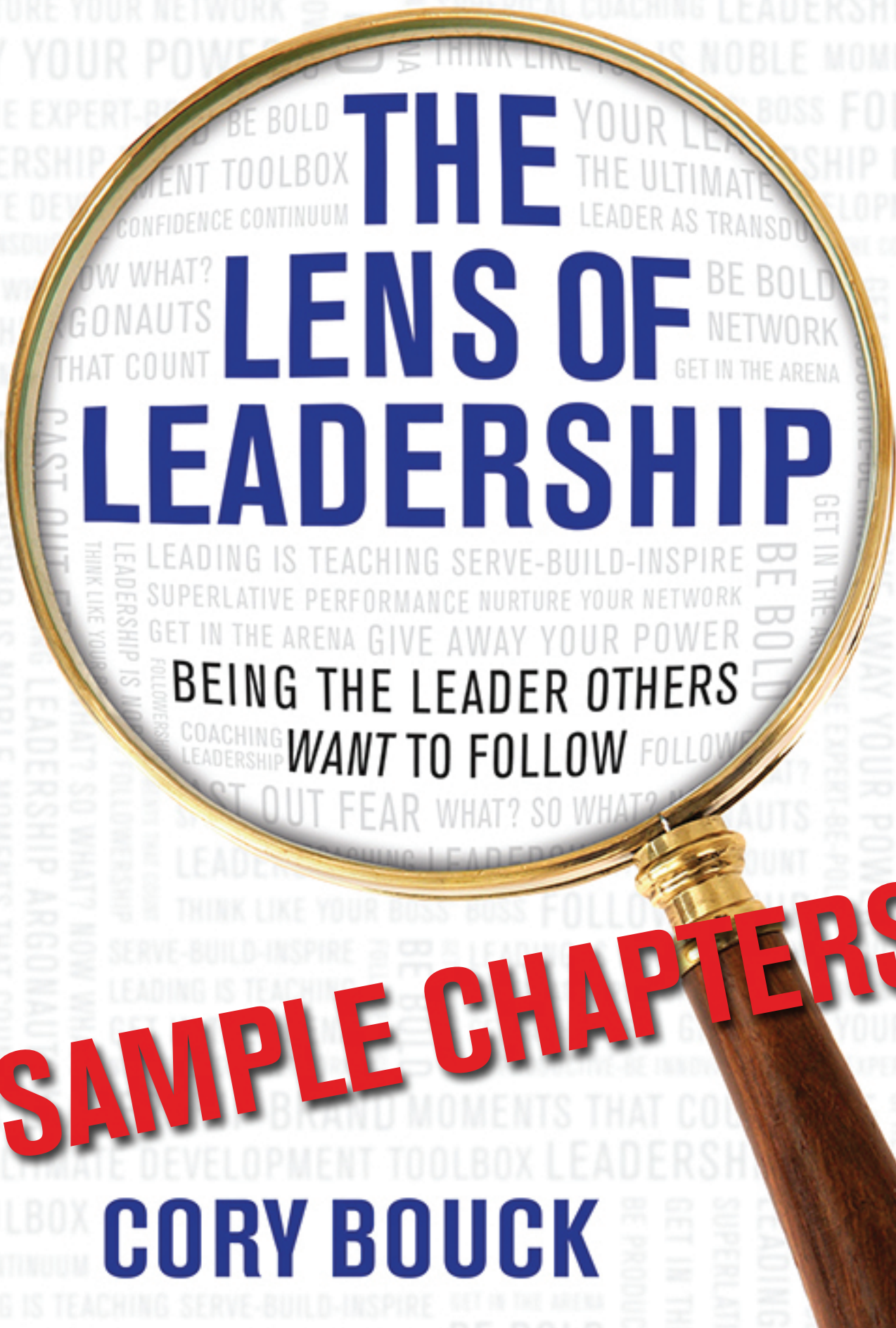


"Cory Bouck distills the lessons of his own impressive experience into practical insights that will help individuals and organizations make the most of their leadership talent."

– John R. Ryan, President & CEO, Center for Creative Leadership



THE LENS OF LEADERSHIP

BEING THE LEADER OTHERS
WANT TO FOLLOW

SAMPLE CHAPTERS

CORY BOUCK

INTRODUCTION

All glory comes from daring to begin.

— Eugene F. Ware

Leaders don't create followers, they create more leaders.

— Tom Peters

While researching the data that became the book *Good to Great*, Jim Collins cautioned his team against the Siren song of “leadership” being attributed as the “answer to everything.” What the team discovered, however, was that great leadership *was* present in all of the “good” companies at the time of their transition to “great,” and those strong leadership skills were consistently missing in all of the poorly-performing comparison companies.

- Are you in over your head as a leader, and you're just waiting to be found out?
- Is your career not progressing as quickly—or in the direction—that you would like?
- Is your paycheck suffering because you are not delivering superior results?
- Do you aspire to lead others on a truly high performance team?

If so, this book can help.

During my years as a military leader, all performance—the critical and the mundane—was viewed through what I call “The Lens of Leadership.” If a mission failed to achieve its goal or was executed sloppily, it was considered a leadership failure. If the floors were dirty or the brass un-shined in a ship’s passageway, that was also a leadership failure. If the meals were bad at the base cafeteria, that was a leadership failure, too. When leaders are held accountable for results, those results almost always improve. Great leadership seeks out accountability.

In my experience outside the military, I have seen business, academic, and community leaders quickly attribute *success* to “leadership,” but they often neglect to attribute *failure* to leadership as well. I have seen bosses—and sometimes even the boss’ boss—shirk accountability and choose instead to cite a long list of *other* problems, often rationalized as having been beyond someone’s control. That’s no way to lead an organization to greatness.

My earliest leadership skills were developed in a very intentional and structured way in what I believe is the finest leadership laboratory in the world: the U.S. Naval Academy in Annapolis, Maryland. Students there, called Midshipmen, learn and practice the most powerful principles of leadership using a potent combination of formal learning, social modeling, and experiential immersion. Everything students do there is an opportunity to demonstrate or further develop their leadership skills.

While I learned these principles in the context of a military environment, they are universally-applicable, and have direct relevance to other competitive enterprises like business, entertainment, and not-for-profits. Business titans like Malcolm Forbes, Dave Thomas of Wendy’s restaurants, FedEx’s Fred Smith, P&G’s Bob McDonald and A.G. Lafley, George Steinbrenner of the New York Yankees, Estée Lauder’s founder Leonard Lauder, and Sam Walton formed their leadership skills in the military, as did entertainment leaders

like Clint Eastwood, Tony Bennett, and Bill Cosby. Great leaders understand the universal, human principles that drive people and teams. This understanding does not have to be developed in the military, but it *does* have to be developed because it does translate into organizational success.

My learning and experience – as a Naval Academy graduate and former leadership instructor, a Naval Flight Officer, a business leader at two Fortune 300 companies and a privately-held firm, and as an elected official – has taught me to see all results through The Lens of Leadership. This book will introduce you to **a new mindset, new skills, and new development tools** for your leadership toolbox.

A NEW MINDSET

The Lens of Leadership is an accountability mindset. All successes and failures have their roots in leadership, and people in positions of leadership bear responsibility for those successes and failures. Great leaders are not afraid to have their results examined through The Lens of Leadership.

