

THE AUTHORITY GUIDE TO CONFLICT RESOLUTION



A revolutionary approach
to effective collaboration

JANE GUNN

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ISBN 978-1-912300-06-8

eISBN 978-1-912300-07-5

Published in 2017 by Authority Guides

authorityguides.co.uk

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Note on references: if I have inadvertently used any words or materials without acknowledging the originator, I apologise and would be happy to include a reference in the next edition.

Cartoons created by Simon Ellinas

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Printed in the United Kingdom.

Acknowledgements

I'd like to dedicate this book to *all* my family, friends, colleagues and clients with whom I have collaborated over the years. It has been an honour to work/live/play with you and I have learnt such a lot from our time together. Without you and the thoughts, ideas and experiences we have shared, I would not be where I am today.

To all of the team at SRA and in particular Sue Richardson, Kelly Mundt and Christopher Cudmore, thank you for your enthusiasm and encouragement.

To Kriss Akabusi and Steve Head, my mastermind buddies, thank you for all that we have shared over the years, our failures as well as our successes and for continually challenging me to be and do the best that I can.

To my husband Rob and daughters Victoria and Rebecca, a huge thank you for cheering me on for so many years and enabling me to do what I love.

“

How soon ‘not now’ becomes ‘never’.

Martin Luther

”

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In quarrelling, the truth is always lost.

Publilius Syrus



Introduction – collaborate or die?

In today's economy some businesses will die, some will survive and some will see the opportunities it presents and thrive.

One of the essential skills that will define the survivors is the ability to collaborate.

As a business leader or entrepreneur you need to create strong collaborative relationships with all of your organisational stakeholders – with everyone who enables your organisation to grow and develop. You must also actively seek out new opportunities to collaborate to take your business to the next level.

But do you have the right knowledge and skills to create strong collaborative relationships? Do you know how to avoid the pitfalls and conflicts and make sure that you are adding value and not risking loss? Imagine the benefits if you could capture the energy and dynamism that different personalities and approaches bring, as opposed to clashes and conflicts that often cost time, productivity and money.

You want to achieve your potential – to be successful and happy – both at work and at home *but* you live and work with others who don't always agree or see things the same way. Your

ability to deal with the challenges and crises in the relationships with your colleagues, friends and family comes down to how effectively you can manage conflict.

There is unbelievable power in the skills and tools that help you to build confidence in dealing with people when you don't see eye to eye. People do not connect to those who believe they are better than or more right than they are; rather they connect to those who are able to listen to and acknowledge the needs, interests and concerns of others, alongside their own.

I believe strongly that conflict is *the key* to effective collaboration. We cannot work together unless we both acknowledge and actively manage the issues that arise every day. And yet, our instinctive approach is often to avoid such issues or to behave in an aggressive or adversarial way that damages or destroys the very relationships on which we depend to live and work happily and effectively.

How to use this book

This *Authority Guide* will teach you the skills I have developed during 30 years working both as a lawyer and mediator helping people and businesses transform relationships. Based on subjects that I've been asked about consistently in my workshops and training, we'll be looking at, and answering, these key questions:

- What is conflict?
- Why is conflict magic?
- What are some common issues that cause conflict?
- What is the cost of unresolved conflict?
- Who are my stakeholders?

- Why don't I say what's on my mind?
- Why do you and I see things differently?
- Why don't I behave/act as I would like to?
- Why does conflict escalate so quickly?
- Why do we talk least about what matters most?
- What does my brain need to collaborate?
- Why do values matter?
- How can I better hear what needs to be said?
- How can I better say what needs to be heard?
- What is a living contract?
- How do I introduce a systematic approach to conflict?

Our 'opponents' are our co-creators, for they have something to give us which we have not. The basis of all cooperative activity is integrated diversity... What people often mean by getting rid of conflict is getting rid of diversity, and it is of the utmost importance that these should not be considered the same. We may wish to abolish conflict, but we can never get rid of diversity. We must face life as it is and understand that diversity is its most essential feature... Fear of difference is dread of life itself. It is possible to conceive conflict as not necessarily a wasteful outbreak of incompatibilities, but a normal process by which socially valuable differences register themselves for the enrichment of all concerned.

