

Liz Wiseman 00:01

Reality is leaving today. It's about reading in the dark. It's about I don't know where we're going because I haven't been there. Like we haven't invented it yet. Like it doesn't even necessarily exist. What I need you to do is like, come with me as we navigate, like in the dark, and try to find our way to something better, something more sustainable.

Jacob Morgan 00:27

That is Liz Wiseman, New York Times best selling author of multipliers, how to best leaders make everyone smarter. In 2019, she was recognized as the top leadership thinker in the world by thinker's 50, and she is the former VP of Oracle University. Louise is also a frequent writer for Harvard Business Review, and fortune and a frequent guest lecturer at BYU and Stanford University. Today we're talking about Liz's book in the two types of leaders she explores in diminishers and multipliers, she shares why organizations need more multipliers, the five disciplines of multipliers, how to deal with diminishers. And she gives some real world case studies and practical tips on how you can become a multiplier two,

Liz Wiseman 01:13

we want optimistic organizations, we want idea rich organizations. But what happens is, if the leader does too much of it, his or herself, if they embody that cultural value, then we have optimistic and innovative management, but not abroad organization, these are all things you want. You want people to move fast that you want it on your team. And sometimes the best way for the team to become this is for the leader to be a little less of it.

Jacob Morgan 01:51

The world is changing quickly. What do you need to know and do in order to be successful now and in the future, from leadership to the future of work to employee experience. This show will give you the insights and the tools you need to succeed and thrive professionally. And personally. Make sure to follow me on Spotify, or subscribe to the show on your favorite platform, you can do so easily by going to future of work podcast.com. Also, please rate the podcast on Apple podcasts or whatever your preferred platform is. It really helps spread the word about the show. And I personally appreciate it. Hey, Liz, how's it going?

Liz Wiseman 02:31

Well, very good. Very good. All things considered. It's there's a lot of challenges in the world right now. So

Jacob Morgan 02:37

yes, yes. And I've had my own set of little technical challenges. Before we get stuck. We've got started today, getting these little images uploaded just in time. So thank you for your patience. And thank you everyone who's joining live. As you can see, today's guest is someone who I'm sure many of you know I have her book, sitting right here. It is Liz Wiseman, Best Selling Author of multipliers. And I love the subtitle of the book, how the best leaders make everyone smarter. Fantastic book that I had the opportunity to read took a bunch of notes from So Liz, thank you so much for joining me today.

Liz Wiseman 03:12

Oh, you know, it's absolutely a pleasure.

Jacob Morgan 03:15

Well, since as you mentioned, there's a lot of madness in the world right now. One of the things that I like to start off with these podcasts now is just to kind of get your thoughts on what's going on in the world. If you have any words of support or encouragement, do you see some sense of optimism in what's going on out there?

Liz Wiseman 03:36

In a Jacob I'm a natural optimist. In fact, you know, my sister accused as we remember everything differently in our childhood because she says I have a happy filter. And I filter out anything that's negative. I don't know that she means it as a compliment. But I am naturally optimistic. But I actually am really optimistic that of what's happening right now. There's a lot of confusion and suffering. But here's what I see coming out of this is I think, particularly in how we work and the future of work. This is an incredible moment in time for us to show our humanity. Yeah. And you know, we have for years been hearing people say like, I want to bring my whole self to work, you know, we need to create human centered workplaces. Well, you know, like, voila, like, here's me, that's the new world of working from home and zoom. And you think back, I don't know, what was it a year or two ago, we all watched that. Professor in South Korea when his kids came in broadcasting on the BBC, and we're like, oh, the shame, the war. And now it's like, the new normal as they say, it's like, Hey, this is me. This is like my life. This is who I am. I'm coming at you from my house. And, you know, I think there's this incredible moment for us. To really see that we do bring our whole self to work. And it's hard to partition our work life and our home life. And to really kind of see into people working at home and to bring our humanity and, and for leaders, this is the time for you not only to provide clarity and direction and be the calm in the storm and all of those things. But for you to double down on, like seeing your team for what they're going through and showing your humanity and that vulnerability. So I actually think there's incredible value that's going to come in how we work coming out of this, it's going to be liberating.

Jacob Morgan 05:44

Yeah, I totally agree, I think more than ever seeing yours try to kind of forward and be, I guess, good human beings first, and then good business leaders. Second, just making sure that their people are okay, making sure that, you know, whatever, the protests that are going on everywhere with COVID financial troubles, I think a lot of leaders out there stepping up, and just making sure, first and foremost that their people are okay, before worrying about, you know, profits or sales or business or anything like that. So I'm glad to see that that that is happening, more and more. So let's jump right into into your book, because I think there are a lot of really applicable insights and stories, especially for what's going on now. And the very first question that I thought we could start with just kind of high level, can you talk about the two types of leaders that you address in your book?

Liz Wiseman 06:39

Well, you know, the start with an observation that I had years ago, that some leaders are smart, but they don't create intelligence around them, I came to call them diminishers. Because they tend to focus on their own intelligence and capability, which causes them not to see or, or user, in some cases, unfortunately, actively suppress others. So that's, that's the diminishing leader. And the other is the

multiplier of leader who's also smart and capable, but they use their intelligence in a way that other people around them become smarter and more capable, that, you know, they're leaders who see and use and grow the intelligence of others. And, you know, by intelligence, I mean, knowledge skill, capability, insights, you know, there are leaders who we get to be fully capable around and and what I found it was so it was shocking. What I found in this research is that these diminishing leaders get less than half of people's intelligence. You know, what that means is people are walking like they're badging into work. Yeah, with ideas and insights and capability. That's not getting used. And, you know, it creates an environment which is disengaging, and frustrating and, and exhausting.