This book will introduce you to this uncommon mindset, which is vital to your success as both a follower and as a leader. All intentions, acts, and outcomes should be viewed through The Lens of Leadership to bring focus to the leader's ultimate accountability for results.

NEW SKILLS

In May 2010, *Harvard Business Review* published an article titled, "How to Keep Your Top Talent." In it, researchers from the Corporate Leadership Council revealed that 70 percent of today's high performers—tomorrow's future experts and leaders—lack critical skills essential to their future success.

To bridge that gap, this book offers a powerful set of leadership skills. I have included the highest-leverage tools available for building high performance teams that will consistently deliver winning results. You can apply these skills no matter what your role or level in any kind of organization. These tools are *practical*, not theoretical. You should apply them immediately to earn the recognition you want to earn by improving the results that you and your teammates deliver.

NEW DEVELOPMENT TOOLS

This book also is designed to be a leadership development *handbook*. Each chapter includes a template and resources for you to create your customized personal development plan. This plan should be your commitment—to your organization, to your leader, to your team, and to yourself. If you keep the development commitments you create in this book, your results will improve, your reputation will blossom, and your career will be dramatically enhanced.

This book is a *long-term resource* for you. People can learn to master only one or two new competencies at a time, usually over the course of twelve to eighteen months. This book has plans for an entire career's worth of leadership development. As your skills and responsibilities advance, you can choose the chapters that apply to your current needs and changing situations.

THE LEADERSHIP EXODUS

Across centuries, great leaders have written the history we know today by developing themselves and inspiring others. The great leaders of tomorrow will have to do so as well. But what “leaders” look like in all kinds of organizations is about to undergo a radical transformation driven by a demographic tsunami: The 80 million members of the Baby Boomer generation (born between 1946 and 1964) have begun to retire at a rate that will continue to accelerate

over the next ten to fifteen years. Generation X (born between 1965 and 1980) has had a couple of decades to develop its leadership skills and prove itself, but its 50 million members will be insufficient to fill the leadership vacuum created by the retiring Baby Boomers. As a result, some of the younger and less-experienced Gen Xers and a huge number of undeveloped, unprepared Millennials (born between 1981 and 1999, and also called “Generation Y”) will soon be sucked up into leadership roles for which their organizations will find them wholly unprepared.

Millennials will make up *half* of the workforce by 2014. They have many wonderful characteristics they are bringing with them: they are natural collaborators; they grew up using technology to communicate, learn, and solve problems; they are curious and have a constant desire to learn. But Baby Boomers and early Gen Xers had years and years of intentional development and mentoring—in progressively more demanding roles—that the inexorable progress of business will not afford to Millennials.

It’s not that Millennials are not currently leading: they hold 28 percent of today’s managerial positions.¹ It is that the accelerated rate of Baby Boomers’ retirement and the insufficient replacement number of Gen Xers will result in Millennials being advanced into senior roles far faster than previous generations.

This book is not specifically targeted at Millennials, however. The principles of *The Lens of Leadership* are timeless and applicable at *all* levels in *any* type of organization. But unless your organization recognizes and acts on the demographic facts, the leaders you will soon begin rapidly to promote *will not be ready to be responsible for the people and roles you are going to give them*.

Lloyd’s of London interviewed 500 global CEOs in order to understand and rank business risk factors for their 2011 Risk Index

1 Already exceeding the Boomers’ number of 23 percent.

report. Of the ninety risks assessed, those CEOs identified “loss of customers” as the number one threat. Number two was “talent and skill shortages.” Think of the catastrophic risk choices they had to choose from: terrorism, the interrupted flow of oil and other material inputs, a natural disaster, political instability, and government interference. But the second biggest risk to the 500 largest companies in the world is that their leaders may not be capable of leading or building a talent bench.

Because of this demographically-influenced leadership exodus, the organizations that will dominate the 2020s will be the ones that have built highly skilled and experienced leaders at several levels—even senior directors and vice-presidents—who happen to be in their late twenties and early thirties. If you want to be winning ten years from now, you need to emphasize and accelerate the leadership development of late Gen Xers and Millennials. If you are an ambitious Gen Xer or Millennial, now is your opportunity to *write the history of tomorrow* by learning to serve others, build skills, lead teams, and inspire greatness.

THE QUALITY OF LEADERSHIP MATTERS

In order to develop future leaders, your organization has to *retain* them long enough to do so. An October 2011 Mercer study discovered that Millennials are twice as likely to be looking for another job—even now during this period of extended economic difficulty. Employees who report to managers who are effective at manager-led development deliver *25 percent higher performance*, have a *40 percent higher retention* rate, and have *29 percent higher commitment/engagement* levels.² So you have to have a *current* bench of leaders capable of building the Millennials into your future leaders.

2 2010 Corporate Executive Board Report on Manager-Led Development

The *Lens of Leadership* will help leaders at *all levels* and their followers to develop into the skilled employees you need them to become in order to remain competitive over the next ten to fifteen years.

THIS BOOK EXPLAINS WHY GREAT LEADERS:

- Act paradoxically as both a leader and a follower at the same time throughout their careers.
- Model the right behaviors every single day, and set the highest bar for themselves.
- Take pride in having led a team to victory, but have the grace to give the credit for that victory to everyone but themselves.
- Have the unshakeable courage to stand alone if necessary to help the team break through barriers.
- Absorb heat from outside the team, not reflect it onto the team.

THIS BOOK IS FOR YOU

- If you are an individual contributor in your organization, this book will get you performing like a superstar by teaching you great “followership.”
- If you are an early leader, it will teach you the key fundamental behaviors to master so you are viewed as a leader who is effective beyond your years.
- If you are an experienced or even senior leader, this book includes advanced skills that are effective all the way up into the C-Suite.
- If you have struggled, or your career has stalled a bit, this book will teach you “career recovery” behaviors, including how to

communicate your renewed commitment to excellence in an authentic way.

- If you have been denied a promotion, or even lost your job, this book has career-management tools for dealing with life-altering change. It will get you on a new path to career success and happiness.

YOU WILL LEARN:

In the first section, **SERVE**, you will learn that the first important attribute of great leadership is *followership*. All of us are followers no matter what role we are in. And if you are already a leader, you must still exhibit and apply the skills of great followership because leaders are both followers and leaders, *simultaneously*. You will also learn about transitioning to a leadership role and the essential skills of getting more done through others, while maintaining a servant's heart.

In the second section, **BUILD**, you will learn how to manage your own skill development by assertively managing your career. The skills of self-development are important for whatever career stage you are in. You will also learn about essential resources for developing others.

In section three, **INSPIRE**, you will learn to motivate those you lead to help you create a high-performance team by engaging them in a worthy cause. You will also learn to prepare them, and yourself, to be ready for those unexpected moments that define a career and a life.

LET'S GO!

Why should you take this journey with me? I have built and grown early leaders. I have been successful at growing my own career and the careers of others. I have been successful leading in very

different sets of circumstances. I have the strategic business experience to influence and coach senior leaders of large enterprises.

Everyone needs advocates and mentors. I want to be your coach. Leadership development is a journey. *Let's get going!*

CHAPTER ONE

FOLLOWING IS THE FIRST FORM OF LEADING



Give me a stock clerk with a goal, and I will give you someone who will make history. Give me someone without a goal, and I will give you a stock clerk.

— J.C. Penney

If you believe lack of authority prevents you from leading effectively, it is time to rethink your understanding of leadership.