Mary Parker Follett (Cloke and Goldsmith, 2003)

The book is broken down into six chapters. The early chapters are the most theory-heavy chapters. These set the scene and explain what conflict is and why conflict happens. At the end of these first few chapters I've provided 'Key points to take away',

which will help you to remember what you've read. As we get further into the book we're going to start looking at, and using, a number of tools and strategies to help you manage conflict and difficult situations. These chapters are slightly longer and you'll notice that there aren't any key summaries at the end of the chapters. This is deliberate as all the tools are equally useful and will provide a systematic guide to conflict resolution.

Chapter 1: we're going to take a deeper look at what conflict is and why it can actually be the magic ingredient in your life and your business.

Chapter 2: I'm going to challenge you to look at the cost of ignoring conflict or handling it badly, as well as thinking about some of the common issues that cause it in the first place.

Chapter 3: what goes wrong and why? Why do we choose not to disclose things that are upsetting us? When we do find the courage to confront other people about our concerns, why don't we act as we would like to?

Chapter 4: getting down to business – what tips and tools can we use if we want to get things right in future? Learn and practise what you need to do and say to get it right next time.

Chapter 5: we look at how to avoid future problems by creating what I call a living contract based on the five Rs of relational agreement.

Chapter 6: create a systematic approach to conflict. This will encourage you to have a plan in place for managing the inevitable conflicts as and when they arise.

As with other titles in the *Authority Guides* series, this book uses exercises, models and case studies. In the case studies and

personal stories you'll read about the way in which other people have put this training into practice in their lives and businesses and you'll learn how to use these examples.

When you've finished the book, if you'd like access to more resources and podcasts, or if you'd like to contact me, you can do so via my website: janegunn.co.uk

Turn conflict into collaboration and differences into opportunities.

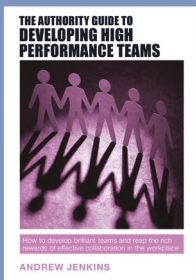
Capture and harness the positive energy that different personalities and approaches bring to conquer the problems that can harm teamwork, productivity and engagement in your business. In this practical *Authority Guide*, mediation expert Jane Gunn will teach you all the essential skills you need to constructively manage change, challenges and crisis. Develop a deeper understanding of conflict and how to transform it, as you unlock the secret to true collaboration and promote a culture of respect, cooperation and success.



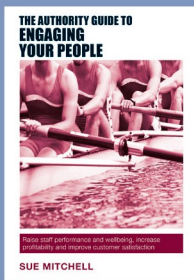
“Jane’s positive lens on dealing with conflict and the opportunities it offers to enhance and deepen work and personal relationships is beyond refreshing.”

David Reay, SVP HR, Sony Music

The Authority Guides are pocket-sized books offering highly practical and accessible guidance on business matters of every description. Aimed at the busy business professional and business owner, each book in the series has been written by an author who is not only an expert in their field but who is working today at the coalface of their specialism.