Jacob Morgan 08:01

Yeah. And we've all been in those types of environments. So we know exactly what that's like. So and I've through my career before I went off on my own, I think it's around 12 years ago. Now. I would say that I worked for a lot of diminishers I don't think I've ever worked for a multiplier. So I know firsthand. Exactly what that's like. So it sounds like the diminishers are the ones that they sort of suppress their people and the multipliers kind of expand and unleash their people.

Liz Wiseman 08:33

Yeah, it is the you know, the multiplier. Fires are igniting the intelligence, unleashing that intelligence. And you might think of it since you mentioned leash, like the diminisher leader has someone probably on a choke chain. Yeah, where the multiplier leader is someone who might be more like, letting someone off leash but, but maybe holding on, not completely, like, free range. It's not a hippie leadership. It's not like, Hey, dude, knock yourself out, like be innovative. Like go for it. It's, it's more like I'm somebody who's holding the strings of a kite. Got it, like allowing something to soar or elevate, but not free flyer, freefall. It's like I'm going to guide you. But it's lightly it's that it's a lighter touch on leadership, as opposed to today. You know, I had a, there's a guy who worked for me at Oracle for 10 years, Ben Putterman. And, like, Ben always kept me down to earth as a leader, like one of the things he would do if I was getting a little too micromanaging. He would, he would, like just like, we walk out of the meeting, and he'd go like this. Like, you know, like, he's like, Liz, you've got me at a choke chain. And he never had to say the words he just would give me the ah, and I would know like, Okay, I need to back off I was never like, trying to actively silence him, I just was so excited that I would jump in and I would be a little too big. And he would know like, hey, I need a little bit more room here.

Jacob Morgan 10:14

That was actually going to be my next question. And that is our diminishing leaders. Are they bad? Leaders? I mean, it sounds like in your case, you didn't even realize sometimes that you were doing it. So you can be a diminishing leader, but not do it consciously or on purpose, like trying to micromanage and shut down your employees?

Liz Wiseman 10:35

Yeah, absolutely give you the big insight I found from the research was, first and foremost, these diminishing leaders were getting less than half of people's capability, of course, paying people full price, getting less than half the second big aha, was that most of this diminishing was coming from the well intended leader. So yeah, some of it comes from the micromanaging, bully, narcissistic boss who's, you know, gives you a little task to do rather than challenges and opportunities. But most of its coming from

what I call the accidental diminisher. And these are leaders who care about their people want to be good leaders trying to do the right thing. Like in my case with Ben, I was just excited to be collaborating with them. Yeah, where I needed to say, this is yours. Let me back away. We hold the strings to the kite rather than like,

Jacob Morgan 11:31

yeah, no. Mix. Yeah. And so we'll talk and getting some questions coming in about how to identify if you're one or the other. So we'll get to those in a few minutes. But before we jump into that, I want to talk about the multiplier effect. So can you explain a little bit about what that is how that works?

Liz Wiseman 11:51

Well, the multiplier effect is what happens when you are getting all of people's capability. So it's what happens when people are able to work at 100% of their capability. Now the multipliers we studied, got on average 95%. But a lot of people said, in fact, in my research, I asked people, what percentage of your capability did this leader get from you? And I said, on a scale of zero to 100, and I define those endpoints of the range. And I got a lot of people who said, Well, 120 130%, and I'm like, no, no, no, no, I'm not asking for hyperbole. Like, hey, I gave it all I tried. I said, I want to know how much of your intellect was being used? And they said, 120, I'm like, no, no, no, let me explain this again. And what I did is I took all that data, and I truncated it at 100. Because I thought, you know, 100 is all of your knowledge, your insights. And what I found is there are people who have at least said, No, it's 110 120. Why? And they said, they got things from me. I didn't know I had, like, Okay, well, good for you. But it's still 100. Right? It was there. They said, No, no, no, there's more. I grew so much working for this person, that it's not 100% anymore. And you know, we know this that intelligence, it, it languishes it shrinks, essentially, when it's not used. And when intelligence is challenged and used, in applied, it grows, that we we literally get smarter and more capable, around certain kinds of leaders and people and colleagues and roommates and family members. And that is really the multiplier effect. It's getting all of people's capability, plus a growth dividend. And then the dynamic that happens across an organization where people come to work knowing that not only are they going to be fully utilized, they're going to be challenged that you need to show up. Game ready. Yeah, that's the multiplier effect.

Jacob Morgan 14:06

So when you unlock the potential, and you kind of support them and enable them to use their full intelligence, it goes kind of like above and beyond that 100%.

Liz Wiseman 14:17

And it does. And as it happens, not just with one person with many people across a team, and then you start to build a culture where it's the norm, where people say, work isn't a place that frustrating and exhausting. Work is a place that's a little bit exhausting, but totally exhilarating. Now, you've built a culture, which becomes self sustaining. Like this is just an end. It really is the kind of enterprise that you and many others have been writing about is the future of work.

Jacob Morgan 14:52

Can you actually talk a little bit about the research I realized I'd never actually asked you because you did quite a bit of research for this to figure that out. So can you just share some of the research that you did? And maybe some of those findings that you were talking about?

