What mistakes did you make? How did you recover?			
RENEW	How would this rookie version of you approach your current job?			
	What specifically would you do differently?			

CAVEAT: If possible, actually physically return to the scene of your first time. Go back to your old office or put on your interview suit and go sit in the building lobby of your first job and remember what it was like.

PROMISE: As we gain experience, we increase knowledge and capability, but we also can become callous or blinded by our expertise. By remembering how we worked when we were new, we can combine the best of expertise and naiveté.



QUESTIONS FOR ACTION PLAN/FIRE STARTER

Once the tone has been set and rookie minds are engaged, use a few of the following questions to start a thought-provoking conversation. If you are using this packet by yourself, journal space is provided for you to write down your answers.

CHAPTER 1 THE RISE OF THE ROOKIE

1. How is it possible to be “at our best” when doing something for the first time? _____

2. Who do you know that is an excellent example of a rookie in action? _____

3. Why do we find rookie experiences both very challenging and very rewarding? _____

QUESTIONS FOR ACTION PLAN/FIRE STARTER

4. What research findings from the book surprised you the most? Why? _____

5. In what circumstances do you want to operate like a rookie? In what circumstances do you need to use the savvy and wisdom of experience? _____

6. Where can rookies be valuable in your business's or your organization's mission? _____

7. What are the organizational forces that pull us toward the "veteran comfort zone" (operating like caretakers, local guides, marathoners, and settlers)? How can we counter these forces? _____

QUESTIONS FOR ACTION PLAN/FIRE STARTER

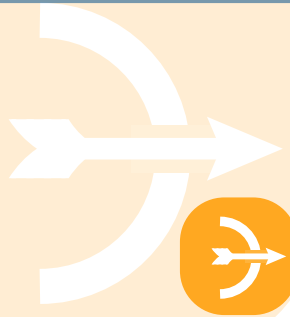


CHAPTER 2 BACKPACKERS

1. What causes us to get weighed down and entrenches us in our views? _____

2. How can we unencumber ourselves, so we can explore new ideas and innovate? _____

3. What is preventing us from asking the naive, fundamental questions (the ones that most people are thinking, but no one is willing to ask)? _____



CHAPTER 3 HUNTER-GATHERERS

1. Why do we get stuck in the “echo chamber” where we hear opinions that support our existing views and receive information that validates our current practices? _____

2. How can we escape the “echo chamber?” _____

3. Where is the “echo chamber” deafening someone on a critical issue? _____

4. How can we ensure mentoring doesn’t just happen top-down, but also flows bottom-up? _____

QUESTIONS FOR ACTION PLAN/FIRE STARTER

5. What would you like to learn being mentored by a rookie? What would you like to teach a veteran? _____



CHAPTER 4 FIREWALKERS

1. What's the difference between self-confidence and situational confidence? Why is low situational confidence advantageous? _____

2. Why can it be dangerous to operate at a steady, consistent pace? _____

3. What keeps experienced professionals and managers from getting the feedback they most need? How else might they get the feedback they need? _____

QUESTIONS FOR ACTION PLAN/FIRE STARTER

4. How can we create space for people to experiment and quickly test new ideas? _____



CHAPTER 5 PIONEERS

1. How do we (both as individuals and as a team) benefit from our “settling” behaviors (building secure infrastructure, policies, etc.)? _____

2. How might our existing tools, infrastructure, or protocols be keeping us from innovating? _____

QUESTIONS FOR ACTION PLAN/FIRE STARTER

3. What are the signs that someone (or a organization) is truly hungry for success? _____

4. Where have we become too comfortable and need a push out to the frontier? _____

5. What might an exciting pioneering expedition look like for you in your current role? _____

CHAPTER 6 THE PERPETUAL ROOKIE

1. Who do you know who is a perpetual rookie — someone who, despite experience and success, can still operate with a rookie mindset? What drives him or her? _____

QUESTIONS FOR ACTION PLAN/FIRE STARTER

2. How can you tell if someone is intellectually curious? Humble? _____

3. What helps you to maintain a youthful orientation to your work? _____

4. Who do you know who is a perpetual rookie? How do they maintain this orientation? How do they cultivate it in others? _____