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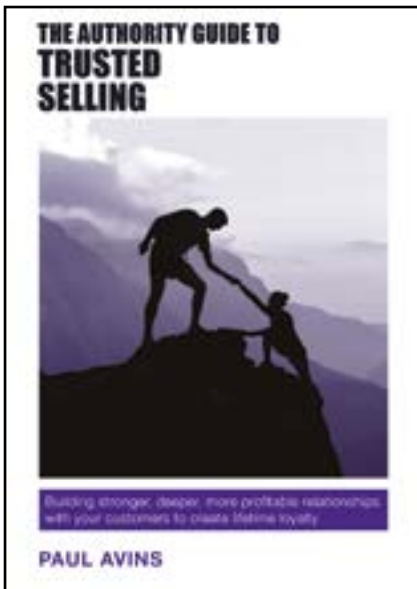
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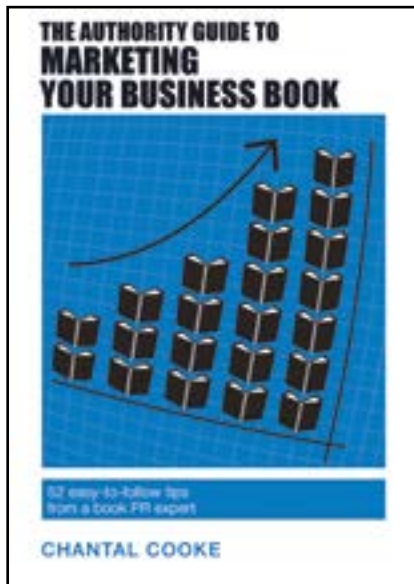
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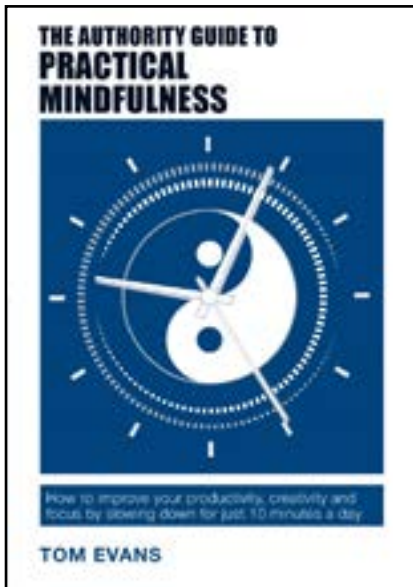
In today's volatile world sales professionals must know how to build trust in their company, their products and ultimately themselves in order to win the business. In this *Authority Guide*, sales coach Paul Avins shares his proven, 4-step system to help you contact, connect and convert more customers with less effort and no pressure.



It's never too soon to start thinking about how to market and promote your book. In this *Authority Guide*, leading book PR and marketing expert Chantal Cooke, presents 52 tips that will make your book stand out from the crowd, build your credibility as an author, and ensure you achieve those all-important sales.



Whether it's your first presentation or you're an experienced speaker, this *Authority Guide* will give you the tools, tips and confidence to deliver engaging, creative and effective presentations. Steve Bustin, an award-winning business speaker, an executive-level speech coach and corporate presentation skills trainer, will teach you simple but effective techniques to keep your audience engaged.

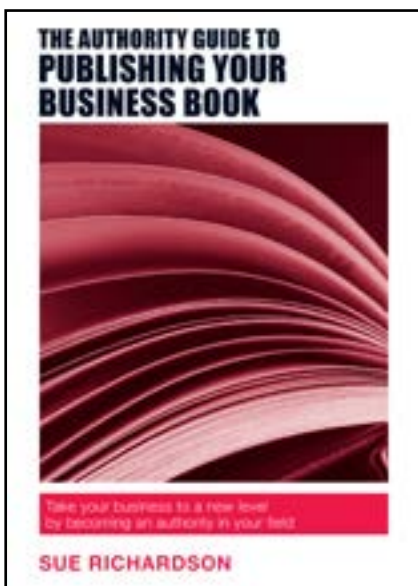


Enhance your wellbeing, creativity and vitality with mindfulness meditation.

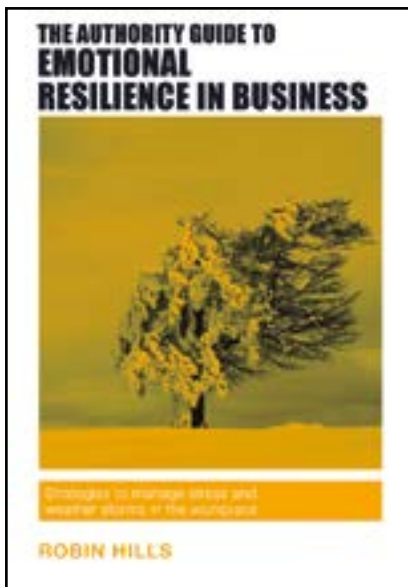
In this *Authority Guide*, Tom Evans invites you to embrace the benefits of meditation in both your life and your business. With the practical mindfulness meditative techniques described in this book, you will learn how to get more done in less time. You will discover how to generate ideas off the top of your head and how to allow serendipity to land at your feet. This book opens the door to a new way to be and do.



