

Preface

Before we get started, I have to tell you that this book abides by one Rule and makes one Promise.

Rule

Even though we're talking about leadership, which is an abstract concept, the rule for this book is: No theory, all practical application. You can get theory anywhere you like. You will not have to work too hard to find more than a few experts serving up their leadership theories.

Not me. This book was written from experience, and concerns itself with ideas and strategies that you can *apply*, not just ponder. The key words here are not “think about a theory,” the key words here are “implement these behavioral modifications.” Or, more colloquially, “avoid these land mines!” Once you do, you will begin

making a positive impact during critical management decision points, and get yourself on the path to leadership.

Promise

I promise, I vow, that after we're finished, if you stack all my ideas on top of one another, they will not spell out a word. Nope. No way. Simply put, I tend not to trust the many professional educational experiences whose core teaching points magically spell out words like LISTEN! ADVANTAGE! or BUNDT CAKE!

It's not that I find those books, tapes, and classes entirely worthless, but whenever I find myself presented with that type of educational experience I can't help but feel that either:

- A. The architects of the educational experience retrofitted their critical teaching points in order to create a clever mnemonic, which convinces me that some of what I'm experiencing is fluff. Or,
- B. It just turned out that way. It's just an amazing coincidence that, when they completed their content, and perfected the instructional design of that content, someone noticed that the core teaching points of the material spelled out MANHATTAN! Well, I'll be.

Straight up, I do not believe that B has ever happened. It's always A. And since I am all about boiling things down to their most elemental state to allow anyone to implement an idea quickly and easily for maximum positive impact, I view the Clever Mnemonic Approach as being a tad disingenuous. As a result,

when I'm faced with this approach I feel like somewhere along the line my time has been wasted.

I hate to have my time wasted.

And since I refuse to waste yours, I have articulated and ordered my strategies and ideas in the way that I think makes the most sense, and will be of most use to you.

Actually, this is the book I wish I'd read the day I got my first management job. In fact, this is the book I wish I had read at *any* time during the many years I spent in charge of sales, support, and staff teams. But this book wasn't available, so safe to say I had to learn my lessons; step on all the land mines myself.

I had pretty typical experiences through my many management assignments, from leading a single team to heading up an entire department. All that time I definitely had three things going for me:

1. I knew I didn't have all the answers.
2. I was always willing to accept advice and learn from my mistakes.
3. I wrote everything down.

And so I got quite an education. The good news is I was paying attention the entire time. I'm glad I kept all those notes because now, after careful consideration, I have boiled those notes and the lessons they contained down to the eight most damaging leadership land mines that prevent managers from emerging as true leaders.

Battle-tested, written from actual experience and with no tolerance for any strategy that cannot be implemented immediately, this book lists those eight land mines and how to avoid

them. I want *you* to be the benefactor of all the lessons I've learned. I wrote this book for you, whether you are:

- A management newbie
- A seasoned department head
- A corporate CEO
- A business owner

or anything in between. You can read it and make some critical adjustments in your professional behaviors to yield immediate improvements in the quality of your leadership.