CHAPTER 7 **ROOKIE REVIVAL**

1. What are the signs that you're not operating in rookie mode? _____

QUESTIONS FOR ACTION PLAN/FIRE STARTER

2. What helps you shift from a mode of knowing to a mode of learning? _____

3. How can we help people rediscover their rookie style of thinking and operating? _____

4. What challenges might you have with balancing your veteran experience with your rookie smarts in your work?

5. Why is it easier to see when a colleague has lost their rookie smarts than it is with ourselves? _____

CHAPTER 8
THE ROOKIE ORGANIZATION

1. How can we better utilize rookie talent on our team? _____

2. What do people in a rookie assignment need from their managers and leaders to be successful? _____

3. How can we combine rookie and veteran talent to form powerful teams? _____

4. What conditions need to exist within a team to make the best use of both types of talents? _____

QUESTIONS FOR ACTION PLAN/FIRE STARTER

5. What can we do as an organization to help all professionals stay in the rookie zone? _____

6. Which of the talent management strategies suggested in the book could have the greatest impact for our team? ____

7. In what part of our operation must we ensure that we maintain our rookie smarts? _____

8. What is the simplest first step we can take? _____

ROOKIE SMART ITINERARIES

To help you apply the theories of *Rookie Smarts*, my colleagues and I have created a set of learning itineraries. They are meant to guide your learning journey, much like a recommended travel itinerary might serve as a starting point for the adventure of a lifetime. Each itinerary maps out the first steps in one of eight different scenarios in which you might seek to strengthen your rookie smarts.

Each itinerary includes a starting point, a destination, and learning experiments along the way that will get you to your rookie destination. The path moves “up a learning curve,” so start at the bottom left and traverse your way up and to the right!

The last itinerary is available for you to fill in, so that you can create your own rookie smarts adventure of a lifetime.



ITINERARY 1

KEEPING YOUR YOUNG COMPANY AGILE AS IT GROWS

BY HAZEL JACKSON &
HAZEL COWLING

Hazel Jackson is CEO and founding partner of biz-group, a management consultancy company based in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, that provides leadership training, teambuilding, and business coaching.

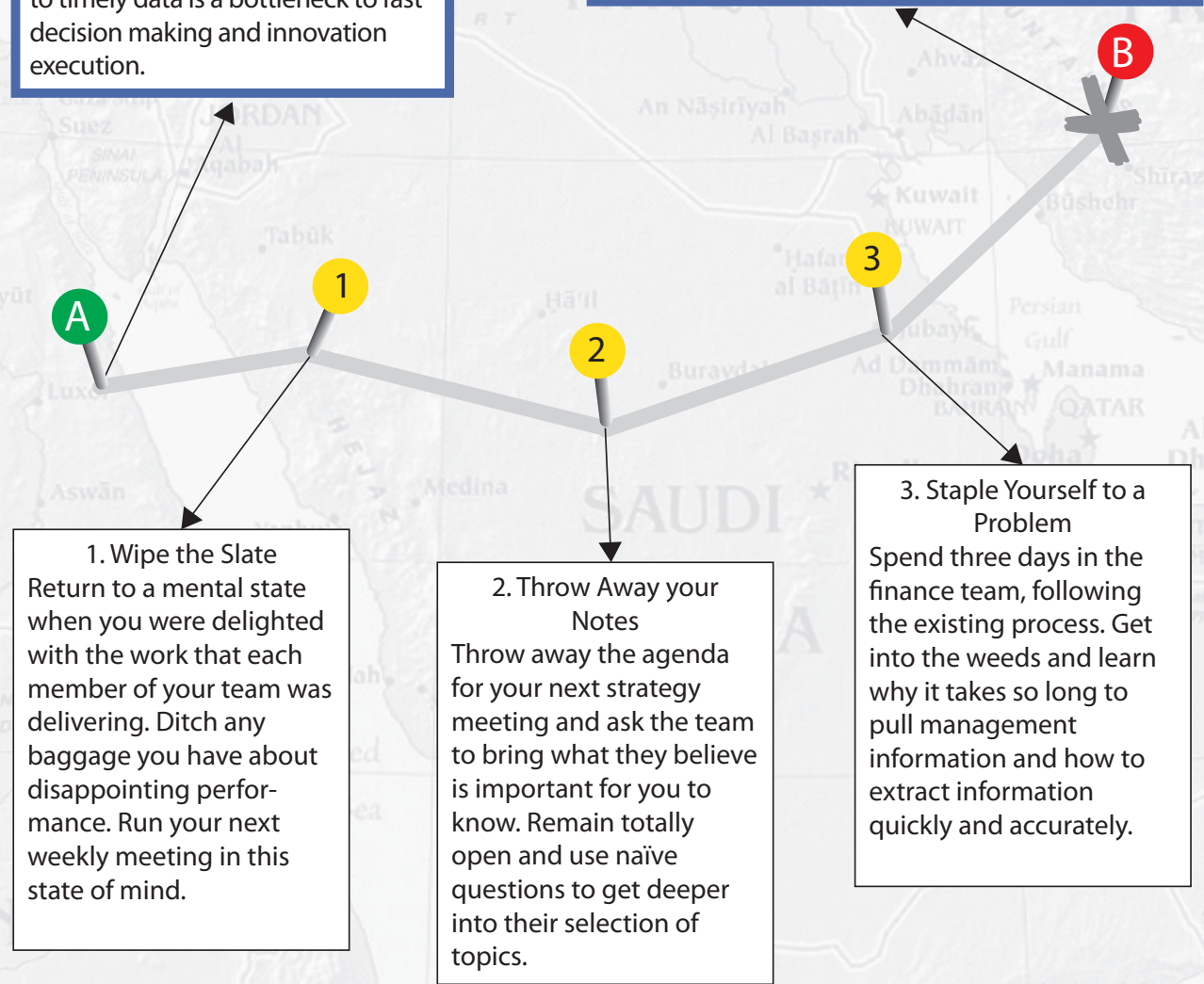
Hazel Cowling is partner and consultant director at biz-group responsible for managing accounts and developing the consultant workforce.

