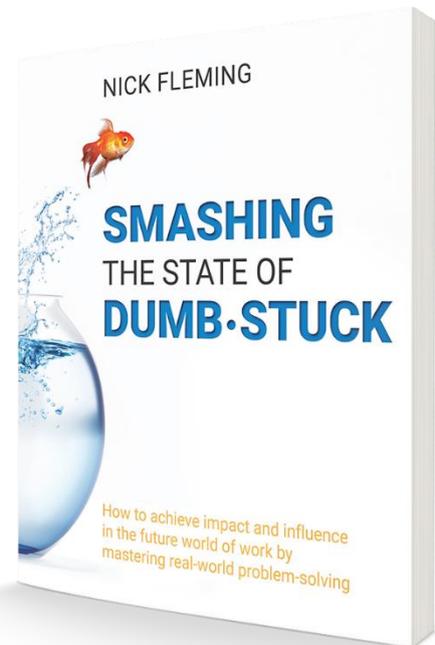


A 'globally significant contribution' to progress and prosperity

Smashing the state of dumb-stuck promises to be one of the most valuable books any business leader and professional can buy. It is packed with profound and practical insights to escalate a leader's impact and influence and the success of the teams, organisations and communities they lead.



It's shocking but true – most people are solving problems in the wrong way most of the time. This incurs extraordinary personal, organisational and societal costs. So, it is hardly surprising that complex problem solving is the #1 skill needed for the future of work.

Smashing the state of dumb-stuck tackles the why, what and how of better real-world problem-solving. The award-winning leader and author, Dr Nick Fleming, explains that many leaders are 'dumb-stuck': unable to elevate their careers and contributions because their know-how and judgement is no longer suited to their situation. It is an argument backed by evidence and international experience.

Fortunately, Dr Fleming, says that it's possible to learn better problem solving and deliver results fast. *Smashing the state of dumb-stuck* provides the crucial and surprising insights with actionable strategies. The practical knowhow is supported by real-world scenarios from several industry sectors.

Recognised leaders from the private and public sectors, locally and abroad, say this book is "a globally significant contribution to human endeavour", "the rarest of things", "mandatory reading", and "the leading book on problem solving" offering "brilliance in one place". In short, it is the must-read guide for anyone who wants to be successful, impactful and sought-after in the fast-changing world of work.

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Smashing the State of Dumb-stuck (June 2021, Moshpit Publishing, 312 pages) is Nick Fleming's second book (the first being *Insight trading – collaborating to transform the infrastructure that shapes society*). It is an imprint of Mosher's Business Support Pty Ltd, and is available from Amazon (US and Australia), Booktopia, Fishpond and all good bookstores.

Further information and a press kit is available by visiting www.innergise.com.au/dumbstuck. For interviews, please contact Dr Nick Fleming at enquiry@innergise.com.au or by calling 0438-022-898.

In a nutshell

You are contributing to a failing system ... and you are about to be exposed.

The red flags are everywhere: stagnant economies, low productivity, persistent social problems, low trust in government, increasingly fractured politics and social turmoil. These vulnerabilities are highlighted by crises like the global financial crisis and the coronavirus pandemic. Increasing automation, the use of artificial intelligence and climate change are doing the same.

And what is the cause? I propose it is our collective inability to solve the right problems. Every day most people are solving the wrong problems. Consequently, the challenge is not to make progress technically possible, but to make it humanly possible.

The cost is huge. Wasted time, effort, investment and reputations. At a national level this inability incurs a cost of billions of dollars each year. It contributes to lost opportunities, lost lives and loss of hope.

Organisations are failing to recognise and tap into their enormous latent potential. And you are not realising your potential. Indeed, you are at real risk of becoming 'dumb-stuck' – unable to elevate your career and contribution because your know-how and judgement are no longer suited to your situation.

But you can smash this state of dumb-stuck and thrive. This book demonstrates why and how, providing the practical, evidence- and experience-based know-how to solve problems well and prosper in the process.