Liz Wiseman 15:05

Yeah. So the way that I do, I did the research for multipliers. And I really see myself as a researcher kind of first and, and foremost is I went in, so I did not pick who I thought were multipliers and diminishers. Like that would have been easy and fun. And it would have been a book about like, Hey, let me tell you about my least favorite work experiences and my favorite bosses, I went, I identified professionals that I respected people who were successful in their careers, people who had often, if not always had management experience themselves. And people who didn't have an axe to grind, you know, which is sort of an idiom, meaning they're not bitter. Because I just didn't want to hear about baggage I wanted to hear about. So then we went to these people said, describe to me about a situation where you were able to do this. And like, what were What did you do and what did the boss do. And that might be a multiplier situation, and then describe it. So you know, that would describe a situation where you're absolutely at your best when you're able to solve hard problems deal with challenges, you know, where you're like, blah, blah, blah. And then I ask people to identify a different situation where they're holding back, playing it safe, where problems aren't getting solved, where problems are actually growing. And so I then ask them to talk about their boss in these situations and describe what did the leader do? How did he or she think, and at the core of all of my research, and, and all of the books I've done has been trying to understand what are the behaviors that lead to certain kinds of outcomes? In this case, someone at their best versus someone at their worst? And then what are the mindsets? And, you know, here's what's funny about the research, Jacob, is I thought people would very easily be able to identify the behaviors of their bosses, but would struggle to identify their, their mindsets, their beliefs or assumptions. And I was exactly wrong. exactly opposite. Because when I asked people to talk about like one of their diminishing bosses and say, Okay, well, what did he or she do? Well, you know, hmm, like, they eventually got there. But when I asked them, Well, what did he What did he or she believed to be true? Oh, that he was the smartest person in the world, that she didn't think I could do it without her intervention. It's funny, they were like this. able to identify here's what was going on in their head. Isn't that interesting?

Jacob Morgan 17:44

It is, it actually reminds me like, I'm just thinking that, you know, if I ever get in, like a, an argument or something with with my wife, and then later on, she'll, she'll be mad at me. And I'll say, Well, can you tell me what, you know, what did I do that made you so upset? Or she'll ask me the same thing. And then oftentimes, it's like, well, I don't I don't remember exactly what you did. But like, it sort of reminds me of that. Like, I know

Liz Wiseman 18:09

what I know what you were thinking. Exactly. Like, I know, only knows, like you had this assumption going on? Yeah. Like, I was like, planning the trip without you. And like, or whatever it is. And it's funny how we, we are really skillful at reading people's intent. And their assumptions, because it just it oozes out in our behavior. Yeah, I was very surprised by that.

Jacob Morgan 18:40

Yeah, but but now that I'm thinking about it, like, you know, when my wife or with friends, I mean, it doesn't make sense, because I know, we've all been in that situation where it's like, somebody doesn't actually do something, but you can kind of tell like, the direction that they're going in. And that's what makes you upset, as opposed to something directly that they did. But yeah, I wouldn't normally, until you mentioned it, I wouldn't have actually picked up on that. Okay, so the mindsets, they were able to identify instead of the

Liz Wiseman 19:07

specific. And so what came out of the research was, okay, two different kinds of leaders. How do they each think, like, what are their assumptions? What behavior does that generate? And then what impact does that have, which is, like, in short, the diminisher holds this mindset that nobody's going to figure it out without me. You know, they don't have to hold a mindset, which is like, Hey, I think I'm surrounded by idiots, or no one else can figure it out. They're all dummies, it's, no one can figure it out without me, which causes them to do a set of things, which then causes them to get less than half of people's capability versus the multiplier, whose assumption is, hey, you know what, people are smart and they're gonna figure it out. You know, like, I can be helpful on that, but But I'm not needed, like, I'm not the key and gradient in that, which causes them to do. In this case, five things that I could see that they do very differently. And they get all people's capability and then this growth dividend, which creates this multiplier effect, and that really was at the core of the research.

Jacob Morgan 20:26

Okay? So the mindset, cuz I think this is really important for a lot of people who are watching or listening. So I guess one way that you can identify the diminisher versus the multiplier is if you yourself, or your leader, always, if you always believe that you need to be a part of the solution, then chances are you have the mindset of the diminisher. Whereas if you believe that you can provide guidance or coaching if it's needed, but you don't need to be there for others to be able to come up with a solution, then you're more of the multiplier.

Liz Wiseman 21:00

Yeah, and it's not that the multiplier is this hands off leader because, you know, we've made some attempts at leaderless organizations, and I don't think they go very well. No, no. And, you know, we often think of leaderless organizations is, you know, going to create anarchy, but actually, leaderless organizations tend to create inaction. Ya know, it's not like a bad scene from Lord of the Flies. It's, it's, it's more like, I, this is how I refer to it at my house is like, if everyone's in charge of feeding the cats, then the cats go hungry. So it's like the leader plays a really key role. But it's more like they step in, they frame an issue, they started debate, they ask a big question, they offer challenge. So they kind of come in big. But then they retreat? No, and then let other people jump in. So it's not like it's a passive? Hands off. It's actually a pretty active, if not aggressive, intense way of leaving, it's just not always on.

Jacob Morgan 22:06

Yeah. Got it. Okay. I think that makes complete sense. Okay, so are there any other maybe characteristics that people should be aware of as far as distinguishing between if they themselves or their leaders are either a multiplier or a diminisher?

Liz Wiseman 22:23

Yeah, you know, I could I could share with you like, here are the five disciplines of multipliers, but I think probably a more useful way is for me to share a few ways that we can accidentally diminish it.

Jacob Morgan 22:33

Okay, which I was gonna ask you about those five, five things later, too. Okay, so let's talk about

Liz Wiseman 22:38

just ways, common ways that people end up accidentally diminishing, and maybe what I'll do, there's nine that I see on a regular basis, but let me start with the couple that are are my vulnerabilities and then the ones that we see really frequently. For me, like, what gets me is I am an idea guy, like, I'm a fountain of ideas. And these leaders, they think, like they're full of ideas, hey, what about this? Why don't we try this? Have you considered this? Well, why don't we do a taskforce? Why don't we, and they think what they're doing is that their ideas are stimulating other people's ideas. You know, they want a creative, innovative, like rich environment. They think they're getting the party started. But what happens around these leaders is other people don't have to think like, Well, okay, you know, either I spend my days running around trying to implement loses ideas, or I don't actually need to think very hard. I'll just like ask Liz what she thinks, like, we become idea lazy around people who are idea rich, that's one, I am so guilty of this, I have to learn all the time, how to turn off my idea guy, and I do it by like asking myself a singular question. When I get all wound up on a new idea, oh, this would be fun. We should try this. I say, Liz, do you want the people on your team to stop what they're doing? And work on this right now? The answer is almost always no. Yeah. Then you know what, take out a piece of paper like I keep in a stack of post it notes, Andy and I just like write my ideas down. I stick in places and say, you know, that last a day or even a week, I'll bring it up at the next team meeting. But so, so being like idea Rich is one another one of my vulnerabilities is I am optimistic, as I mentioned. And you would think that my team would very much appreciate my optimism but not everyone does. Like we find that optimistic leaders often overlook you know, these are hopeful positive that see upside that often overlook struggle and challenge. And like, right now, like people need to know that their leaders understand how hard things are. Yeah, because they're isolated because they're trying to work virtually when they've been working physically because the economy is, is tight or oppressive, even. So, I've learned to spend more time like understanding the struggle and saying things like, hey, what we're doing is hard. We might not succeed at this a lot more time talking about the downside. So that people around me understand that I get it, and they can focus on the upside. So those are two I struggle with,