A. Starting Point

Your company has been growing fast for the last five years, but the competition is nipping at your heels. Innovation is taking longer, and you fear this will only get worse. Access to timely data is a bottleneck to fast decision making and innovation execution.

B. Destination

The company maintains fast growth in revenue and profit by accelerating the pace of innovation and remaining agile. The team moves with a sense of urgency and balances risks by using the relevant management information. Managers read numbers with a rookie mindset, seeing between the lines to find the lurking fresh ideas and opportunities.



ITINERARY 2

SHARPENING YOUR COMPETITIVE EDGE

BY SALLY CRAWFORD &
ROBERT DUPLANTIER

Sally Crawford is vice president of the leadership development practice at the Wiseman Group and leads the education business worldwide. Previously she was the CEO of a firm specializing in technology transfer and adoption.

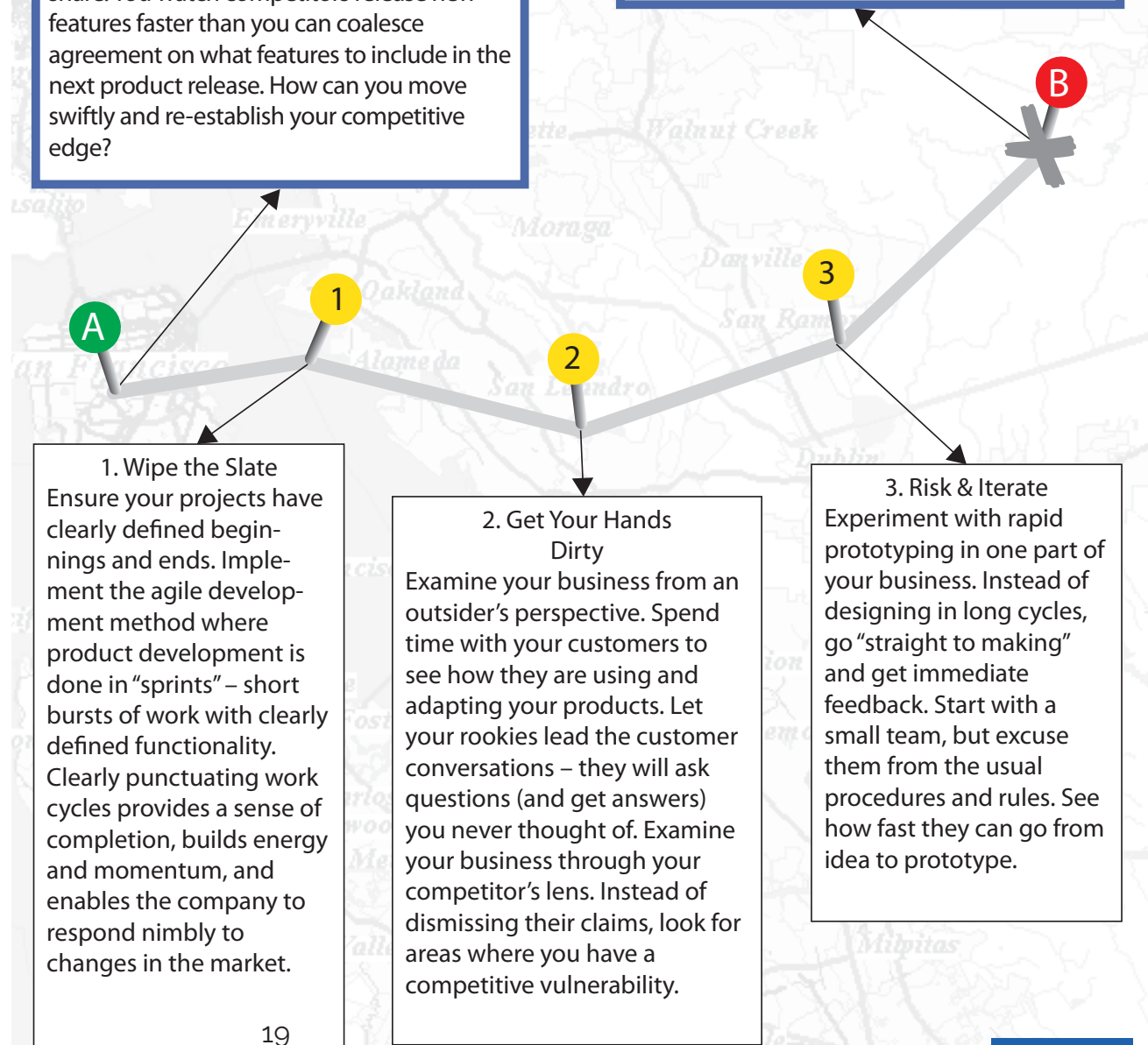
Robert Duplantier is a senior HR leader with 15 years of experience in human resources development, management, and analytics.