Effective problem-solving goes way beyond just having ideas. It is about taking the actions that deliver enduring benefits to the people that need them. That is the proof that problems have been solved.

Real progress and results can be achieved quickly. You can avoid 'paralysis by analysis'. And it does not require more effort – it just requires critical thinking enabling better placed effort.

This is a book for every leader, manager and professional in public and private enterprise and not-for-profit business. It sets out a path to grow into a compassionate, effective problem-solver in a hyper-connected, digital world. It sets you up to take on higher levels of work that bring greater job satisfaction and financial rewards. In short, it is your key to ongoing relevance, impact and success.

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An excerpt from *Smashing the State of Dumb-stuck* by Nick Fleming, Moshpit Publishing, June 2021. Available from Amazon, Booktopia, Fishpond and all good book sellers.

Author bio



Dr Nick Fleming is the founding director of the strategic advisory firm, Innergise. His skill is bringing clarity amid complexity, direction amid uncertainty, and superior results from better placed effort.

Nick's rich knowledge base has led people to assume he is an economist, a social planner and even a narrative therapist, however his original degree was in civil and environmental engineering. His insights come from working globally with businesses and governments to drive progress in the natural resources, infrastructure, energy, defence, education and social welfare sectors.

A respected leader, speaker and mentor, Nick's mission is to create a more inclusive and sustainable society. It was the basis for his first book, *Insight trading – collaborating to transform the infrastructure that shapes society*, which was acclaimed for its novel and valuable insights.

His commitment to excellence and leadership, has won him many awards including a CEO Medal for Exceptional Client Service and Consult Australia's Gold Medal for Excellence in Education and Training.

Nick is a graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors. He is a non-executive director of South Gippsland Water and the National President and Chair of the Board of Engineers Australia. He also delivers executive education on complex problem solving and systems thinking with the Australia and New Zealand School of Government.

Nick lives in Melbourne, Australia, with his family and much-loved Brittany Spaniel. He spends his down-time cooking, bushwalking and channelling the energy of teenagers as a basketball coach.

Sample Q&A

1. *Smashing the State of Dumb-stuck* received glowing endorsements from reviewers, locally and abroad. Is that what you expected?

I know the ideas in the book resonate strongly with leaders across the public and private sectors when I share them in executive development programs or apply them in practice. But could I translate the ideas into a book in an engaging and compelling way – that was the question? So, I hoped for a positive response, and was delighted and humbled by the feedback I received.

2. Why did you write the book?

I, like others, see persistent problems all around us that carry a big business and societal cost. I also see enormous latent potential in businesses and government agencies. I know this potential can be unleashed if we can just equip people to solve problems well. I really want one question to be asked right across society, that being “Are we solving the right problem?” This one question can lead to better placed effort, greater productivity, and vastly better and cheaper outcomes. The benefits would amount to billions of dollars annually in monetary terms alone.

3. Doesn't everyone know how to solve problems?

No, they don't. In fact, most people aren't ever trained how to diagnose let alone resolve the messy real-world problems that matter most today. In fact, most people are addressing the wrong problems in the wrong way most of the time. Consequently, the cost of poor problem-solving is extraordinary ... as is the upside of making even small improvements.

4. Who is your target reader?

To the horror of most publishers, I have more than one specific reader in mind. In fact, I have many – because problem-solving is a skill universally required across industry sectors worldwide. It's an essential skill for current and emerging leaders and professionals in business, government and the not-for-profit sector. Indeed, complex problem-solving is recognised by the World Economic Forum as the #1 skill required for the future of work. Indeed, the universal relevance of the book was validated by the diverse suite of reviewers.

5. What are the one or two big insights in the book?

There are many valuable insights throughout the book. Two key insights are, however, that a) most people are solving the wrong problems most of the time, and b) today most things are technically possible, the challenge is to make progress *humanly possible*. What I mean by this second point is that our human biases, mindset and foibles most often get in the road of solving problems well. When we are equipped to recognise and address these impediments, progress becomes easier, faster and vastly more rewarding.