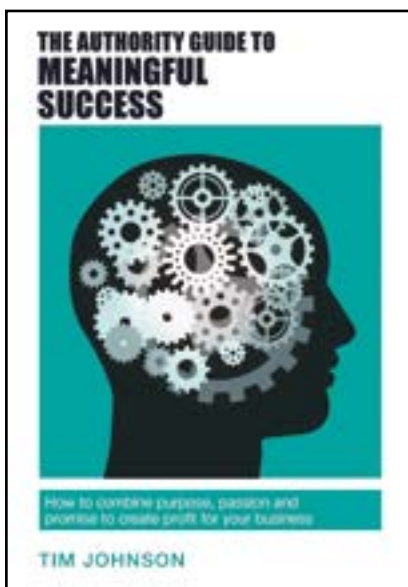
In this *Authority Guide*, forecasting guru Simon Thompson shows you how to build financial forecasts quickly, effectively and cheaply through his unique, proven and easy-to-follow 10-step process. By learning how to create effective forecasts you will master the ability to understand the potential financial outcomes for your business and be able to communicate financial information in order to successfully raise investment or loans.



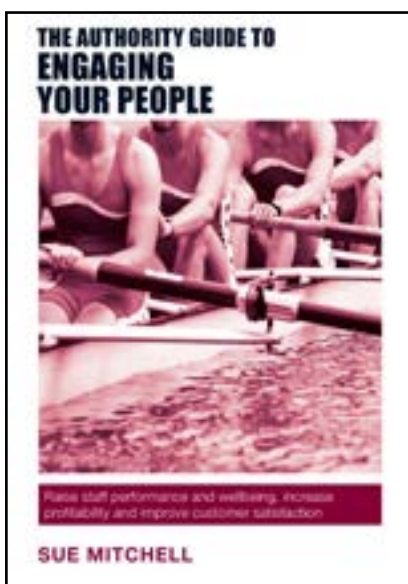
Publishing expert, Sue Richardson, shows you how to use your expertise, knowledge and experience to become a published authority in your field and gain the visibility you and your business needs. This *Authority Guide* will help you to create a plan that ensures you write and publish the right book for your business.



The emotional resilience of those involved in a business will contribute significantly to the organisation's success. This *Authority Guide* from leading emotional intelligence expert, Robin Hills, will help you change the way you think about yourself and the way you approach potentially difficult situations. You will be able to develop your own personal resilience and understand how to develop resilience within the hearts and minds of your team and your organisation.



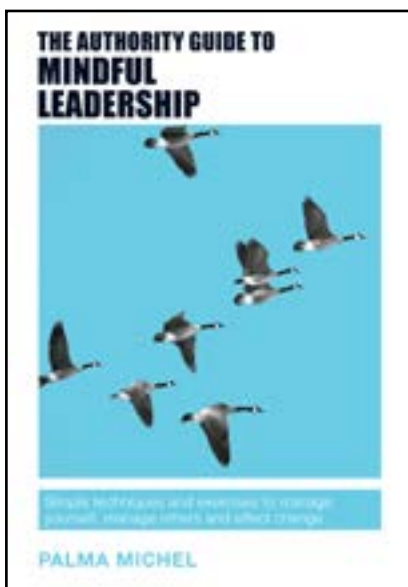
Tim Johnson, founder of Meaningful Success, shows you how to integrate practical business thinking with practical personal development to build a global network through your business or charity. This *Authority Guide* blueprints how we can embrace the best elements of entrepreneurial drive and passion, enabling blame-free culture to lead teams and provide personal fulfilment for all those involved.



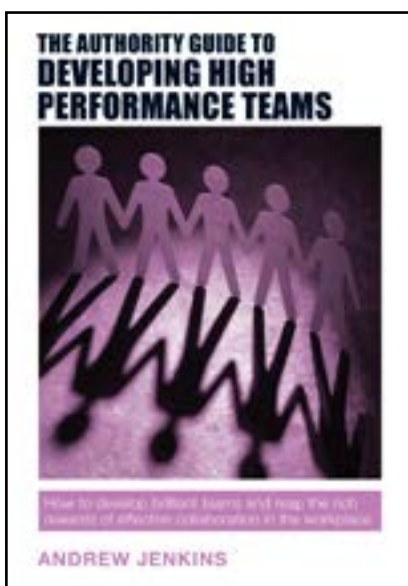
This *Authority Guide* addresses how businesses can increase their performance, productivity and customer/staff satisfaction through focusing on engagement. Sue Mitchell, an authority in coaching and leadership development, shows you how to build a team who is committed, inspired and eager to deliver their best work in order to make a difference.