— Mike Bonem and Roger Patterson, *Leading From the Second Chair*

Just about everybody has a boss. You do. Your boss does. If you work for a company or even a not-for-profit, your most senior leader probably reports to a Board of Directors. Each director is elected or appointed by a collection of shareholders or other stakeholders. If you work in an obvious hierarchy like a factory, the government, or a multinational corporation, then you can see the stack of bosses in the organizational chart. If you are a small business owner competing in a Darwinian market, the customer is your boss. Even the President of the United States, “the most powerful man in the world,” has a

boss: the American people. He gets daily informal feedback through polls, and he endures what is probably the world's toughest performance review after four years.

Unless you are one of the very rare exceptions (a self-employed visionary inventor, Employee #1 in your own company, or a senior family member in a privately-held business), the journey to great leadership begins—and continues throughout your career—by demonstrating great followership. Great leadership is mastery of the paradoxical dual roles of both leader and follower. The first among these is the follower.

BECOMING A FOLLOWER

The skills of great followership are so important because they teach us a vital first principle of leadership: *service*. Many great, global organizations as diverse as General Electric, the Peace Corps, Procter & Gamble, and the Walt Disney Company have leadership development programs that start with some sort of early process for revealing, then reducing, the natural tendency of people to act in their self-interest *first*, which teaches the cornerstone of camaraderie and sacrifice: that you are part of something larger and more important than yourself.

The most obvious example of this is the military services, where upon your joining, your commanding officer will order your hair cut short, issue you standard uniforms for all occasions, restrict you to various standard behaviors, and work hard to break you down physically, mentally, and emotionally as an individual before building you back up. Military recruits lose their sense of individuality and establish their primary self-identification as being part of their unit through this process. They earn tangible artifacts—like T-shirts, patches, awards, qualifications, and ribbons—through shared trial and experience. They learn self-mastery through service to the greater team. During this time, they learn that individual accomplishment is not what is rewarded. They learn that account-

ability is bigger than just responsibility for self: it is accountability for the success of the whole.

It's not just the military that has this sort of intentional, directed acculturation. In *Built to Last*, Collins and Porras coined the phrase "Cult-like Cultures" to describe one of the indicators that distinguishes a currently-successful firm from a truly visionary company that is likely to deliver long-term, self-sustaining success. Many of these high-performing, long-successful companies have culture-perpetuating tools:

- An ideology with an inspiring affirmation or pledge
- A tendency to hire new people through a tight candidate screening process
- Early employee indoctrination
- Internal "universities"
- On- and off-the-job socialization
- A stated promote-from-within policy
- A unique language and terminology
- Internal mythology and "folk tales" that reinforce what "great" looks like
- A comprehensive reward system that is designed to create full financial and psychological buy-in to the company.

Many hiring, recruiting, and interviewing processes are designed to accomplish this before you even join the company. Instead of shaving your head and teaching you to march, they make sure that the ones coming through the door will be a "fit" using tools like academic tests (e.g., Procter & Gamble's "P&G-MAT"), personality profiling, behavioral interviews, and pre-offer socialization. And great companies work hard to acculturate new employees as they walk in the door for day one: New "cast members" (employees) at Walt Disney, for example, go through a week-long program called "Traditions."

Team members and employees who learn to "follow first," learn to serve the needs of their leaders. Again, this doesn't mean that they

are joining a caste system or perpetuating some outdated industrial-age construct. I'm not encouraging followers to act subservient or to treat leaders deferentially. Great followership demonstrates your recognition that leaders need teammates who are aligned with the leader's goals, are ready to go the extra mile to accomplish those goals, and possess enough learning agility to anticipate their leader's needs and fill those gaps without needing to be told to do so. Followership means learning to write with your leader's style, to speak his (or her) mind and represent his interests at meetings he is unable to attend, and to take on thankless tasks if that is what is necessary for the team to accomplish its goals. It requires you to develop the ability to conduct a comprehensive situational assessment *from the leader's perspective*. It may even require you to assume roles and thinking styles that complement the leader's gaps that he or she may not even acknowledge having.

Followership is a constant part of leadership because "everyone has a boss." The earlier and more consistently you demonstrate great followership, the faster your reputation will develop as a "go to" member of your team, and the faster you will earn promotion to the level and the type of work you are passionate about. Before most leaders will promote you or recommend you to join another team within a company, they want to observe you to perform at *that* level in your current role. They want to see your daily professionalism and consistent willingness to go the extra mile to deliver reliably great results. This mindset is not outdated. It is a timeless reality of professional development. This process is "earn your chops," not "wait your turn." It is a willingness to be measured by your performance and results, no matter how early you are in your career. It screams, "I can hunt with the big dogs, and I'm willing to prove it!" in what Dan Pink calls the "Conceptual Age," our current time when innovative ideas that contribute to solving big problems are the coin of the realm.

Great followership begins with fully investing yourself in the ideology of the company or team you have joined. Take the acculturation seriously. Study the behaviors that earn rewards. Listen to the internal mythologies and tease out what behaviors lead to success and which ones lead to failure. What actions are rewarded or punished?

Ask many different leaders what it takes to succeed and compare their answers. There are many different paths to success in any organization. Look at the behavior of all employees—up and down—through The Lens of Leadership: Do they talk about success and failure in terms of leadership of the project or team? How are people held accountable for results? Do leaders talk about what it takes to win, and how winning will specifically be defined? Do they talk about failure with words and tones that convey contempt for losing? Can they explain *why* they expect to win?

Take note of your leaders and others as they communicate and coach. Collect techniques that are consistent with your style, and adapt others that seem to work so they are right for you to use. You are always building your leadership toolbox because “everyone has a boss.” And no matter where you are in an organization, you can learn as much from bad leaders as you can from great ones.

GREAT FOLLOWERSHIP ROLES

Great followers see themselves as one of many facilitators for the team, and a great facilitator serves many roles. In their book *Leaping the Abyss: Putting Group Genius to Work*, Chris Peterson and Gayle Pergamit explain that great facilitators wear many hats. One of them is the “valet” hat: learn your leader’s presentation style, the voice she writes with, how she builds her stories and designs her PowerPoint slides, and then design the content you create for her with that in mind.

Another is the “Socrates-like mentor” hat: Know your leader’s job well enough to stimulate challenging, counterintuitive thinking. Know when to provoke, and when to let it go. Whatever your leader’s weaknesses (the methodology of the research, the financials of the project, the “people” aspects of dealing with change, dealing with marketing, etc.), shore them up by becoming *great* at those things. Amplify your leader’s strengths, supplement her gaps, and train yourself to think like she thinks.

The “chameleon” hat demonstrates that you know when to be visible, and when to be subtle or even invisible. Remember, great followership is about making your boss look good, not immediately standing out yourself. A follower who earns a reputation for “seeing around corners” and putting the answer to that unanticipated question in the backup slides for the boss will always be a standout, even while “blending in.” This may feel like a big risk. Many early-career followers fear having to share credit—or worse,

Like “The Force” in *Star Wars*, the “Pastor/Parent” role has a dark-sided temptation. You must recognize that an enormous trust has been vested in you. Never “borrow” the rank of your boss, and never leverage the trust, the power, the access, or the voice you have earned to serve yourself or manipulate others. Your abuse will be discovered because once you use it successfully, you will continue to use it, but more sloppily, until you destroy the trust. Once your over-step as a consigliere is discovered, it will end your influence, and probably your career in that organization.

not getting credit—for every little thing they do. By focusing on making your boss look good, you certainly risk being taken advantage of. But a leader who repeatedly exploits your facilitation and gives you inadequate public credit is telling you loudly and clearly that he or she is unworthy of your followership.

