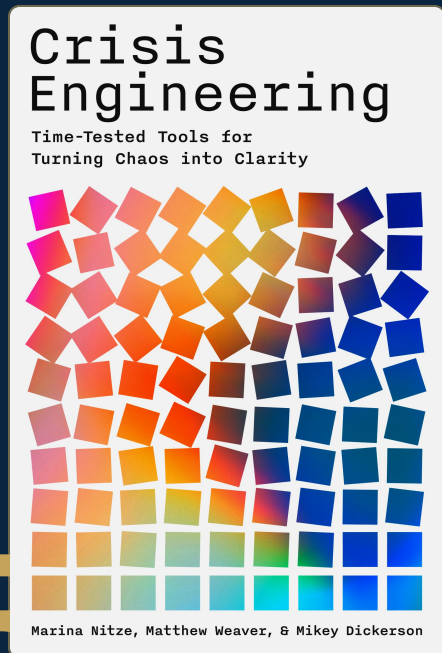


RICK & ISABELLA PINA COACHING

PATREON PREMIUM GUIDE • JPM 9 • BOOK 4 OF 9

CRISIS ENGINEERING



Time-Tested Tools for Turning Chaos into Clarity.
Marina Nitze, Matthew Weaver, Mikey Dickerson.

JP Morgan put this on their list for students and interns. That got my attention. If they want their young people reading it, I want us looking at it.

FIVE LESSONS • FOUR ROOMS EACH • [PATREON.COM/RICKPINA](https://patreon.com/rickpina)

5 LESSONS + HOW THIS APPLIES TO YOU

Hey family. JP Morgan put this book on their list for students and interns. I am not going to turn this into a sermon. It is not a church book. But that list got my attention. If they want their young people reading it, I want us looking at it. Here is what I think they want you to walk away with. And here is what it hit in me.

01 **Engineered, not heroic**

02 **Name the system first**

03 **Find the constraint**

04 **Make ownership clear**

05 **Live feedback over certainty**

THE BOOK IN SHORT

WHAT THEY LEARNED IN THE FIRE

The three authors run a crisis engineering firm called Layer Aleph. Mikey Dickerson was a founding site reliability engineer at Google and led the rescue of HealthCare.gov, which put him on the cover of TIME and led President Obama to appoint him Deputy Chief Information Officer of the United States, where he created the United States Digital Service. Marina Nitze was Chief Technology Officer of the Department of Veterans Affairs and a senior technology advisor at the White House. Matthew Weaver helped found the SRE discipline that now runs technical operations everywhere.

They have been called into HealthCare.gov, wildfire response, and pandemic logistics. The book is what they learned about how complex systems actually fail and how you get them back. Their core claim is blunt: crisis response is not a personality trait and it is not a heroic last-minute scramble. It is an engineered practice you can learn.

1

Crisis response is engineered, not heroic

It is not a personality trait and not a last-minute scramble. It is a practice, and practices can be learned and rehearsed.

2

Name the system before fixing symptoms

The visible broken thing is rarely the broken thing. Map it first.

3

Find the constraint

Break the mess into visible parts and locate the one thing everything else is waiting on.

4

Reduce the blast radius

Contain the damage while you are still looking for the fix. Stop the bleeding before you diagnose.

5

Make ownership painfully clear

Ask who owns the next move. Shared responsibility is how things get dropped.

6

Prefer live feedback over polished certainty

Find the shortest credible feedback loop. Waiting to be sure is how you stay wrong longer.

7

The crisis is the opening

Conditions that would normally take years to change are movable while everything is on fire. Use it to make the fix permanent.

01

LESSON 01 OF 5

CRISIS RESPONSE IS ENGINEERED, NOT HEROIC

FROM THE BOOK

The authors say it flatly: crisis response is not a personality trait and it is not a heroic last-minute scramble. It is an engineered practice.

That reframe is the whole book. The calm person in the room is usually not calmer by nature. They have a method, they have rehearsed it, and they are running it while everybody else is running on adrenaline. As they put it, the best leaders do not eliminate disorder. They metabolize it faster than everyone else.

MY NOTES — HOW THIS APPLIES TO YOU

BUSINESS

IF YOU HAVE A BUSINESS

When a proposal starts going wrong at forty-eight hours out, my instinct is to work later and push harder. That has never once saved a bid. What saves it is a checklist, a named owner on every volume, and a clock, which is boring and which works.

MINISTRY

IF YOU HAVE A MINISTRY

I built a system for the daily message years ago precisely so I do not depend on how I feel that morning. Feelings are not a delivery method. The discipline I keep in the easy weeks is the only thing that carries the hard ones.

CAREER

IF YOU ARE BUILDING A CAREER

The people I watched perform under real pressure in the Army were not the naturally calm ones. They had rehearsed the thing so many times that pressure had nowhere new to hurt them. Calm is a rehearsal artifact, not a temperament.

FAMILY

WITH YOUR FAMILY

When something goes wrong in our house, Isabella and I do not need a hero. We need to know who is calling the doctor, who has the kids, and who is handling the money. We decided that in advance, on a normal day, which is the only time you can decide it well.

02

LESSON 02 OF 5

NAME THE SYSTEM BEFORE YOU FIX THE SYMPTOMS

FROM THE BOOK

Their first operating principle is to name the system before fixing symptoms. In a real failure the visible broken thing is almost never the broken thing.