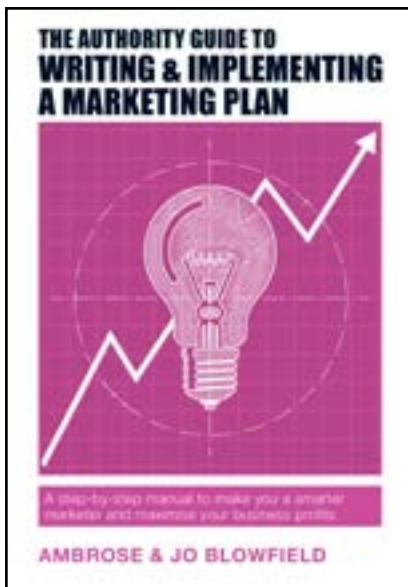
Any business wanting to reach new customers should be embracing public relations to spread their key messages. If you don't, your competitors will. This *Authority Guide* shows you how to grab the headlines (for all the right reasons), reach huge audiences and grow your business by accessing the media to tell your story.



Today's leaders and organisations need to develop an agile mindset and take bold risks. This *Authority Guide* shows you how to link mindfulness directly to business challenges and offers practical and accessible tools for change. Written by an expert on leadership, meditation and mindfulness, the book teaches you how to manage your inner landscape of thoughts, emotions and interruptions so that you can create a compassionate, innovative and sustainable working culture.



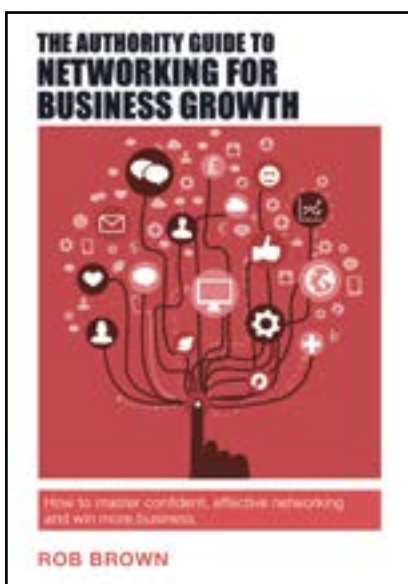
To make your good business a great business you need to have more than just a strong product or service. Having a highperforming team in your organisation is guaranteed to give you a competitive advantage. Andrew Jenkins helps you discover how to cultivate in your people the willingness to grow as individuals and as a group. Packed with easy-to-follow activities, exercises and models this *Authority Guide* explains how to build a high-performing, collaborative, trusting and resilient team.



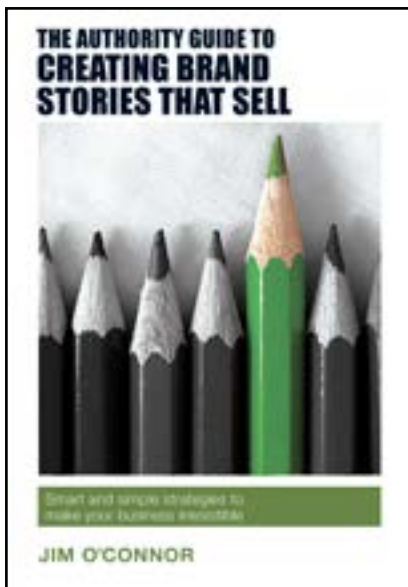
Written especially for small businesses, this *Authority Guide* shows you how to write and execute your marketing plans efficiently and accurately. Ambrose and Jo Blowfield will help you create a plan using proven, affordable marketing tactics for both digital and traditional strategies. You'll have a year long marketing plan that is structured, well thought out and targeted to your ideal clients, allowing you proactively to promote your business.