Earning what Jack Welch calls the “Pastor/Parent” hat gives followers the opportunity to demonstrate their professional maturity. Welch writes, “Pastors hear the ‘sins’ and complaints without recrimination. Parents love and

nurture, but give coaching fast and straight when you're off-track." Once you have earned the Pastor/Parent trust, you will become a "go-to" influencer with your boss.

I observed one of the best examples of followership I have ever seen when I was shadowing a very young director I was hoping to work for at Newell-Rubbermaid in the early 2000s. I was in a divisional marketing role, and he was the leader of the company's corporate NASCAR program. We were at a dinner hosted by the CEO and his staff for all twenty-five of his division presidents, who were there to network and lobby for resources. At that time, Newell-Rubbermaid was a very political organization, and the CEO, who was a fierce and hot-tempered competitor as far back as his college wrestling days, encouraged that kind of competition between his presidents. It was a business mixer, and each of the division leaders jockeyed for time alone with the CEO to "kiss the ring."

Early in the evening something big came undone, and before we knew it, the CEO and his COO left the gathering angry and in a hurry. We were in a city the whole group was used to gathering in, and the young director I was shadowing knew where the CEO and COO were likely to go to eat their dinner and sort out the problem unobserved by the twenty-five presidents. He confirmed this with a president who was closely connected to the CEO, and over the next few minutes, I heard him demonstrate a deft and exemplary act of followership.

He called the exclusive restaurant and asked for the *maître d'*. He said, "Two very important, powerful men are on their way to your restaurant, and they are having a very, very bad day. I would like to help you ensure that they have a great experience at your restaurant. I want to make sure they come away having solved their very big problems and enjoyed themselves over a fantastic meal." He told the *maître d'* insights about the pair's culinary knowledge and preferences, gave him his name and cell phone number, and encouraged him to call if there were any questions or subtleties about the

"What if I have a lousy boss?"

All the more reason to support him or her! You WILL be noticed—and viewed very positively—if you can fill in your leader's "gaps." Think of it as "serving the role, not the person." You are helping to make the team successful, and that is your obligation, whether you like and respect your leader, or not. You can motivate yourself by thinking about the informal leadership skills you are building.

"Won't I be perceived as a brown-noser?"

Not if your behaviors reflect an authentic, genuine desire to serve the team's interests. If your behaviors are supported by that spirit, and you accomplish your work with a high degree of professional maturity, others will see you as taking initiative and leading, not sucking up.

service that the maître d' wanted to know. Then he gave the maître d' his corporate credit card number in order to guarantee the servers a particularly high gratuity if the CEO and COO did not leave enough. Finally, he asked to speak to the restaurant's sommelier, to whom he gave important insights about the CEO's wine knowledge and preferences.

This young director demonstrated exceptional followership skills in "managing up" that evening. He knew his leaders inside out, and wanted only for them to accomplish what they needed to accomplish that night. He asked for no recognition. I doubt the CEO and COO even knew he involved himself. But he anticipated their need, facilitated an exceptional transition from anger to

productivity for them, and he worked the crowd of presidents back at the corporate dinner like a diplomat. He did it for all the right reasons, and for the benefit of all, even those who never knew they were benefitting.

If you can follow by being a facilitator, valet, consultant, and Pastor/Parent, you will be leading through your followership. Leading as a follower is a fine line to walk. Like any professional skill, it takes some time and trials to master, but the best leaders

want an army of this kind of follower because they are the ones demonstrating the aptitude and self-development skills to become the next generation of leaders.

There are many benefits that result from developing your followership skills. Early in your career you might lack the perspective necessary to recognize the value of the camaraderie developed through trials endured with others. But the bonds you form with peers and mentors during these formative professional years will serve you throughout your career.

You will realize that your early roles provide you with a “leadership laboratory” where you can experiment with various techniques of execution and motivation. As an effective follower, you should volunteer for leadership roles (on project teams, for example) early and frequently. You will develop more tools for your leadership “toolbox” earlier and faster as a result.

You will also learn to push the boundaries of your authority, and you will earn a reputation for being highly accountable. Acting like an entrepreneur and “owning your business” will teach you to set the course for things within your control and not let your project or team become victims of circumstance. Learning to subordinate your will to the team’s needs and the leader’s direction will demonstrate your professional maturity at a time when others may be acting more selfishly. This maturity will be apparent to, and valued by, the leaders around you.

Finally, as a follower you should develop a habit of looking at your career through The Lens of Leadership: How did leadership skills contribute to the success or failure of your projects, teams, and interactions? Be observant, and connect every result—be it a large or small outcome—to the ultimate accountability that the leader has and the role he or she plays for and with the team. Collect these experiences and commit to best-practice behaviors when *you* have the

opportunity to be a leader. And remember, no matter who you are, you are simultaneously a follower and a leader. The natural tendency is to focus on the skills needed to be a good leader. Recognizing the value of being a good follower will make a good leader *great*.

Summary & Exercise:

Chapter 1—Following is the First Form of Leading

WHAT?—SO WHAT?—NOW WHAT?

What? Great leadership begins with great followership. Everyone is simultaneously in the roles of both leader and follower, and both of these roles are servant roles.

So What? You must recognize and differentiate between your obligations as a follower and a leader. You must develop the skills necessary to be successful in these paradoxically simultaneous roles. Knowing how to serve others up, down, and sideways will earn you a reputation as a powerful asset to any team.

Now What?

I will study _____
_____ to learn more about followership.

I will reach out to _____
_____ in order to seek
more insight, guidance, and advice.

I will ask _____ to hold
me accountable for _____
_____.

And I will _____

_____ in order to create an experience with
elements/competencies that I have not yet adequately developed by
(date) _____.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES FOR YOUR "NOW WHAT?" JOURNEY:

Carnegie, Dale. *How to Win Friends and Influence People*.

Chaleff, Ira. *The Courageous Follower: Standing Up to and for Our Leaders*.

Covey, Stephen R. *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*.

Hughes, Richard, Robert Ginnett, and Gordon Curphy. *Leadership: Enhancing the Lessons of Experience*. (7th ed.)

Maister, David H., Charles H. Green, and Robert M. Galford. *The Trusted Advisor*.

Pink, Daniel H. *The Adventures of Johnny Bunko: The Last Career Guide You'll Ever Need*.

Riggio, Ronald E., Ira Chaleff, and Jean Lipman-Blumen, eds. *The Art of Followership: How Great Followers Create Great Leaders and Organizations*.

Tulgan, Bruce. *It's Okay to Manage Your Boss: The Step-by-Step Program for Making the Best of Your Most Important Relationship at Work*.

CHAPTER TWENTY TWO

SUCCEEDING IN MOMENTS THAT COUNT



*Oh, that a man might know the end of this day's business ere it come.
But it sufficeth that the day shall end, and then the end is known.*
– Brutus, in Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*, Act V, Scene I

*On the strength of one link in the cable,
Dependeth the might of the chain.
Who knows when thou may'st be tested?
So live that thou bearest the strain.*
– from “The Laws of the Navy” by Rear Admiral R.A. Hopwood,
Royal Navy, 1896

One of my favorite leadership modules to teach at the Naval Academy was Combat Leadership. It was deeply thought-provoking both for me and the Midshipmen because its subject is the essence of why our service academies exist. All midshipmen wonder what challenges combat will bring them. Like hundreds of Henry Flemings, they wonder how they will perform in the heat of battle, and whether they will earn a Red Badge of Courage.