Jacob Morgan 25:35

I have a problem with that, too. My wife always tells me, you know, like, if something tough is happening, I tend to focus on the bright side of things. And she's like, why can't you ever just be negative with me on some things? So I can totally relate to that. And the same thing with the ideas thing, and I'm sure my team hates when I do this, but I'm constantly like, same way, you know, can we try this? Let's try that. Which is interesting, because I know that some organizations really value they call that innovation, right? Oh, you know, we need more ideas, we need more suggestions, we need more things to try. But it sounds like that can actually be sometimes a detrimental thing for leaders, because it just kind of takes over

Liz Wiseman 26:14

here. Here's the key to understanding accidental diminisher tendencies. It's really understanding two things. One is it's understanding the difference between your intent and your impact. Like you're actually trying to generate innovation and creativity. But your impact is that you've provided all of it. So other people don't need to do it, or they're, they're too busy running around following you. So your impact is to decrease innovation. The other important thing like to fix this is to understand that every one of the accidental diminisher tendencies, and I'll mention the three most popular ones in a second here is their virtues. Like we want optimistic organizations. Yeah, we want idea rich organizations. But what happens is, if the leader does too much of it, his or herself, if they embody that cultural value, then we have optimistic and innovative management, but not abroad organization, these are all things you want, you want people to move fast, but you want it on your team. And sometimes the best way for the team to become this is for the leader to be a little less of it. So the other ways that we see this happen a lot is rapid responders, managers who are like moving quick, they, you know, they see a text, they answer a text, they an email comes in, they want their team to move fast, so they move fast.

Jacob Morgan 27:52

Oh, that's a problem for me, too.

Liz Wiseman 27:54

Okay, so you're three for three right now, this week, fine, we're gonna see if we can do like a bingo

Jacob Morgan 28:00

is not looking good for me. You know,

Liz Wiseman 28:03

if the manager is so quick to respond, then nobody else gets to do their job, nobody else gets to take accountability, because that manager has just taken it from him. So the little rule I use, I've had some rapid responder tendencies in the past, I use a 24 hour hands off rule. Which means if an email comes in, and one just came in on Friday, it was sent to me and one other person on my team who was actually the one responsible for this project. Well, I knew he was out for a bit in a meeting, and he wasn't going to get to this and my fingers on the keyboard, I'm about to reply. Because I'm like, Oh, this is important. And this person is going to want to hear from us. And I just take my fingers off the keyboard, and I'm like, 24 hours, hands off, which gives him a chance to come back from his meeting, come back from his son's little league game, whatever it is, and take ownership and responsibility. But people can't take ownership for something unless the manager lets go of it. Yeah. And so I do 24 hours, meaning I give other people a chance to respond. But if they don't respond, then I'm all over it. And usually, it's, Hey, this is yours, not mine. You know, can you get back to this person? So rapid responding, the other is paced setting, meaning, you know, being the example of let's say there's kind of a desire to be more market focused. So it's like, hey, let's read up what's happening in the industry and really knowing what what's going on in the economy, the market or knowing what's happening with our customers. So the managers like, Okay, I want my whole team to do that. So I will, I'll lead the way. I'll model that I'll spend time reading up on the market spending come out in the field with our customers knowing what issues they're dealing with. And what happens is they're thinking, I'll lead the

way I'll get out ahead set the pace for the team, and other people will follow. But actually what happens is people hold back and they, they watch like, when we set the pace for our team, we more often create spectators than followers. And, you know, like, sometimes you have to put that slower person or the more junior person out in front and let them leave. Something I learned hiking with four kids. I take the youngest that everyone's saying, Joshua, go faster. Why can't you keep up? I'm like, Hey, Josh, you know what, on this next segment, why don't you lead and set the pace for your older brothers? Brother, brother and sister? Well, what do you think what happens when I put Joshua out in front? He now kicks up the pace and others are having trouble keeping up with him. As a leader, you know, sometimes these to march in the back?

Jacob Morgan 31:00

Yeah, yeah, I suppose you need a little bit of self awareness for this as a leader, because I mean, you need to be well, I guess that kind of brings up an interesting point is you need to be able to identify these things in yourself, right, as a leader or other people call them out for you.

Liz Wiseman 31:13

Well, generally, people don't call them out for us, which is why it's so important. You know, people don't usually say, hey, this thing that you're doing with the best of intentions, it's having this negative impact, it's learning to see it like it starts with sometimes people can see it just on hearing the concept like the idea guy, the optimist, the rapid responder, the Pace Setter, the rescuer, jumping in to save people, the protector, oh, you know what, don't take the hardship assignments, I'll do it, you can take the easier things, the big bold visionary, who does all the thinking no one else has to the perfectionist who just loves to get it right. But like people are getting their work recollected all the time. Sometimes just that will help you know, we've got a little quiz on multipliers books.com that a lot of people take that gives them sort of a it's a self assessment, it gives you a little bit of a suspicion. But what it really comes down to is talking to your team and it's, it's not Am I a diminisher? It's like, you know the answer to that question. You know, it's not even saying, Hey, am I an accidental? diminisher? Of course not. It's asking in what way, like with the best of intentions, could I be suppressing creativity? Or, you know, this enabling like ownership, like, how am I doing it, like, tell me the good things I'm doing, that are actually causing bad things to happen? And when you frame it that way, people can tell you, Oh, well, look, let's I know you're trying to do this. Like you're trying to cheerlead me. But actually, what I need right now is someone to like, just be a little bit what was the term you use with your wife? Can you just be a little bit negative?