They pair it with a second move: reduce the blast radius. Contain the damage while you are still looking for the cause. Stop the bleeding, then diagnose. Doing those in the wrong order is how competent people make a bad situation worse.

MY NOTES — HOW THIS APPLIES TO YOU

BUSINESS

IF YOU HAVE A BUSINESS

A late invoice is never actually a late invoice. It is a missing purchase order, an unapproved receipt, or a government portal that nobody on my team owns. Chase the symptom and I will pay somebody to chase the same thing again next month.

MINISTRY

IF YOU HAVE A MINISTRY

When something drops off in a ministry, the temptation is to fix what people can see. Usually whatever broke happened weeks earlier and somewhere else entirely. Fixing the visible part first mostly just hides the real problem longer.

CAREER

IF YOU ARE BUILDING A CAREER

When you get handed a mess, resist the urge to start fixing things on day one. Map who touches what and where every handoff happens. Building that map feels like delay and it is actually the work.

FAMILY

WITH YOUR FAMILY

When one of my kids' grades drop, the grades are not the problem. It is sleep, or the phone, or who they are around. Working on the grade sheet fixes nothing that matters.

03

LESSON 03 OF 5

FIND THE CONSTRAINT

FROM THE BOOK

Their method is to break the mess into visible parts and then find the constraint, the one thing everything else is waiting on.

It shows up in their diagnostic questions, which are worth memorizing: What is the actual objective right now? What do we know, what are we assuming, and what do we need to learn? Where is the constraint? Who owns the next move? What is the shortest credible feedback loop?

MY NOTES — HOW THIS APPLIES TO YOU

BUSINESS

IF YOU HAVE A BUSINESS

On any pursuit there is exactly one thing that decides it, and it is almost never the thing the team is busiest with. Finding that one thing early is the entire job of a capture lead, and everything else is motion.

MINISTRY

IF YOU HAVE A MINISTRY

In a season with too much on the calendar, one thing carries all the rest. I protect that one and let the others slip, because slipping the right things costs nothing and slipping the wrong one costs everything.

CAREER

IF YOU ARE BUILDING A CAREER

Most people spend their day working on what they are already good at. The constraint is almost always the thing they are quietly avoiding. Go look at what you keep moving to tomorrow.

FAMILY

WITH YOUR FAMILY

For a long time our constraint was not money and it was not time. It was that Isabella and I were not talking early enough about things we both already saw coming. Fixing that fixed problems that looked completely unrelated.

04

LESSON 04 OF 5

MAKE OWNERSHIP PAINFULLY CLEAR

FROM THE BOOK

One of their four operating principles is to make ownership painfully clear, and one of their five questions is simply: who owns the next move?

It sounds obvious until you have watched a real failure. The thing that gets dropped is almost never the thing nobody could do. It is the thing everybody assumed somebody else had.

MY NOTES — HOW THIS APPLIES TO YOU

BUSINESS

IF YOU HAVE A BUSINESS

Federal contracting punishes vague ownership harder than almost any mistake. "The team is handling it" is exactly how a submission gets missed by twenty minutes. One name, one deadline, said out loud where everybody hears it.

MINISTRY

IF YOU HAVE A MINISTRY

Volunteer work dies of shared responsibility. When everyone owns a thing, no one does. So I name a person, never a committee, and I tell that person in front of the others.

CAREER

IF YOU ARE BUILDING A CAREER

Be the one who says "I have it" and then actually has it. That is rarer than talent and it moves you faster than talent does, because trust compounds and cleverness does not.

FAMILY

WITH YOUR FAMILY

Isabella and I divide things clearly, not because of any idea about roles, but because unclear ownership is how things fall through the cracks in a house with this much going on.

05

LESSON 05 OF 5

PREFER LIVE FEEDBACK OVER POLISHED CERTAINTY

FROM THE BOOK

Their last principle is to prefer live feedback over polished certainty, and to hunt for the shortest credible feedback loop you can build.

The book closes on something bigger. A crisis is not only the end of something. Conditions that would normally take years to move are suddenly movable while everything is on fire. That window is your chance to make the fix permanent instead of temporary.

MY NOTES — HOW THIS APPLIES TO YOU

BUSINESS

IF YOU HAVE A BUSINESS

I would rather put a rough version in front of a customer in week one than a polished one in week six. The rough version buys me the correction while it is still cheap to make. Polish before contact is just expensive guessing.

MINISTRY

IF YOU HAVE A MINISTRY

I find out quickly whether a message landed, because people tell me. That steady live feedback has shaped my teaching more than any plan I ever wrote down.

CAREER

IF YOU ARE BUILDING A CAREER

Ship it, show it, get told it is wrong, fix it. The people who wait until they are certain lose, every time, to the people who went and found out.

FAMILY

WITH YOUR FAMILY

Isabella and I check in with our kids more often than feels necessary. A short honest conversation every week beats one long serious talk after something has already broken.

BOOK 4 OF 9

WHAT DID YOU GET OUT OF THIS

This is book 4 of 9. These are books JP Morgan wants their new people and interns to read. What did you get out of going through this? Let's discuss this in the comments.

I love you.

This is the YEAR OF DISCOVERY.

YEAR OF DISCOVERY
GREATER IS COMING

Rick