After discussing the readings and class content, I would invite them out into the hallway to conclude the class. High up on the walls on

both sides along the length of the corridor were the citations and midshipman photographs of all of the graduates who had been awarded a Congressional Medal of Honor, some dating back one hundred and thirty years. I would have each student line up in front of one alumnus and read his citation to himself. Then I would have him study the hero's black-and-white student photograph above the citation, and I would ask, "What do you see?" Each student would reply with the same kind of answer every time: "He looks like my roommate." "He's got the same smirk as my lab partner." "He looks like he just flunked an exam." "He looks just like us...."

Then I would ask several questions as I walked slowly behind the students, referring to all the men pictured on the wall: "Do you think they *knew* they were going to become war heroes when those student photos were taken?" "What did they *do* while they were here that prepared them for the fateful act that cost many of them their lives and earned them our nation's highest military award?" "Do you think their instructors could have identified who would become the heroes?" "Which one of you will have your student photo up on this wall with a citation for future midshipmen to learn of the heroism you have yet to demonstrate?" "Will you be ready for your moments that count?"

It was always a sobering, incredibly powerful moment in my students' leadership development. Of course, *none* of the heroes expected to become "heroes." None of them wanted to be tested in an *in extremis*¹ moment. In these photos, they were just awkward looking college-age kids, and so, because of the traditions of similar uniforms and short hair, it was easy for my students to identify with them. Each one of those American heroes came to be considered "heroic" for actions that certainly contained courage, but their destinies were driven to their inexorable conclusion by context and circumstance: Nobody wants to fail in his "moments that count."

1 One of "extreme circumstances, especially near the point of death."

THE PARADOX OF HUMBLE HEROISM

One of the most heroic people I have known personally was Howard Dignan. Mr. Dignan was my barber at the Naval Academy. I felt very insufficient when I finally learned who Mr. Dignan really was.

As a midshipman, I was full of the arrogance of youth. I couldn't wait to die for my country, and I was sure I would do something great—that Destiny would choose *me*. And I remember Mr. Dignan being a nice, gentle old man who cut my hair. It was only upon my return to the Academy as an instructor that I took the time really to get to know my barber. It took several months of frequent haircuts to coax his story from him, but Staff Sergeant Howard Dignan had done unimaginably heroic things. He went ashore in the first wave on Omaha Beach. He fought forty-four days of sustained combat before his first shower and change of uniform in France. He turned down several battlefield commissions in order to stay with his men. He led small teams behind enemy lines and was often cut off. He hid in the coal bin of a French bar that German officers were using as a headquarters. He was stunned so deeply by an artillery barrage during the wintertime Battle of the Bulge that he was tagged as “deceased.” He was the only one of his twenty-four closest hometown pals who enlisted together who came home. He returned to become a barber, and a husband, and a father, and a city councilman in his hometown of Annapolis. I realized that Destiny had been right to choose him. And I was humbled by his humility.

My friend and classmate Vic Hyder is the other most heroic person I know. Vic and I spent a summer training block as midshipmen together in the Philippines, Thailand, and Australia. After graduation, Vic went on to become a Navy SEAL. Our paths crossed only once, when I had the great fun of throwing him and his SEAL platoon out of the back of my P-3 Orion for some mid-altitude parachute training jumps. We connected ten or twelve years later via LinkedIn.

He was retiring from the Navy, and I was conducting a business war gaming exercise for the senior leaders of Johnsonville Sausage. I needed someone to connect my company leaders with the concept of business being “combat every day.” Vic came and set the tone for the day, and he and I got to catch up on his career, and the impact of 9/11 and the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan on the SEAL community. I was, again, humbled by a friend.

A camaraderie exists between Naval Academy classmates that is hard to describe, but it is an instant thing—years melt away, and we connect as deeply as though no time has passed since we were college-age kids struggling to outlast the Academy’s rigorous régime. Vic was measured, but also subtly eager to share with me that he had discussed combat with veterans of World War II’s D-Day invasion, the Korean Conflict’s battle of the Chosin Reservoir, and from various Vietnam War engagements. He wanted me to know that our classmates and their troops measured admirably against the yardstick of those storied heroes. He was not bragging. He was just letting me know, as a classmate and a friend.

Vic called me “brother” in one of our email exchanges while planning for my company’s war gaming event. It was one of the proudest and most inadequate moments of my life: to be considered a brother by a man of such nobility, whose deeds on behalf of our country should be known and revered by our whole society. But Vic and his warriors don’t need such reverence. They only need to “measure up” in the eyes of a small circle of their peers: to have demonstrated valor equal to those whose legacy they carry, and to have defeated the enemy. Vic lives the paradox of humble heroism.

For you, measuring up should mean succeeding in the eyes of a small circle of your closest friends, cross-functional teammates, and mentors—not because it will further your career, but because you are humble about moments that count.

HEROISM IN EVERYDAY MOMENTS THAT COUNT

Everyday heroism certainly requires important leadership skills, but mostly it requires *courage*. Courage is central to success during moments that count. C.S. Lewis wrote, “Courage is not simply *one* of the virtues, but the form of *every* virtue at the testing point.” In order for an act to be virtuous, it requires courage. It may require the courage to be self-disciplined in a moment of weakness. It may require the courage to temper your personal ambition and instead serve the team’s best interests. It may require the courage to say “yes” to something when others are saying “no.” Howard Dignan and Vic Hyder were *physically* courageous in the horrible circumstances of ground combat, but there are other important forms of courage that you must demonstrate: *Professional Courage*, *Managerial Courage*, and *Moral Courage*.

Professional Courage Puts Others First

The best and most-committed leaders are in it for something they believe in that is bigger than themselves. Because of that, they tend to put the organization—or at least the *mission* of the organization—first. They work for organizations they trust and they believe deeply in their hearts in the good intent and good deeds the organization accomplishes. They believe in and live out the values because they have chosen a team that allows each of them to live out his voice.² That belief leads them to put their organization first, their team and teammates next, and themselves last. This notion may seem so idealistic as to be trite, but I have seen it in several business colleagues whom I admire. They are widely revered and are also able to deliver fantastic results because of the commitment they engender in others. They see the typical organizational pyramid as inverted, with the organization on top, the team in the middle, and themselves supporting the whole on the bottom.

² The concept of “voice” is explained in Chapter 13.

Managerial Courage Shows Itself Everyday

My friend Chris Miller, a former Johnsonville colleague who is now a partner at The Praevius Group, writes that the most successful *in extremis* leaders are those who are “the most agile and adaptive. Regardless of the situation, they succeed. They are not committed to a course of action, but to a cause, and intent. They adjust. They accomplish and execute, no matter the level of chaos or order; no matter the audience.”

Some important “moments that count” are less dire than *in extremis* moments. For those moments, which are likely to occur in your daily life, here are the important skills needed:

- Conflict management
- Confronting poor results or execution
- Standing alone
- Compassion
- Maintaining integrity and ethics
- Demonstrating loyalty
- Speaking up to arrogance or instances of incompetence

Some of these are big, anticipated moments that you see coming from a mile away, that you can prepare for and practice and even get advice on before they arrive. But many of these will be unexpected and will require you to summon your professional courage, without warning, in a moment that counts.