6. There's a lot of talk about innovation. Is this something you address in the book?

Yes, the book makes a major contribution to enabling innovation but also challenges the dominant innovation narrative. If innovation is the answer or solution to the woes of business and government, what is the initial problem? I suggest it's a fundamental inability to solve problems in the first place. Consequently, it's more real and useful to focus on problem-solving than innovation, particularly as innovation can be alienating to many people. This is a story nobody is telling.

Sample Q&A continued

7. Where did you get your ideas and insights from?

I've collected the insights over nearly 30 years of professional practice, drawn from a range of disciplines including engineering, planning, economics, stakeholder engagement, decision support, management and the behavioural sciences. What I enjoy most is connecting important ideas from different disciplines to improve how work gets done in the real world.

8. How do you know the methods in your book really work?

I have successfully applied almost all the ideas and methods in my book in practice. Indeed, some of them are my own creations to help people make progress on the problems that matter to them. Other tools and methods are widely recognised and used on a daily basis. Each of the methods and tools described is valuable in its own right, but when used in combination they can be incredibly powerful.

9. Why should people buy your book (rather than another in the genre)?

Smashing the State of Dumb-stuck is the most practical, evidence-based “how to” book in the genre. Where other books on problem-solving are overly simplistic or consider a problem solved when a client ‘buys’ a solution idea, this book is founded on the idea that a problem is solved when benefits are actually delivered to the people for whom they are intended.

Crucially, *Smashing the State of Dumb-stuck* delivers profound insights to the importance and practice of effective problem-solving in society today. It describes the why, what and how of real-world problem-solving in a compelling way.

The book provides a complete arsenal of tools in one place, and every chapter provides real substance without being long-winded. It integrates the work of other leading practitioners in an engaging, accessible way. Real-world case studies are used to illustrate all 35 tools which, together with step-by-step guidelines, equip the reader to solve problems well. No deep knowledge in specialised fields (like finance or engineering) is required to understand and apply the insights.

10. How will a reader benefit?

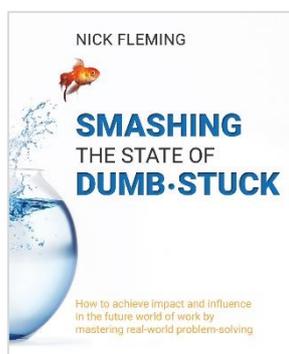
This may be one of the most valuable books a reader ever buys. As a reviewer has said, it's not a “read once and put on the shelf book”. It's a guide to have on the desk every day. Indeed, it can change the reader's relationship with their work, peers, direct reports and stakeholders in a substantial way. Indeed, as I often say to participants in my executive development programs, “you won't see the world the same way again”. Furthermore, the book explains how the reader can achieve an immediate return on investment and effort. *Smashing the State of Dumb-stuck* provides a solid foundation for the future of work and consequently the reader's job effectiveness as a professional, a leader of teams and leader of organisations.

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Sell Sheet

Title	Smashing the State of Dumb·stuck
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Publication date	2021
Synopsis	Most people are solving problems in the wrong way most of the time. But it is possible to remedy this situation with immediate effect. <i>Smashing the State of Dumb·stuck</i> is 'the leading book' on real-world problem solving, rich in practical insights for leaders and professionals that want to be impactful and sought-after.
Formats available	Paperback
Available from	Amazon, Booktopia, Fishpond and all good book sellers
Territories sold	Australia, United States, United Kingdom
Cover	



Author



Testimonials

“This is a globally significant contribution to human endeavour ...”

Peter Young, Chair of ISO Sustainable Finance International Standards Committee

“Smashing the state of dumb·stuck is a 'must read' for people who are serious about making our organisations and society better ...”

Elizabeth Proust AO, Advisory Board Chair at the Bank of Melbourne,
Chair of Nestlé Australia, non-executive director at Lendlease

“Without doubt the leading book on problem-solving. Essential reading.”

Tony Frencham, Group Senior Vice President, Worley