Jacob Morgan 33:15

Or she she frequently says that? Can you be a little bit more and more negative with me?

Liz Wiseman 33:20

Yeah, what she's saying is, I need you to acknowledge that I am struggling with something. Yeah. Don't try to happy me out of it. Just like, would you join me in the struggle for a moment? Before we climb out?

Jacob Morgan 33:35

Yeah, exactly. So I tried to I tried to work on that. But you know, it's my wife. So she has no problem calling me out. on anything that I do.

Liz Wiseman 33:43

I guess all these problems would be fixed if we just treated each other, like spousal

Jacob Morgan 33:48

relationships. Exactly, exactly. Don't hold back. So we talked a little bit about the diminishers. Maybe we can talk now about the multipliers. So what are some of the things that multipliers do and can also be an accidental multiplier.

Liz Wiseman 34:01

You know, there are some people that I would consider accidental multipliers, and they don't realize they're either they were just like, born and raised, like at their mother's knee with this real sense for like, Hey, don't get so big for your britches. And you know, what, it's not about you. It's about others, like be the person who enables others, like, they were either just raised right and they do it naturally. Or maybe like me, you're just lazy enough that you end up doing it, right. Like, I think the lazy man's approach to leadership is not a bad one. It's like, Ah, man, I'd have to think really hard to solve this problem. Why don't I just use my team instead? Or, you know what? I don't have the energy to micromanage. Like, I'm going to trust you. Okay, so what is it that these multiplier leaders do? For one is they they see in us people's natural genius, I call it their native genius and thing they do easily and freely if you want a little technique to be more of a multiplier this way is don't look at people as in their job descriptions, or their resumes, it's like look for what they do easily and freely. Like what they're going to do, whether it's their job or not, what they're going to do, whether you ask them to do it or not, like, it's just that thing they're going to do, we all have something like, it's just like, my mind just does this, and, and build a job around that or find parts of the job with that can be used like you will get 100% from people and then more than one to they, they give other people space. You know, they create some psychological safety. But they also give other people space to think or disagree. My favorite, like simplest thing that you can do is to give people time to think, rather than ask people to think extemporaneously spontaneously is, my simplest thing I've learned to do is send an agenda out in advance, at least 24 hours, if not 48, or even, like 72 hours in advance, not just with a set of topics, but a set of questions like, here are the things that I want us to find answers to, can you come into this meeting, like ready to go? Particularly if you are extroverted by nature, and you'd like those sorts of spontaneous conversations like it, I've learned that my more introverted colleagues, like they want time to think. So give people some space and some time to do their best thinking. And, you know, I think there's something Jacob in your work that I read that it's like, it's this acknowledgment that the best thinking can't be taken, it has to be given voluntarily. And so give people some space to be able to give not just taking, you know, another thing is to instead of telling, asking, asking questions, I really see that asking good questions is like the top skill of good leaders, instead of giving people tasks, or even goals, or MPOs, as they're often called, in the corporate world. Give people challenges, like hard stretch challenges, like Give them the question, but not the answer, like, give them a puzzle, lay out puzzle pieces, and let them solve it. Instead of making the decisions become a debate maker for your team. Yeah, frame the issue, ask the question, and instead of micromanaging, you know, put other people in charge. And Jacob my favorite, like simplest thing here, it came from simplest, simplest management technique came from one of my interviews, and it

was us, a vice president who had been hired by John Chambers at Cisco. And John Chambers is the new CEO, he's hired his first vice president. And he tells Doug, and Doug's gonna run customer support. He says, Doug, when it comes to this part of the business, you get 51% of the vote, and 100% of the accountability. And I just think it's so brilliant. He didn't he didn't give him 100% of the vote, because what he's saying is like, consult me as your boss, like, I want to, I want to have ideas, I want to give input, I want to be informed. But you know what, in the end, this is yours to decide. And I think it's a simplest way of putting somebody else in charge is telling them, you know, what, on this part of the project, or for this whole project, or just for this little decision, you get 51% of the vote. And decreases wonderful partnership between 49 and 51. And it's pretty clear, like you're in charge and you know, put other people in charge and then do your best not to rescue them when they struggle to keep them in charge.

Jacob Morgan 39:36

Do you have any favorite examples or stories of either companies who you think do a good job of cultivating, bringing in multipliers, or any particular leaders that come to mind that exemplify a multiplier?

Liz Wiseman 39:53

Oh, this is a tough question because it's not a lack of it's okay. There's so many it's like asking me like my My favorite books. Well, I think SAP has done a really, really good job of this. And I have to admit I had, when I left Oracle, I had done some work at SAP, some coaching work. And when I first heard that they wanted to build multiplier leadership across the organization, I was very skeptical, because they had such a strong kind of command and control model of leadership. And I'm like, I'm not sure that's going to happen. But I was invited to participate. They, they've made a huge, enormous difference in their organization. By teaching people, this way of leading, and giving managers sort of time to get up to speed, they created a measurement tool, they measured two things on Team One trust. And the second was engagement. So they didn't create a huge scorecard, just, we're gonna measure two things. And they did the training on here's how to lead like a multiplier. And then they waited six months before they introduced the measurement, which is said, you know, what, we know this is not an overnight transformation, like, some of you are going to struggle to do this. And so they created this nice on ramp to this initiative. And then they started measuring it, and the numbers are failing me right now. But they're in the like, like Mega Millions of dollars, if not billions of dollars that they have seen, because of how trust and engagement went up as a result. And then when they found certain manager struggling to improve engagement and trust, they didn't just say, Hey, you're out of here. They offered him some coaching. And again, like a timeframe, like, let's see over the next year, how you do and hey, you know, is it possible that maybe this kind of role could be better, and it's one of the best examples? I'm sorry that I'm gonna flip through some papers here and find some of those numbers. But if you go to the company, BTS is a consulting firm that was working with them their website, I think they've got a really wonderful case study written up on this. In terms of multiplier leaders, give me an industry ticket, let's do let's play like name that leader, give me an industry. And I'll see if I can come up with

Jacob Morgan 42:30

the probably the easiest technology software. Suppose every company is a technology company these days.