Moral Courage Does What is Right

Launa Stayer-Maloney, Vice-Chairman of Johnsonville Sausage, taught me that “Business decisions are easy when you know what your values are.” She is absolutely right. When you work for an authentic organization, and you know its values and the intent behind them, even the tough decisions become less difficult. You measure the decision against the guidepost of values. Making financial decisions, people decisions, and decisions about whether to step up to career-affecting conversations becomes something you are obligated to do.

YOU HAVE A LOT AT RISK

If you are a police officer, a firefighter, an airline pilot, or a linesman for an electrical company, you are literally putting your life in the hands of others. In some jobs, there is *physical* risk and trust is hard-earned because of that risk. But Roger Cameron, the father of the junior military officer category of professional recruiting, inspired me to pursue a career in business because, he said, “Business is combat every day.” Your competitors wake up each day thinking about how they can steal your lunch money and put you out of business.

As you consider what courage means in business, and what moments in your life are moments that count, think about the people of your organization. In most jobs, our *lives* are not at risk, but our livelihoods, our lifestyles, and our self-interests absolutely are. Our ability to provide for our family, and to contribute to our community and to the welfare of others is on the line with every decision we make. Moments that count occur because we put our professional future into each other’s hands.

What will make you a hero in the context of your work life? Your teammates need you to be courageous and heroic in both of your roles as a follower and as a leader. There are other ways to be professionally heroic: to inspire others to improve themselves; to speak up when others will not; to defend those who are worthy and in need; to right a wrong you see that others do not. Life is truly like George Bailey’s in the film *It’s a Wonderful Life*. We can never fully know the impact we have on the lives of others.

TIME: THE LONG LENS OF LEADERSHIP

I was walking through the Père Lachaise cemetery in Paris with my daughter Shelby, who was sixteen years old at the time. We were wandering and visiting some of the famous graves. We stopped at a few from pop-culture, but we mostly searched for the sepulchers of those who had a more enduring impact on Western culture. As

we wandered, we suddenly had a heightened awareness of the perspective of time. Many of these eighteenth and nineteenth century politicians, admirals, statesmen, generals, correspondents, scientists, philosophers, and ministers of state had truly been world-famous in their day, having changed the course of human history. They are studied across cultures throughout the world even two hundred years after their deaths. Yet, there on that day, they were only skeletal remains under what were once colossal shrines to their lives, which are now merely moss-covered pieces of granite with decrepit ornamental metalwork and difficult-to-read scripts. My daughter and I recommitted ourselves to the importance of our faith, and to our closest relations. I shared with her Charles De Gaulle's famous quote, "The cemeteries of the world are filled with 'indispensable' men."

What about you? De Gaulle is right: No matter who you are, there is an inevitable future without you in it. Have you prepared your team members for that circumstance in case it comes sooner than you expect? How self-sufficient have you made them? How well cross-trained are they in each other's jobs? Special Forces teams in all services train to be self-sustaining no matter who is lost. Each member is trained in the skills of another—often two other—team members. They are ready for "moments that count." Is your team?

EVERYBODY HAS MOMENTS THAT COUNT

The only remotely heroic thing I have ever done was not "heroic"—it was just my job at the time. I was a poolside safety observer during the evaluation of which midshipmen would earn coveted slots to attend Navy Diver training. I had endured this same program as a freshman and graduated from the Fleet's diver training program. I was now part of the Academy's cadre administering the evaluation program for another group. The candidates were in the pool, each holding his breath while swimming the longest distance he was able to underwater, trying to exceed a certain distance requirement.

Everything was as it was supposed to be: we had healthy, smart, competitive candidates swimming their distances, and our own safety swimmers with mask, fins, and snorkels watching them closely. Everything was going “swimmingly.” Until it wasn’t....

I was walking the pool deck, watching for surface problems, when up from the pool’s depths emerged a safety swimmer and an unconscious candidate who had held his breath to the point of passing out underwater. Everything happened fast, but it happened like it was supposed to. It was all a blur, but my CPR got his systems going again. It turned out he was not just a fellow midshipman, but Greg Collins, a *classmate*. I visited him in the hospital and was happy and grateful to have been successful in my moment that counts. We were not close as friends at the time of the incident—we had different academic and extra-curricular interests and different circles of friends—and we didn’t necessarily become friends after the incident. It was an important event in my life, but I didn’t focus on it a lot: I was off to the next adventure, and the next, and the next....

Fast-forward twenty years into the future. I was at my twentieth Naval Academy class reunion, renewing all kinds of friendships. All of a sudden, a man appears in front of me at the football game social area and says, “Hi, Cory. Do you remember me?” I knew him instantly. He said, “I want you to meet my family. They know all about you.” I was suddenly surrounded by two “tweenagers” shaking both of my hands, and a woman hugging me and thanking me for what I had done for the husband she had not met yet and the children she had not foreseen all those years ago.

Wow. I was stunned. It had been more than just an important moment to Greg. I had minimized in my own mind something that had resulted in an incredible positive effect on people I didn’t even know. I will never forget the humbling power of gratitude I felt from that hug. My moment that counted had been important in ways I could not imagine. But you don’t have to be involved in saving someone’s life to be heroic in a moment that counts.

ANOTHER “MOMENT,” ANOTHER OPPORTUNITY

I am equally as proud of the opportunity I had to influence a young man who works in a manufacturing plant at Johnsonville. From time to time, I spend a shift in a plant to keep my head in the game and connect with the members who do the real work of our company, and on this particular day, I was with Brett. Brett was in his early twenties, and he led a team that was different every single day. Each morning, he took a team of seven or eight strangers from our temporary labor provider and molded them into a team doing one specific job. It was a pleasure to watch him lead. He took the Bad News Bears and turned them into the Harlem Globetrotters by the end of the day. And he did it every day.

Later, I was facilitating a class and Brett was one of the students. I had been so impressed by his leadership that I was sure he was on his way to great things. When I asked him what he wanted to do next, he didn't seem to have the fire and ambition I expected. I believed he was capable of great things as a future manufacturing line leader or even a shift leader at one of our plants, and I told him so. But Brett seemed uninterested. My surprise must have shown because he confided that he “would have to go back to school to get a promotion, and high school didn't go that well” for him. “Besides,” he said, “two years for an associate's degree? That's a *long* time!”

I asked him whether he had a wife or any children. He told me he was married and would become a father soon. I asked him what he cared about. What did he want to become? He said, “I don't want my wife to want for things, or my kids, either. I grew up poor, and I just want them to be able to have stuff without worrying.”

That was my “in.” I asked, “Brett, do you know how long you're going to have to work? I mean, at twenty-two, you do realize you're going to be working for another *forty-five* to *fifty* years, right? Twice as long as you've even been alive so far.” I let that sink in....

“I never thought about it like that. That's a long time,” he replied.

“So, if you’re going to work for fifty years,” I said, “maybe spending two, or even four of those years in school to get better skills and a couple of promotions might not be a bad investment if you want to provide a better life for your family, right? Working a little extra hard for *less than 10 percent of your work years* may not be too much to ask if it can help you earn more and get better shifts so you can have more time and more money for your family, right?”

