



(LEADER GUIDE)  
**THE GENIUS TRAP**

DR. JOE HILL  
[higherperformancegroup.com](http://higherperformancegroup.com)

## **LEADER {CORE} Guide: The Genius Trap**

*Moving Beyond Individual Expertise to Create Collective Intelligence*

### **Duration: 30 Minutes**

Purpose: To facilitate a meaningful dialogue about transitioning from individual-expert teams to collective intelligence, helping team members explore how to create collaborative structures that generate breakthrough solutions while maintaining individual competence.

### **Pre-Session Preparation**

- Send the article to participants 24-48 hours before the session
- Request that they bring one example of a persistent challenge their team has addressed repeatedly without breakthrough
- Set up a comfortable meeting space that encourages open dialogue
- Prepare materials for the Collective Intelligence exercise
- Consider your own authentic story about when collective thinking led to breakthrough

### **Session Flow with CORE Process Opening (5 minutes)**

- Welcome participants
- Briefly explain the CORE process (Call It, Own It, Response, Execute)
- Share a personal example of when implementing a collective intelligence approach led to better outcomes
- Establish relevance: "Today we're exploring how we might shift from individual expertise to collective intelligence to drive breakthrough results for students"

### **C: Call It - Questions of Clarity (7 minutes)**

#### **Group Discussion:**

- "Based on the article, what is the fundamental difference between individual expertise and collective intelligence?"
- "What are the four dysfunctions that destroy educational leadership teams?"
- "How does the Collective Intelligence Framework transform individual competence into breakthrough solutions?"

#### **Facilitation Notes:**

- Capture key insights on shared space
- Clarify any misconceptions about collective intelligence vs. groupthink

- Reference key concepts from the article: "Teams with higher collective intelligence outperform teams of individually brilliant people by 40-60%"

### **O: Own It - Questions of Meaning** (7 minutes)

#### **Individual Reflection:**

- "Which of the four dysfunctions do you see most clearly in your current team dynamics and why?"
- "Where do you see yourself caught in the 'individual expertise' trap?"
- "What persistent challenge is your team currently addressing where collective intelligence might create breakthrough?"

#### **Paired Discussion:**

- Have participants share their reflections with a partner
- Partners ask: "Why does this matter to you and your students?"

### **R: Response - Options for Practice** (8 minutes)

#### **Application Exercise:**

- Working in pairs, participants select one persistent team challenge
- Using the Collective Intelligence Framework, develop a brief collective approach:
  - o Truth: What's the real challenge students/community face?
  - o Experience: How might we encounter this together as a team?
  - o Thinking: What could emerge from collective real-time thinking?
  - o Action: What coordinated response might develop?
  - o Integration: How do we maintain this collective approach?
- Partners provide feedback using the prompt: "How does this approach maintain individual competence while adding collective intelligence?"

#### **Group Sharing:**

- Invite 2-3 volunteers to share their collective intelligence approaches
- Facilitate peer feedback on effectiveness

### **E: Execute - Commitment to Practice** (5 minutes)

#### **Individual Commitment:**

- Each participant completes the statement: "In the next week, I will apply collective intelligence by..."
- Participants identify one upcoming team challenge to practice collective thinking
- Each person names an accountability partner who will check in on their progress

**Closing** (3 minutes)

- Round-robin: Each person shares one word describing their key takeaway
- Remind participants of the article's challenge question: "What's stopping you from making this shift?"
- Leader closes with commitment to model collective intelligence in upcoming team work

**Key Concepts for Reference**

- "Collective intelligence transforms individual brilliance into breakthrough solutions"
- The four dysfunctions: Isolation Analysis, Expertise Silos, Meeting Theater, Consensus Compromise
- "Student achievement depends more on collective intelligence than individual expertise"
- The Genius Paradox: "individual brilliance doesn't create better outcomes—it creates competing solutions"
- Collective Intelligence Framework: Truth, Experience, Thinking, Action, Integration

**Remember:** Your role is to facilitate discovery, not direct conclusions. Model the very principle you're discussing by creating space for authentic collective thinking and breakthrough insights.