Liz Wiseman 42:39

You they are, you know, in technology, one that comes to mind is Lindsey OB, I wrote about him in a number of places in the book, but one of the things that fascinated me about books, he worked at Microsoft, he was the general manager of Microsoft Learning. And his team said, you know, around books, you can make any mistake you want. I'm like, Wow, that's amazing. And then there are very clear that like, you can make any mistake you want once the button is there, like nobody would like you can screw up like, you can try something creative. Like one person described the I tried this, like, really kind of innovative out there promotion to see if it was going to generate more sales. And they said it didn't. But the next time I went to try promotion, I'm like, I knew like I already used my mistake on this. Like, I need to demonstrate that I've learned from that. And in people to said he created this environment where it was okay to experiment. But you had to learn from your mistakes. If you want more examples, just name an industry that'll help me pick one. Oh, man, what's, uh,

Jacob Morgan 43:57

what about like, automotive or Pharma? Or,

Liz Wiseman 44:03

you know, let's do automotive. You know, it's hard not to want to point to Alan Mulally. And I've had a chance to like, meet with him and spend some weekends learning more about how he led. And you know, he's if people haven't heard of him, he, he led he presided over this massive turnaround inside of Ford Motors. Yeah, it's very troubled. He took it on but I think there's a couple things he did that are very multiplier ask. One is he just created total transparency in his meetings. He he stopped holding one on ones where everyone's kind of angling different well, we can't do this because of that. And he said, all decisions are going to be made in the open and he put, you know, a chance Should everything to I think they were, I can't remember the day of the week, but they were early, like a three hour meeting once a week with the whole executive team. And he's like, here's where we're gonna go through all the issues. And not only did he force that it had to happen out in the open, he asked his executives to bring a junior person from their organization with them.

Jacob Morgan 45:21

Oh, interesting. I didn't know that. Yeah, so think about what

Liz Wiseman 45:24

that does. So you go from one on ones where everyone's kind of like jockeying an angle and giving you the information you need to creating like a debate where it's now an open forum, we talk about the issues openly. And now find a young person, Junior manager or whatever, from your organization, maybe someone from the shop floor, maybe one of your direct reports, like, it's brilliant. What does that do? One, everyone behaves really well. During those meetings, too. There's like, total transparency, honesty, three, it's teaching others how to operate at the executive level, it's exposing people to what our key issues are, it's helping everyone stay on the same agenda. But you know, that's one where he's like, pulling all that intelligence out into the open. So he, he's an obvious person from out of motive. I think if there's someone

Jacob Morgan 46:24

great one, he's a great one.

Liz Wiseman 46:26

I'm gonna do one more if you want, or we can move on. But no, those

Jacob Morgan 46:29

are two great, great stories. I mean, you talk more about I mean, in the research, I think you've written articles, you have it in the book. So people if they want to get more examples, I think it's pretty easy to find them from from the work that you've done.

Liz Wiseman 46:41

They're a bit of a jukebox of examples of both great and bad leadership. The problem is, there's too many songs.

Jacob Morgan 46:47

Yeah, yeah, exactly. Well, I normally we have around the 1015 minutes left, so I thought maybe we could transition a little bit to? Well, first is when you can write into organizations, what's the most common thing that they asked you to do? Because I'm assuming they don't just come to you and say, Hey, Liz, we need more multipliers, make multipliers in our company? What are the specific problems they come to you with?

Liz Wiseman 47:10

You know, that here's the problems that become I'm going to try to pass this the way it's changed over the last decade. Because I know your work is around the future of work. I think it shows us where we're headed. Initially, it was, boy, you know, what our people are struggling trying to do more with less? You know, how do we get the most out of the resources we have? That was one use case, from the software world. The second was, oh, you know, we're trying to innovate? How do we get more ideas, better thinking kind of space for innovation and experimentation? Another as we're trying to grow fast, like what does leadership at scale look like? Meaning? What do we need to do differently as we are rapidly growing? Because you really do need to think differently, how you lead as you as you scale? Another would be engagement. And that's kind of been the I don't know, the rallying cry for this last decade? In some ways. It's been the decade of engagement, meaning our engagement scores are down, how do we, you know, what do managers need to do to help people stay engaged? More and more we're seeing and kind of giving you these as layers more and more we're seeing diversity and inclusion as being kind of the focal point, meaning? How do we create an environment where all forms of intelligence are seen and heard? Like, how do we get all caps diversity? Meaning, a rich set of perspectives and ideas? And what can managers do to utilize them to include different perspectives and different knowledge, and insights and talents into the mix so that we can be more innovative or grow and, you know, more and more like kind of bringing it up to the present? It's, how do we manage remote teams? Yeah. And we, you know, I've got, you could find it out on Twitter or LinkedIn, but I've done a post on, like, multiplier, pro tips for managing remote teams, as well as how do you lead in an environment of uncertainty? And I've shared a few tips on that. But, you know, more and more, Jacob. Like the fundamental role of leadership has has changed. No. And I think back to when I was a

corporate manager and an executive. We did a training program. We had an outside vendor come in and he talked about, like a leaders job is to do take people to a better place, which is, you know, you think about like iconic leaders. But I don't think that's the leadership job anymore. It's not like, Hey, I've, I've seen a new world. I know a better place like the grass is greener, like, come with me to this better place. Like, the reality is leaving today is about leaving in the dark. It's about, I don't know where we're going, because I haven't been there. Like, we haven't invented it yet. Like, it doesn't even necessarily exist. What I need you to do is like, come with me as we navigate, like, in the dark. And try to find our way to something better, something more sustainable.

