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**Creating and Communicating
a Compelling Vision for Change**

CREATING AND COMMUNICATING A COMPELLING VISION FOR CHANGE

by Kevin Eikenberry

Status quo requires no leadership.

That has been a mantra of mine for a long time. It encapsulates an important point about the role of leaders – leaders are in the change business.

After all, if everything in your organization was perfect, there would be no need for leaders because there would be no new desired destination – you (or the organization) would have already arrived!

This means leaders must be students of change – how to create it, how to cultivate it, how to communicate it and how to champion it.

Change is defined by one critical component – the destination you are changing towards. This destination is often called the vision.

Let's be a bit more specific and call it a vision of a desired future.

This article discusses creating and communicating that *vision of a desired future*.

To start, you must understand that simply having a vision isn't enough. You must create a compelling vision. To be compelling, your vision must be:

- **Positive** – something *others* see as desired.
- **Personal** – something that will benefit others personally or directly (not just abstractly or “it seems like a good idea”).
- **Possible** – a destination people can see themselves reaching.
- **Visual** – something people can see.
- **Vivid** – crystal clear; the clearer the picture of the future, the better.

Now that you've created a compelling vision of a desired future, you need to communicate that vision. There several factors that will help you successfully communicate your vision for change.

Remember that the *most effective communication is other focused*.

When people own the vision it is more compelling. People are always excited about a change that they conceived and created. So, rather than creating a vision of a desired future *for* people let them co-create it. Yes, it might not look *exactly* as you intended, and, yes, it might take a little more time. However, while both of those things are true, it's also true that you will achieve *more* change *faster*. Better to go a bit slower at the beginning and accelerate later, don't you think?

The easiest way to communicate benefits is to ask them. Once the vision is created, ask questions like:

- How will this change benefit you?
- What about this vision excites you?
- How will achieving this vision make your life easier, or better?

You may see benefits they don't see, and you can certainly suggest those. And, your suggestions will be more powerful and accepted if they come *after* you ask them for their thoughts!

People don't argue with their own data. Read that sentence again. These last two points work because people don't argue with their own data. Stop thinking that communication is only about you talking. Stop trying to communicate with the perfect PowerPoint slides. Stop assuming everyone reads every word of every email you send. *Start* engaging people in a conversation about a desired future state!

Once you have these factors in your favor it is infinitely easier to communicate a vision – because it is now *their vision*. Now your task is to help clarify and refine it – and get more excited about it. Here are a couple ways to do that:

Remove barriers – now and in the future. As a leader, through your actions, you can be the person who helps them see the vision is reachable, or possible. Your role is to encourage and help people see the future vision through successful change.

Maintain the conversation. That is right – you have to keep having *the change conversation*. Your work in communicating change *doesn't end*, at least not until you reach the vision. Then it starts over towards a new destination. Keep people thinking about and talking about not just the change but that beautiful desired destination.

There is more of course.

Nothing as complex as change or communicating change can be described or summarized in 700 words.

However, don't be fooled by the brevity either – using these ideas will make a difference in how successful you will be in creating *real* change.

You don't want the status quo, so it is time to lead.

ABOUT BUD TO BOSS

Bud to Boss provides new leaders and organizations looking to develop new leaders with insight, resources and powerful learning opportunities designed to specifically address the challenges of successfully transitioning from peer to leader.

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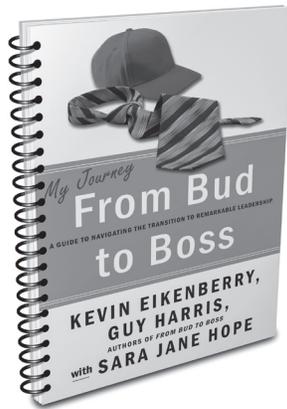
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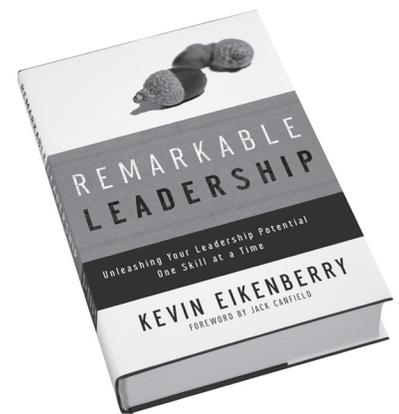


My Journey From Bud to Boss

A companion volume to the From Bud to Boss book, the Journey is a workbook designed to help you apply the knowledge gained to actual work experiences. It includes activities, questions, and exercises designed to take you beyond the concepts introduced to you during the Workshop or the book. And while this book is completely designed to be written in, all of the templates and tools are available in both PDF and Word document form so that you can use them over and over.

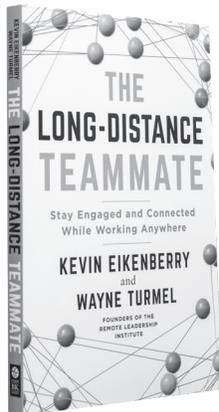
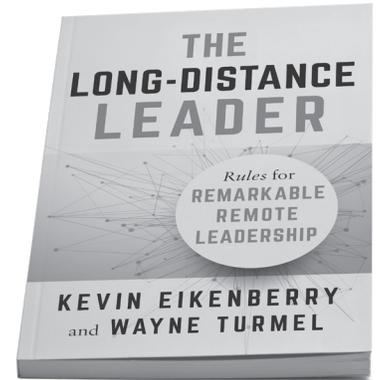
Remarkable Leadership

is a practical handbook written for anyone who wants to hone the skills needed to become a remarkable leader. This book outlines a framework and a mechanism for both learning new things and applying current knowledge in a thoughtful and practical way. It explores real-world concerns such as focus, limited time, incremental improvement, and how we learn.



The Long-Distance Leader

is a practical, candid look at what it takes to lead people, projects and teams in today's dispersed workplace. The book showcases 19 rules for being a remarkable remote leader, and offers practical models, tools, and best practices to tackle the real-world challenges from how we work and communicate virtually.



The Long-Distance Teammate

Written by the founders of the Remote Leadership Institute, this book is the most authoritative single resource for helping remote workers get work done effectively, build relationships that are both productive and satisfying, and maintain a career trajectory when they are not in constant close contact with their leader, coworkers, or the organization in general.

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