A. Starting Point

Your company used to move fast but has become slow and is settling into “the way we do it here.” While your company is enjoying the fruits of earlier labors, more nimble competitors are eating away at your market share. You watch competitors release new features faster than you can coalesce agreement on what features to include in the next product release. How can you move swiftly and re-establish your competitive edge?

B. Destination

While many parts of the organization are still slow to change, you’ve built muscle for experimentation and rapid innovation and have proof-points to help mobilize the rest of the organization.



ITINERARY 3

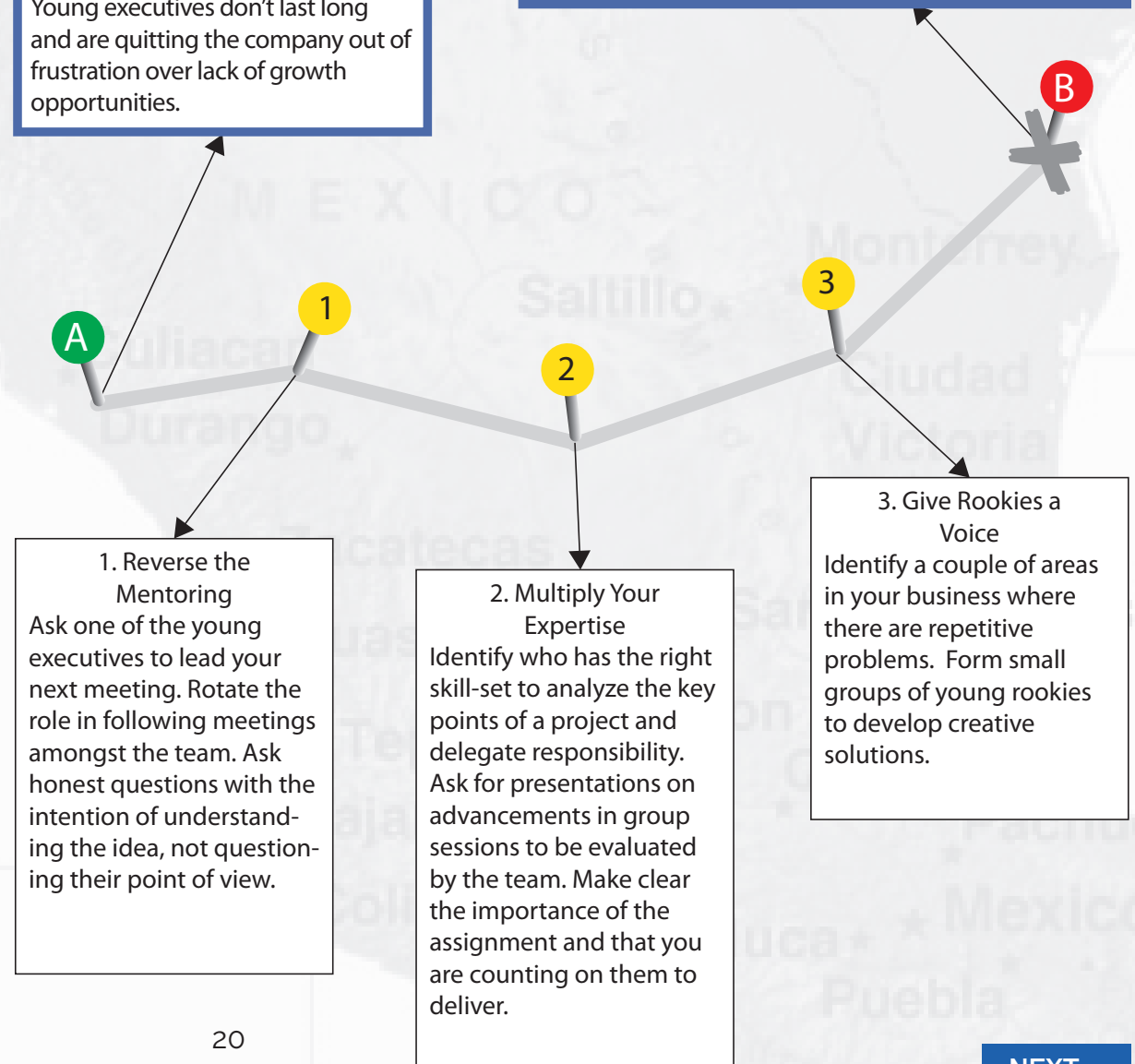
NAVIGATING CULTURAL AND GENERATIONAL DIFFERENCES IN THE WORKFORCE

BY MARIO BORGHINO

Mario Borghino is an expert consultant and keynote speaker in the fields of strategic planning, leadership, and innovation. He has authored six books (some of the top bestsellers in Latin America). He advises CEOs and government officials.