Brett left the class that day in a very contemplative mood. I reached out to his coach (supervisor) and told him a little bit about the exchange, and he told me he would continue to push Brett to think about the future and encourage him to consider going to school.

Brett enrolled that fall in an associate’s degree program that met regularly in our company’s learning center. I saw Brett doing homework and preparing for classes regularly over the next three years. It was hard work for him to deliver a great performance on the job, attend school, get all of his homework and projects done, *and* be a great husband and father to two children. Some days the comments were a good-natured but sarcastic, “What have I done to myself?” And on other days they were about the latest “A” he had received, and how it kept surprising him that he was doing so well.

I was proud to be included in a small group that took Brett out for a beer to celebrate his graduation. He has completed a big accomplishment that will empower him to achieve his goal of economic security for himself and his family. Brett did all of the work. I am pleased I could play a small motivational role that gave Brett some perspective. I am grateful to have passed the test in another moment that counts.

You may not believe you’re in a job where you could become someone’s “hero.” But you don’t have to be a Navy SEAL or a fireman or policeman to have an incredibly important impact on the direction and outcome in someone’s life, inside or outside of work. And sometimes you don’t even have to do very much—you’re just one link in a chain of nudges. But you have to be *looking* for the mo-

ments. As a leader, some of your precious time has to be spent being on the lookout for moments that count.

Then, you have to be ready with whatever the moment calls for—it might be action, but it also may require *inaction*. By having the heart of a servant and the commitment of a warrior, you will surely be ready. By looking at your opportunities through The Lens of Leadership, you will be more likely to find—and succeed in—many moments that count.

Summary & Exercise: Chapter 22—Succeeding in Moments That Count

WHAT?—SO WHAT?—NOW WHAT?

What? Our lives are filled with moments that count. These moments are a test of our skills, our nature, and our commitment to others. In most jobs, our lives are not at stake. But in this interconnected, matrix-structured world, we *do* put our careers, our livelihoods, and our self-interests into the hands of others.

So What? You affect many lives through the behaviors you model, the expectations you set, and the decisions you make. You must be ready for your moments that count by developing professional, managerial, and moral courage.

Now What?

I will study _____
_____ to learn more about
being ready for “moments that count” in business.

I will reach out to _____
_____ in order to seek more
insight, guidance, and advice.

I will ask _____ to hold me
accountable for _____
_____.

And I will _____
_____ in order to create an experience with
elements/competencies that I have not yet adequately developed by
(date) _____.

**ADDITIONAL RESOURCES FOR YOUR
"NOW WHAT?" JOURNEY:**

Adams, Richard. *Watership Down: A Novel*.

Ambrose, Stephen E. *Band of Brothers*.

Dumas, Alexandre. *The Count of Monte Cristo*.

Gerstner, Louis V. *Who Says Elephants Can't Dance?: Leading a Great Enterprise through Dramatic Change*.

Gilbert, Martin. *Churchill: A Life*.

Grove, Andrew S. *Only the Paranoid Survive: How to Exploit the Crisis Points That Challenge Every Company*.

Haynes, Captain Al. "The Crash of United Flight 232." (Google it.)

Kennedy, John F. *Profiles in Courage*.

Kolditz, Thomas. *In Extremis Leadership: Leading As If Your Life Depended On It*.

Lee, Gus and Diane Elliott-Lee. *Courage: The Backbone of Leadership*.

Perkins, Dennis N.T. et al. *Leading at the Edge: Leadership Lessons from the Extraordinary Saga of Shackleton's Antarctic Expedition*.

Stockdale, James B. *Thoughts of a Philosophical Fighter Pilot*.

Treasurer, Bill. *Courage Goes to Work: How to Build Backbones, Boost Performance, and Get Results*.

A FINAL NOTE

Whether our efforts are, or are not, favored by life, let us be able to say, when we come near to the great goal, "I have done what I could. Let he who can, do better".

— Louis Pasteur

If you have a goal in life that takes a lot of energy, that requires a lot of work, that incurs a great deal of interest and that is a challenge to you, you will always look forward to waking up to see what the new day brings.

— Susan Polis Schutz

Followership is *the* prerequisite to leadership. Most great leaders started out as being great followers. This is not a “wait your turn” mindset; it is an “earn your chops” and “learn the skills” mindset. Over the next two decades, America will see tens of millions of experienced leaders from the Baby Boomer generation leave the workforce. There are not enough Generation Xers (born between 1965 and 1980) to fill those empty roles—not enough by about half. Technology and efficiencies will be found to fill some of the work that modern leaders must do, but the fact is that tens of millions of Millennials (or “Generation Y,” born between 1981 and 1999) will be sucked up into the leadership vacuum created by the departing Boomers and the

limited number of Xers replacements. How these Millennials are different will dramatically change—and improve—the workplace. But Millennials will be promoted into positions of leadership more rapidly than any other generation has without being given time to build leadership skills and confidence. And they will be leading in a world where the rate of change of complexity is increasing faster than the human species' ability to adapt to and master that change.

This need for rapid fundamental leadership development is not unique to America. Emerging markets are growing so rapidly that a whole new balance of global economic power is being created. These economies are in dire need of skilled first- or second-generation business leaders. These leadership principles are *human* principles. They will work in any organization around the world where people interact with other people to get work done.

LEADERSHIP DRIVES ECONOMIC RESULTS

Jim Collins coined the term “Level 5” leadership to describe the humble-but-relentless leaders who drove their companies from “good to great.” We know that stronger leadership benches drive better organizational performance. One study measured that improved performance as a 15 percent higher three-year total shareholder return!¹ But in the 2009 Corporate Leadership Council’s HIPO Survey, only 40 percent of employees identified as having “high potential” say that they “are being asked to contribute to [their] full potential.” And only two out of every five leaders are rated as “effective” or “highly effective.”²

I have spent the last twenty years acting in the paradoxically-simultaneous roles of follower and leader in the military, in academia, in business, as an elected official, and in not-for-profit and community roles. I was fortunate to have been given much more responsi-

1 Compared to their competitors with poor leadership development programs, as measured in the 2003 Corporate Leadership Council’s “Hallmarks of Leadership Success” report.

2 41 percent in The Corporate Executive Board’s 2009 Manager Study.

bility and autonomy than my age and experience warranted at the time. My two earliest leadership influences gave me more than just permission to experiment: they *required* that I vary my followership and leadership techniques in order to find what worked and toss out what did not. They also taught me to see every result—a dirty floor, an undisciplined team, or a wild success—through The Lens of Leadership.

The Lens of Leadership is an accountability mindset. I believe all successes and failures have their roots in leadership, and that people in positions of leadership bear responsibility for those successes and failures. Great leaders are not afraid to have their results examined through The Lens of Leadership.

The best leaders are “students of people” who can help teams overcome human and organizational foibles. They create an environment where teammates believe they are valued, and that they must constantly and forever develop themselves so they can better contribute to their own and to the organization’s success. Humans are such complicated, imperfect creatures full of unflattering behaviors and emotions. Some great teammates eventually emerge as great *leaders* and go on to inspire others to achieve their own greatness, despite our human “messiness.”

These three time-tested principles will make you a better follower and a better leader. Starting today, they *will* help you become more successful over the course of your career: *Serve*, *Build*, and *Inspire*.