Jacob Morgan 50:54

Yeah. I love that analogy.

Liz Wiseman 50:57

Yeah, I think of,

Jacob Morgan 50:59

well, because, you know, the world of work is changing so quickly, you know, it's, you know, an explorer going off on an adventure. But back in the olden days, before we had all these high tech instruments, and it was kind of like, you know, we're going to set sail, and we're not exactly sure where we're gonna end up. But, you know, trust me, and come on this journey with me. And I think that's exactly what we're starting to see today. Because things change so quickly, we don't know what the future is going to bring. And so we need leaders who understand it's not, you know, I've seen better from a past job from a past company, and I've done this already. And I'm going to take you there, to this idea of things are changing quickly. And I can bring the experiences and knowledge and things with us on this journey. You know, we can equip ourselves as best as we can with the supplies and the tools and resources. But ultimately, we're not sure the path that we're going to take. And, you know, that's kind of what pops into my head is the Explorer journey.

Liz Wiseman 52:00

Yeah. And it's like, come with me, and we're gonna figure this out. Together. It's such a different leadership model, then I know where we're going, follow me, which is like the peanuts, cartoon strip with like Snoopy and stock birds behind him. It's, let's figure this out together, which requires trust, you have to trust that the leader has intelligence and capability. But more importantly, it's the leader saying, I don't have the answers. I just know we need to go I have some of the questions. But I'm going to use intelligence at the team in the moment. You know, it's more like special ops. Yeah. And, and we're gonna figure this out together, and I will guide us, trust me to guide us. But the real task is how do we utilize all eyes, like, one of the things I have a pet peeve of mine is when they say like leaders need to be able to see around corners. Like you don't get any bigger eyes. When you are the leader. It's like, the only way to see around course is to have multiple perspectives like the superhero model of leadership. Like somehow I know better.

Jacob Morgan 53:14

Well, that's doesn't hold up. So the, from the CEOs that I interviewed, that was the number one skill that CEOs identified as being most crucial for future leaders, I called it thinking like a futurist, which is the

ability to not necessarily see around a corner, but to be able to think in terms of those different scenarios and possibilities and perspectives. Because I think that's something a lot of leaders sometimes struggle with, they pick one path, and they kind of go down it. But when things change so quickly, you have to kind of visualize different scenarios. And I always draw the analogy between the game of chess, you know, separates an amateur chess player from a great chess player is the great chess players, the amateur thinks in terms of like, I will move one piece, my opponent will move one piece, and it's just like one move here and there. But top chess players, they think in terms of scenarios, I can move one of these pieces, my opponent might move one of those pieces, and this is how I'll respond. So you have these different scenarios and possibilities playing out instead of just kind of one to one, which I think is an important skill for sure.

Liz Wiseman 54:17

And Jacob to that point is for those people who say like, Okay, I understand that that's an important skill, but like, how am I gonna suddenly develop a strategic brain? You can do it is by having a team of people who are watching for you and thinking with you, I you know, think of like a scene out of a movie where you've got like a commander and there's all the special ops folks and they're all in their position. It's like okay, what do you see? What do you see like the way you get that picture is drawing on Intel. From a diverse team. Everyone in a different position seeing something different,

Jacob Morgan 54:57

couldn't agree more couldn't agree more. Well, maybe in the last few minutes, what we can do is talk about just some ways that people can become multipliers. So if you have any specific, like, tips or strategies, and also do you need to be a leader to be a multiplier, or can you just be an individual, you know, a leader of self, so to speak and be a multiplier,

Liz Wiseman 55:19

is one of the things that has been so inspiring to me about this kind of leadership is it doesn't require position and authority. It's a leadership model based in influence, it's about inviting people's contribution rather than demanding its contribution. And I think you can be a multiplier very much from where you are, you can lead from where you are, um, maybe a final thought on what you can do. You know, if you are leading remote teams, people need more clarity. And I maybe like a simple practice would be letting people know the three what's like when you're giving a piece of work? Let people know. Number one, here's what good looks like. Here's the quality criteria. See, often people are trying to guess, what does the boss want, let them know what good looks like, let them know what done looks like and let them know what's in scope, it's essentially giving people a statement of work. And when you give people a statement of work, it allows them to operate independently, and remotely where it's harder to check in. So instead of just trying to move fast, and get work off your to do list and onto someone else's, think about giving people the three watts and setting them up for success. too, we may have covered it and I've forgotten is like, send out agendas in advance, build your agendas around questions, not topics. And when you do and when you get people together, virtually, like people will be ready and able to engage. So those are a couple thoughts about leading in remote environments, in terms of leading in times of uncertainty. Probably to two tips, there would be number one, talk about your own mistakes. You know, when things are uncertain when you're in the dark, people take smaller steps that are afraid to make mistakes, because they can't see what the consequences of those are.