A. Starting Point
You are the experienced financial leader of a company with many young accountants working for you. You are highly conservative, extremely disciplined, and you believe that to grow within the company, rookies must put in the same time you did to become a VP. Young executives don't last long and are quitting the company out of frustration over lack of growth opportunities.

B. Destination
Your company will arrive at a place where young executives feel involved in important decisions and know that their personal capacity is being recognized. They will know that they have ownership for results and that the organization is counting on their creativity, initiative, and fresh ideas for the solution to problems.



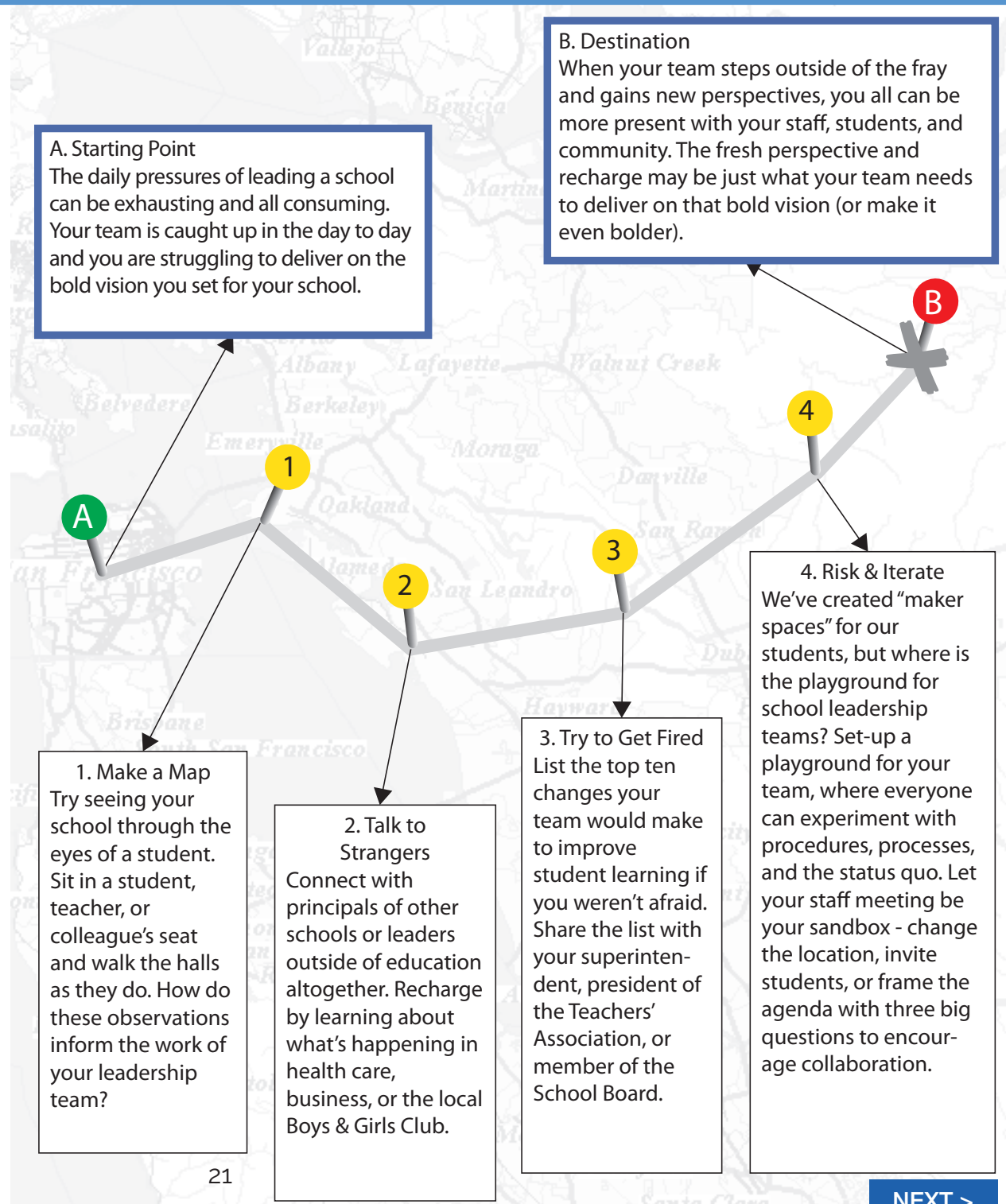
ITINERARY 4

RECHARGING YOUR SCHOOL'S LEADERSHIP TEAM

BY ELISE FOSTER &
ALYSSA GALLAGHER

Elise Foster teaches leadership to and coaches business and educational leaders. She is the co-author of *The Multiplier Effect: Tapping the Genius Inside Our Schools*.

Alyssa Gallagher is the director of strategic initiatives & community partnerships at the Los Altos School District. She was named as the Multiplier of the Year in Education for 2013.