SERVE

As you have read, the first principle of leadership is followership. A “servant follower” serves the best interests of his or her leader by first serving the best interests of the team, not his own personal self-interests. By serving the leader and the team as a follower, you will earn a strong reputation for influence, which will, in turn, get you promoted to the next level of leadership responsibility. After that

promotion to leader, you will be both a leader and also *simultaneously* still a follower.

Paradoxically, that spirit of service is also the right mindset for followers to maintain as you grow into leadership. By seeking first to serve the needs of those they lead, servant leaders develop their people to have the skills to achieve the organization's mission and purpose. The best servant leaders "use the business to build their people," not the other way around.

Some of the other essential elements of service are:

- Loyalty—to your leaders and to your team, even when you may personally disagree with certain decisions.
- Integrity, Ethics, and Character—High-trust teams are more efficient, more effective, faster, and cheaper to run than low-trust teams.
- Initiative, Resourcefulness, and Self-Reliance—Lighten your leader's load. Take the initiative to improve things. A "fire-and-forget" missile is a weapon that is advanced enough to adapt to target changes and operate independently all the way to the goal. Be a "fire-and-forget" teammate.
- Professionalism—Setting a sterling example will set you apart. Be Productive, Be Innovative, Be the Expert, and Be Polite.

The most effective leaders give away responsibility *and* authority for mission accomplishment—that is *real* empowerment. This action allows them to compound their own effectiveness through effective delegation. They recognize that their reputation for excellence as a leader is their own personal brand, and they work hard to nurture that brand the way Apple, Nike, and Disney steward theirs.

The best leaders hire the best people. They seek out, network with, and find people who are leaders *first*, who also happen to be exceptional at their functional roles. That requires a very patient, thorough vetting process—one that measures for cultural fit as well as professional competence. By hiring people whom they believe are capable of earning at least two promotions in their organization,

they continuously maintain their bench strength and earn a reputation for being a leader to whom others flock.

BUILD

It is a type of service to your leader, your team, and to yourself to pursue your own self-development. The best followers and leaders build their own toolboxes as a method of serving others. You will grow the fastest and achieve the most if you are committed to earning your way into relationships with people who are smarter than you are—people who are *the best* in their category or industry or profession. Work hard to develop your knowledge and judgment so you can consistently maintain professional conversations with people two levels above where you are today.

You should remain curious and inquisitive at all times about professional people and topics that may seem interesting but at first only tangential to your everyday work. A career is a string of eight to ten year adventures, the paths of which are often unanticipated. Don't leave this up to serendipity: seek out mentoring from experts in areas that interest you, and look for opportunities to make a living by moving closer professionally to what you love, what you can be really great at, to fill a need you see, and to do what your conscience compels you to do. Take the time to grow and nurture your professional network. Give away a little bit more than you receive by being a mentor yourself.

As someone's leader, you are the most important influence on his professional development at work. The best leaders are teachers who also recognize that most of the learning occurs on the job, not in a training event. Make sure the people you lead understand your expectations about performance and application following their learning of a new skill. Create experiences that will challenge them beyond what they think they can achieve. They will eventually thank you for that push.

One of the hallmarks of developing yourself and developing others is accountability. The best leaders and teammates do not avoid difficult conversations about performance or expectations. They conduct them in-the-moment, demonstrating 100 percent candor and 100 percent respect.

INSPIRE

The most successful and most respected leaders use *influence*, not rank or power, to lead spherically. They enlist people from all directions on the organizational chart, and also from outside the organization, to accomplish great things. They lead with a servant's heart because they recognize that only by helping others achieve *their* highest goals can they earn their people's highest engagement, and get people to give freely of their discretionary effort.

All leaders should constantly be considering where they and their teammates are on what I call the "Confidence Continuum."

A leader's two biggest worries should be...

Complacency

Hubris



The "Confidence Continuum"

There is an ideal point where the leader and the team are perfectly balanced on the continuum. They are confident enough to carry out the mission because they have prepared *thoroughly*—they are committed experts. They are also healthfully paranoid enough to be worried about what it is they do not know or haven't considered. This paranoia fuels their insatiable desire to learn more and get better. The best teams recognize that they are always getting better or declining—there is no steady-state. The best leaders don't lie awake nights worrying about complacency and hubris. They lie awake nights worrying about how they can get *their teammates* to lie awake

worrying about complacency and hubris. This is the servant-led, self-improving team.

Human beings are capable of unimaginable feats of professional, moral, mental, and physical accomplishment. The more unimaginable the feats, the more inspiration and motivation they require. Many levers exist that leaders can “pull” to motivate and inspire. The best leaders use *several* levers—each at just the right time and in the right circumstance—like tools in a toolbox. In order to be an effective motivator, you must understand your teammates as complete, “whole” people, not just who they are at work for fifty hours a week.

By tapping into these deep reservoirs, leaders unleash extraordinary amounts of commitment and accomplishment. They turn their teams into truly *high-performance* teams. Leaders with the ability to inspire high performance deliver 1.5 times the revenue and 1.8 times the profit of those with poorer skills.³

The best leaders and followers are ready for the moments that count. Most jobs don't contain the physical risk or require the physical courage of being a combat soldier or firefighter—we think of *them* as heroes. But no matter what your job is, you place your career and your ability to provide for your family's future in the hands of others every single day. This situation requires that everyone be ready to answer the call when professional, managerial, or moral heroics are required. Courage is an essential ingredient for leadership. That is why *all* leadership—not just service as a police officer or fighter pilot—is a worthy calling. All leadership is *noble*.

WHAT YOU MUST DO

You stand on the giant historic shoulders of others, *no matter who you are*. Everything we have is a gift from previous generations. Your

3 Corporate Leadership Council's 2009 “Improving Leader Effectiveness” survey.

obligation is to leave something more behind for future followers, leaders, and their teams.

Your journey now becomes a simple one. But *simple*, is not *easy*.

My friend, bestselling author Patrick Snow, motivates his keynote crowds by having them repeat out loud John Addison's, "I will do today, what others don't, so I will have tomorrow, what others won't." He doesn't necessarily mean material things. There are things you want to "have" that are more important than material possessions, and you will only get them by *challenging yourself* to achieve more.

In that spirit,

- I challenge you to review your **Impact Map**. Make sure you know which two or three improved behaviors will increase your effectiveness the most and move you more quickly toward achieving your voice. Connect those behaviors to the team and organizational goals you will help achieve by changing your behaviors.
- I challenge you to review the "**What? So What? Now What?**" sections at the end of each chapter that are key developmental areas for you. Create **your customized development plan**: write out the formal learning (books, classes, seminars, etc.) you will need to complete, the social learning (from colleagues and mentors) you will seek out, and *most importantly*, outline the experiences you will need to create with your leader so you can practice these skills on the job. You may have to take on additional work or a modified role. Focus your efforts over the next six to twelve months on specifically improving *these one or two skills*.
- I challenge you to **serve**, beginning with your followership. Also adopt the mindset of service as your reason for being a leader. Are those you lead becoming healthier, wiser, freer,

more autonomous, and more likely themselves to become servant leaders?

- I challenge you to **build** by developing the skills and careers of yourself and others.
- I challenge you to **inspire** others to greatness through the example you set, through your skills of power and influence, and through your ability to deliver in the clutch, during moments that count.

Good luck on your journey! Our world is desperately in need of skilled followers, leaders, and teams. Seeing your results through The Lens of Leadership will ensure that you live a life of impact, of worth, and of value to yourself, your family, and our world.

Serve. Build. Inspire.