Talk about time, in fact, we found it was the number one thing that leaders could do to encourage an environment of innovation and risk taking is to talk about their own mistakes. So avoid the temptation to do innovation by fiat, like, Hey, be creative, be innovative. So one thing I hate when people tell me like be innovative, like the fact that you told me to be innovative did not actually help me become more innovative. And in some ways it decreases it. Talk about your own mistakes, let people know that you've made mistakes and can recover. And you can also talk about like your own fears and doubts about that will help people to talk about there. And then to make clear space for experimentation. It's naive to assume particularly in times of economic uncertainty and downturn, that when you tell people to be creative, like they're not going to want to do that, because the consequence of making mistakes is amplified. Without a great practice for this is to delineate, I call it delineate the playground from the freeways. And what that means is you're saying, hey, you know, because if you tell people to like, take risks and experiment, innovate, what's going to happen is like the experience, people are going to be Oh, she didn't really mean that because that could be business ending. And the young people, the new people are like, cool, and they bring down like production databases and go Oh, bummer, dude, sorry about that. And so what you want to do is you want to say, okay, in the work we do, there are places where we can experiment and recover, where mistakes are, okay? These are playgrounds, innovate, experiment, try, you know, new promotions, new products, new ideas there. But there are parts of our business where it's actually not okay to fail. And it's damaging to tell people to like be innovative and experimental. See, these are the freeways. These are the places where we've got to get it just right, and I might have to micromanage to get it there. This is where we're kind of more conservative like, play on the playgrounds, be cautious on the freeways. And when managers make that delineation, it's actually hugely liberating to people. Like okay, I know where to go be creative and experimental, particularly when things are uncertain and dark.

Jacob Morgan 59:59

Well, it sounds like the first For people listening and watching this first, listen couple minutes ago where we talked about the differences between the multiplier in the in the diminisher, and to figure out which one you are. And so if you're a multiplier, I guess, keep doing what you're doing, if you fall into that category. And if you're a diminisher, it sounds like what you need to do is start to change some of those behaviors and patterns. And in the book, actually, I think you have a pretty good breakdown, you have like a table, where you compare the, the behaviors and the mindsets of the diminisher and the multiplier, and so you kind of just need to shift from one to the other.

Liz Wiseman 1:00:35

Yeah, I think like there's two charts in the book that are pretty helpful. One is at the beginning, it's this comparison of multipliers and diminishers. Maybe Jacobs going to like, open up that book, hopefully, like and find it. Okay, let's see, let's see who can find these faster. And it's in chapter one, there's this, this. It used to be on page 23. But I think it moved in the nude, oh, here we go. It's on like page 28 is right here. This is my desk copy. It's spiral bound. So there's a chart that just like my three years is 20. PAGE 23. Oh, it is 23. I just can't see. So it's page 23. That's a pretty helpful chart. And I think you can probably find these on the website, if you don't want to get the book. I try not to be a book pusher. And then this is, this is my favorite part of the whole book. And it's on page. I'm hiding behind it now 20 208 and 209. And this, I think you can find on the books website as well, but it is how it's nine of the accidental diminisher tendencies in graphic form. What the problem is with each what you could do

instead, and it offers a multiplayer experiment like hey, here's a multiplayer practice, go try this. They're all detailed in appendix E of the book. Or it offers a simple workaround, which is, you know, what? Just try this, like, do this one little thing differently. And it'll have more of a multiplier effect.

Jacob Morgan 1:02:13

Yep. I love that. It's a very, very helpful chart. So now that we're okay, somebody asked really quick, the three watts if you can just quickly repeat the three watts.

Liz Wiseman 1:02:26

What does good look like? So it's a quality? What? Yep. Because you have a secret standard in your head, that you need to communicate to your team. You know, when you get something you're like, Oh, that was not a good job? Well, you probably didn't tell them what a good job is. What does good look like? To what does done look like? It's a completion criteria. And three, what's out of scope? Like what are the boundaries? If you give people those three things, it's like a statement of work. And then they can work more independently. Good, or great completion, and boundaries.

Jacob Morgan 1:03:06

So Liz, where can people go to learn more about you the book, and you have a great website for the book, there's quizzes that you mentioned, people can take, but anything that you want to mention, for people to check out, please feel free to do so.

Liz Wiseman 1:03:22

Well, it's pretty easy to find theirs.

Jacob Morgan 1:03:26

And grab the book, watching you can see I'm holding the book grab

Liz Wiseman 1:03:32

my thumb, my, like, spiral bound version here is there's multipliers books.com There's, there's my other books, too, Ricky smarts.com, you can go there. And that is maybe even more relevant right now. Because it's about why learning is like how fast you learn is way more important than what you know, right now, you know, so that master skill that's worth the sparks.com and then there's our little firms website, the Weizmann group.com And it's the Weizmann group, if you go to Wiseman group.com, you will end up at a San Francisco based interior design firm, which I guarantee you their website is more interesting. denars it may or may not help you be a better leader, but the Wiseman group.com Or you can find me on LinkedIn, Twitter, I'm easy to find it

Jacob Morgan 1:04:22

pretty easy to find it with a quick Google search of your name. So I think people will be able to get in touch with you. Well, Liz, thank you so much for taking time out of your day to share some of the insights of me from your book.

Liz Wiseman 1:04:34

What's my pleasure? And you know, thank you for the work you do particularly around the future of work, because I think there's a lot of us who envision the future of work being a place where people really love to go to work. Yeah, it may or may not love their boss. You know, I'm trying to rid the world of bad bosses. But you know, we want to create workplaces where people do their best work and it feels like human and joyful. promises. So thank you for your leadership

Jacob Morgan 1:05:02

there. Thank you. I always say we want to create a place where people feel like they want not where they need to show up to work each day. So I've, I've been in those bad organizations, I know exactly what that's like. And it's not it's not fun for anybody. So hopefully, we can work on changing that. And thanks, everyone for tuning in. Again. My guest has been Liz Wiseman, please make sure to check out her book super easy to find multipliers, how to best leaders make everyone smarter, and I will see all of you very, very soon. Thanks again for tuning into the future of work with Jacob Morgan. I hope you enjoyed the show. Please remember to follow me on Spotify. Subscribe on Apple podcasts for your favorite platform at [future of work podcast.com](https://futureofworkpodcast.com) If you want to reach out to me about sponsoring the show, or if you just have feedback for me, please send me a note at Jacob at the future organization.com