ITINERARY 5

KEEPING YOUR CHURCH CONGREGATION VIBRANT & HOPEFUL

BY HEIDI BRANDOW &
BILL HYBELS

Heidi Brandow is a senior advisor in leadership development at World Vision International. She is also a master practitioner and learning designer for the Wiseman Group.

Bill Hybels is senior pastor of Willow Creek Community Church and chair of the board for Willow Creek Association. He is a bestselling author of more than 20 books, including *Leadership Axioms* and *Simplify: Ten Practices to Unclutter Your Soul*.

A. Starting Point

You want to build ministries that bring hope and help to those in need. But you realize you can't do it alone. You must create a vibrant church culture that inspires and engages others to use their gifts, talents, and passions to lead those ministries.

B. Destination

Your church has a vibrant culture, where ministries are led by engaged staff and volunteers who are empowered to innovate, learn from their mistakes, and bring others alongside them to produce results. The staff and congregation alike are finding fulfillment by using their God-given talents and gifts, and even the newest member has a significant contribution to make.

A

1

2

3

B

1. Reverse the Mentoring

Determine your area of greatest interest and least understanding. Ask one of your new staff members or volunteers with expertise in that area to help you learn. Ask questions and learn from their answers.

2. Talk to Strangers

Humble learners can learn from anyone. Find authors with whom you disagree—and read them. Gather input from people outside your congregation to understand the greatest needs of your community. Take what you learn and see what changes your congregation needs.

3. Get Your Hands Dirty

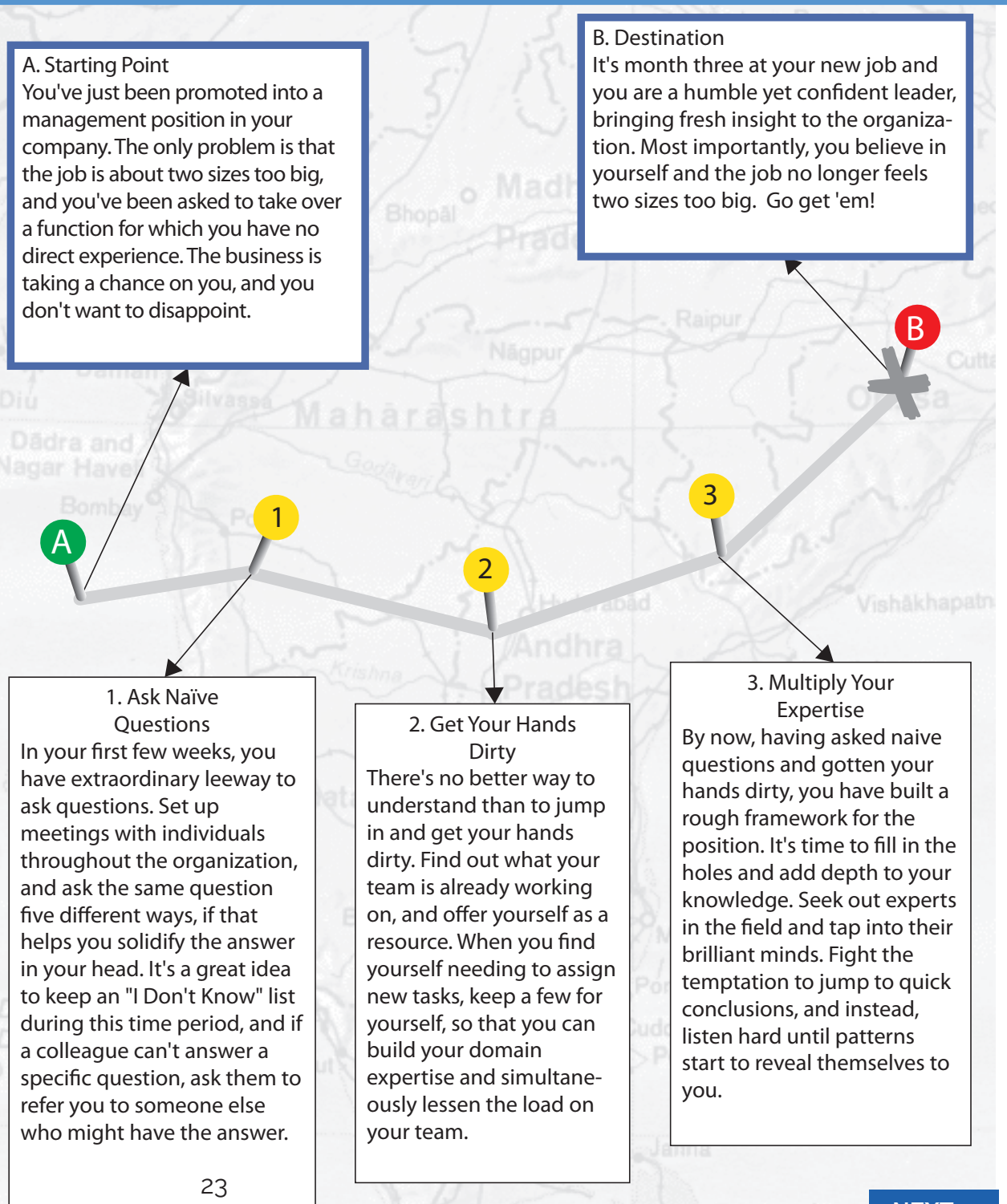
Take a step back and serve in an area that you passed on to someone else long ago. Pay attention to what has changed and find new ways of serving and leading in that space.