In this *Authority Guide* you will explore how to set expectations, give and receive real-time feedback and, as managers, become mentors in your workplace. These are essential to building and sustaining an excellent performance culture. Work psychologist, Dr Gene Johnson, teaches you how to focus on a results-driven culture, how to build it and how to not get muddled up in the mechanics of the process.



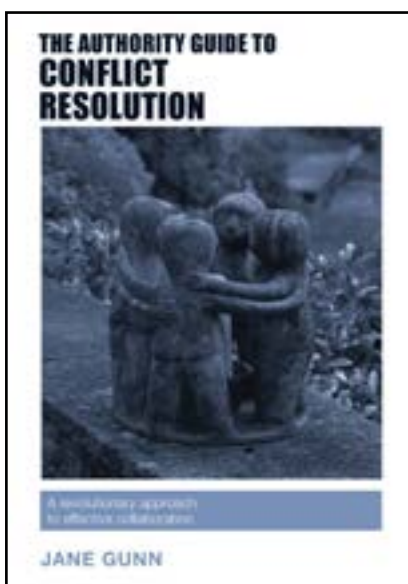
Overcome all your networking fears and learn how effortlessly to build and leverage the powerful connections you need to enhance your reputation, raise your profile and win more business. Networking expert Rob Brown will coach you on all the essential skills that will help you meet new people, create new leads, open up opportunities and grow your business – confidently and effectively.



Connect with your customers and make your business impossible to resist using this sharp, practical *Authority Guide* that will save you time, money and frustration. Combine psychology, creativity, logic and emotion expertly into a brand story that will make your business stand out from the crowd. And using Jim O'Connor's hard-won knowledge and vast experience give your business the focus, affinity, distinction and competitive advantage it needs to succeed and thrive.



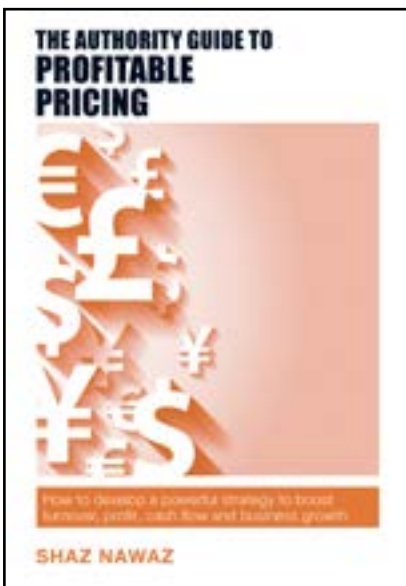
Create success and secure more business with a powerful pitch that really packs a punch. Avoid all the common pitfalls and learn how to boldly and succinctly explain what you do in less than 60 seconds. In this fast, focused *Authority Guide* Mel Sherwood shares her expert knowledge to give you the skills you need to prepare and deliver a professional pitch with authority, confidence and passion.



Capture and harness the positive energy that different personalities and approaches bring to conquer the problems that can harm teamwork, productivity and engagement in your business. In this practical *Authority Guide*, mediation expert Jane Gunn will teach you all the essential skills you need to constructively manage change, challenges and crisis. Develop a deeper understanding of conflict and how to transform it, as you unlock the secret to true collaboration and promote a culture of respect, cooperation and success.



Discover what makes people tick, how they perceive and react to different situations and why they behave the way they do. In this fast, focused guide, emotional intelligence expert Robin Hills reveals insights into motivation and how people perceive situations in business. As he unlocks the secrets of human nature you'll learn how to inspire top performance, gain trust, win confidence and build lasting relationships – more effectively and with great results!



Setting the optimum price for your products and services that's right for your customers and market, is vital to success. But how do you know what you're charging is doing the best job possible? In this smart, savvy Authority Guide, pricing expert Shaz Nawaz takes you step by step through everything you need to know to build a solid, reliable pricing strategy for your business. Thrive, flourish and open the door to instant increased turnover, the best customers and accelerated growth with the key to profitable pricing.

New titles of the Authority Guides to come soon.