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The Leadership Challenge: How To Make Extraordinary Things Happen In Organizations, Fifth Edition



25th Anniversary



Synopsis

The 25th anniversary edition of the best-selling business classic, completely revised and updated. For more than 25 years, The Leadership Challenge has been the most trusted source on becoming a better leader, selling more than two million copies in over 20 languages since its first publication. Based on Kouzes and Posner's extensive research, this all-new edition casts their enduring work in context for today's world, proving how leadership is a relationship that must be nurtured, and most importantly, that it can be learned. This book: Features over 100 all-new case studies and examples, which show The Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership in action around the world Focuses on the toughest organizational challenges leaders face today Addresses changes in how people work and what people want from their work An indispensable resource for leaders at all levels, this anniversary edition is a landmark update and must-read.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I admire the work that Kouzes and Posner have put into their five practices model and if someone asked me which books on leadership they should read, I would include "The Leadership Challenge". Nonetheless, it has some weaknesses in my view. First, I feel it focuses so much on the inspirational side of leadership that it underplays the "sleeves-rolled-up" (getting the task done) reality of leadership in smaller firms. This feels like a big-company orientated book. Second, it doesn't say much about how to develop leadership presence, even though the best leaders seem to have it. To me, great leadership is not just a matter of the right behaviours (which is what this book focuses on), it also depends on your presence. This, I feel, is a gap in the book. Third, it might give some readers

the impression that leaders must always be visionaries. It misses the point that a vision isn't always necessary, but a group purpose is. The purpose may be expressed as a vision, but then again it might not. It might instead be more pragmatic and short-term, especially if it's leadership of a rescue team we're talking about, not an international company. Fourth, it says what you have to do (the five practices) to lead, but knowing what to do won't always enable someone to do it - especially if the behaviours aren't natural to them. Many leaders are stuck in old habits because of their psychology, but The Leadership Challenge doesn't address this. Fifth, The Leadership Challenge, I feel, gives the impression that successful leaders have to be inspiring and lead from the front. But surely it is possible to put forth an inspiring idea without always being personally inspiring?

This is a very in-depth book that challenges leaders to mobilize their people to get extraordinary things done in their organizations. The content is very digestible, intuitive, and compelling. It is called "The Leadership Challenge" for a reason: the chapters offer anecdotes and activities that challenge you to become the best leader you can be. They are quite good. Something as simple as, "Write Your Credo"--where it challenges you to write your own guiding principles as a leader--proved to be a valuable exercise for me. I like leadership books that offer intuitive content and at the same time teach me to apply what I'm reading. Another book I recommend that does this incredibly well is Leadership 2.0. But I digress, here's a summary of what's in "The Leadership Challenge":

PART I. WHAT LEADERS DO AND WHAT CONSTITUENTS EXPECT

1. The Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership:
 - 1) Model the way
 - 2) Inspire a shared vision
 - 3) Challenge the process
 - 4) Enable others to act
 - 5) Encourage the heart
2. Credibility Is The Foundation of Leadership: For people to follow someone willingly, the majority of constituents believe the leader must be honest, forward-looking, inspiring, and competent.

PART II. MODEL THE WAY

3. Clarify Values: Find your voice and affirm shared values.
4. Set the Example: Personify the shared values and teach others to model these values.

PART III. INSPIRE A SHARED VISION

5. Envision the Future: Imagine the possibilities and find a common purpose.
- 6.

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