ITINERARY 6

STEPPING INTO A NEW, BIGGER JOB

BY DEEPA KRISHNAN

Deepa Krishnan is a firm believer in Rookie Smarts, having held various positions in law, business development, and product management. She is currently a VP of Product Strategy and Development at a late-stage startup in San Francisco, and holds a J.D. from UCLA and a B.A. from the Woodrow Wilson School at Princeton University.



ITINERARY 7

GETTING MORE FULFILLMENT AND PASSION IN YOUR WORK

BY NADIA LAURINCI

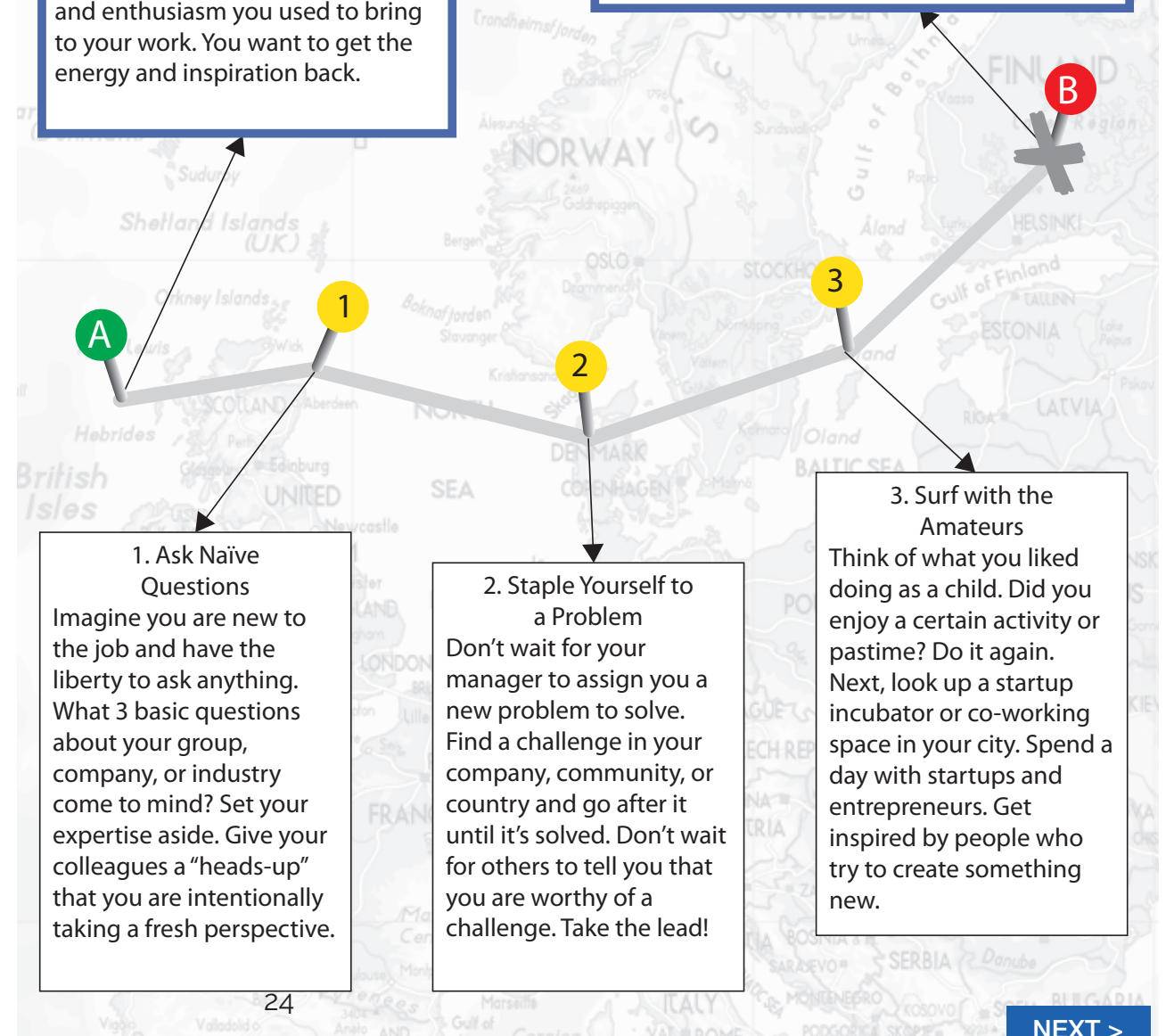
Nadia Laurinci is the CEO of Laurinci & Company, a talent agency working with leading experts and authorities around the world and spreading their knowledge to places where it is needed and impactful.

A. Starting Point

You have always invested your all into everything you touch. When you initially took on your current role, you embraced it with all your enthusiasm, smarts, and passion. Now, every day looks more and more the same. You are running on autopilot and have lost the passion and enthusiasm you used to bring to your work. You want to get the energy and inspiration back.

B. Destination

You are in a place where your excitement is back, and you are full of new ideas. You are ready to take your work to the next level, push the boundaries, and try something new. You radiate positivity and a can-do attitude. People around you say "she is back!"

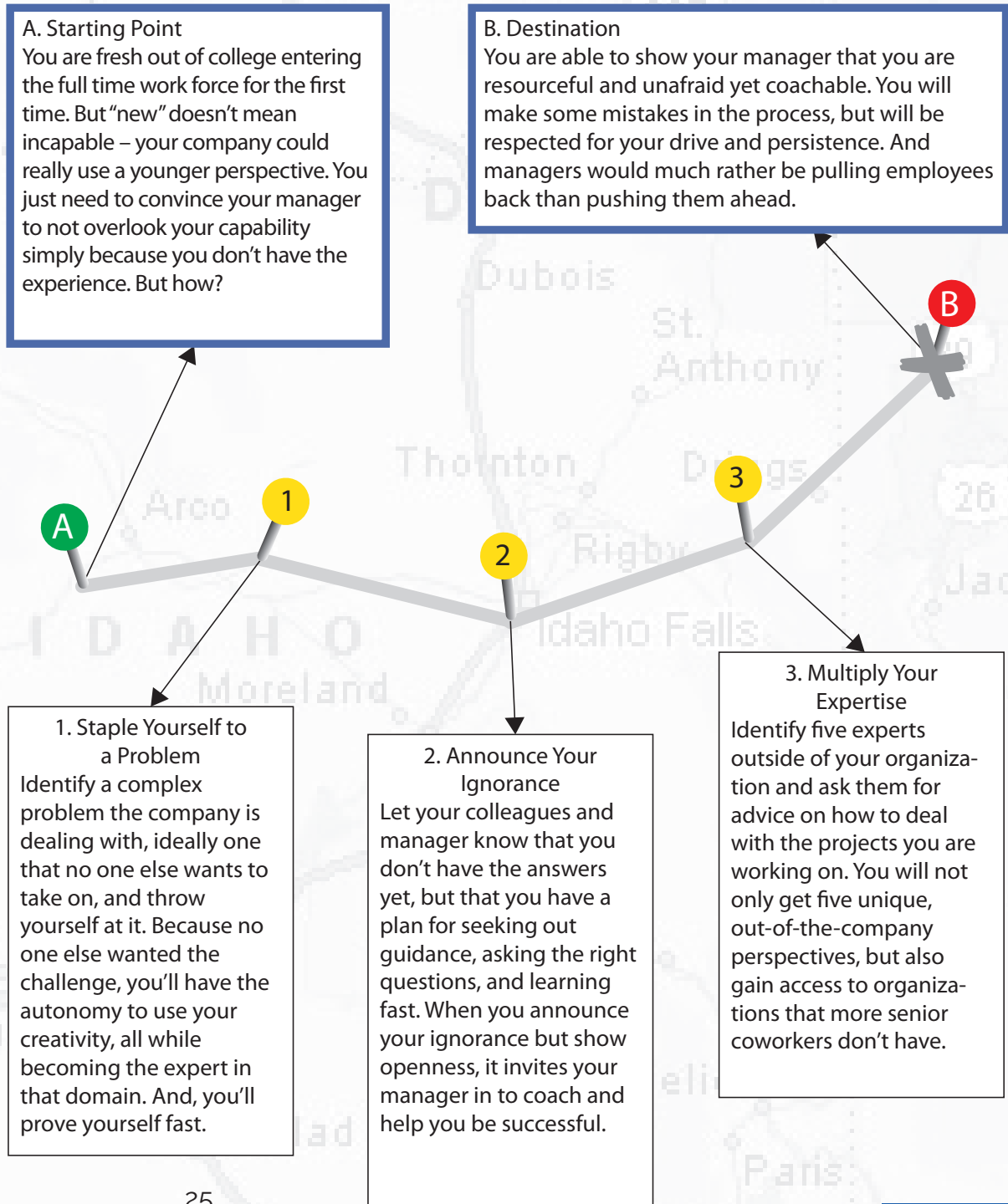


ITINERARY 8

MAKING A BIG CONTRIBUTION WHEN YOU ARE YOUNG AND UNAFRAID

BY NATE MEIKLE

Nate Meikle holds a Juris Doctorate from Stanford University and is currently a PhD student in organizational behavior at the University of Utah. He is the author of the forthcoming memoir, *Little Miss: a father, his daughter, and rocket science*.



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