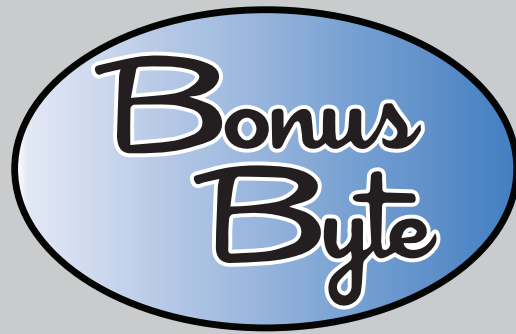


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Five Reasons Why Every Leader is a Salesperson

A LIST OF CHANGE QUESTIONS

by Kevin Eikenberry

What images, thoughts and feelings come to mind when you think of or hear the word “salesperson”?

- Stereotypical, slick-talking, used car sales people
- Well-spoken financial manager
- The guy everyone loves who sells his wares on the golf course

Whether you have positive thoughts and feelings about salespeople or decidedly un-positive, the purpose of this article is not to suggest or defend any of these images or thoughts. Rather, my purpose is to state an iron-clad fact:

Leaders *are* salespeople.

And, more importantly, *great leaders are great salespeople.*

You may not buy my idea (after all, I am trying to sell it to you, but keep reading I plan to succeed). If you don't buy this premise it's probably because you have some beliefs/images/thoughts about sales people that contradict your beliefs/images/thoughts about leaders.

If you already buy my idea then you will love what's to come. If you don't, then let's see if I can change your mind by the end of this article . . .

Salespeople can't make you do anything; neither can leaders. Both realize they can inspire and inform, and they recognize the ultimate choice to take action belongs to the customer or follower. Great salespeople and leaders also realize that when they remember this fact they are less frustrated and more successful.

Salespeople are selling a vision and ideas; so are leaders. You may think salespeople are selling a product or service, but the truth is they are selling a vision of what that product or service will do or how it will make people feel as a result of their ownership. As leaders help people to see a vision of something different in the future, they are doing the same thing.

Salespeople know they are in the relationship business; so do leaders. Neither a great salesperson nor a great leader focuses on becoming friends with his/her Customers/followers, but all focus on building meaningful and trusted relationships. Why? Those relationships make their work easier and far more rewarding.

Salespeople realize they are in the change business; so do leaders. If no one buys, nothing changes. If no one follows, there isn't much leadership. To be successful, salespeople and leaders study and understand individual and group/organizational change.

Salespeople are influencers and persuaders; so are leaders. Notice I didn't say manipulators, but influencers and persuaders. When you sum up the other four points above you come up with influence.

Are there manipulative, short-sighted salespeople?

Of course. (The same can be said about some portion of the leader population.)

But, are those the salespeople that create long term success for themselves and their Customers?

Not at all. (Not in the leader population either)

The best salespeople are persuasion experts who influence through relationships, insight, great communication skills, understanding people and more. They strive to support and improve the lives of those they sell to, knowing when they do they have created a Customer for life.

Read that sentence again, and with just a couple of changes . . .

The best *leaders* are persuasion experts who influence through relationships, insight, great communication skills, understanding people and more. They strive to support and improve the lives of those they lead, knowing when they do they have created a *follower* for life.

Those are just five reasons why the best leaders are great salespeople.

Regardless of what you might have been thinking at the start of this article, it is time to embrace your inner salesperson.

But only if you care about being a more effective leader.

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.

To speak with someone about how we can help you or your organization, send a note to **info@BudtoBoss.com** or call the number on this page.

You can learn more about us at:

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- The Bud to Boss Toolkit eLearning Course
- A Variety of Enterprise Solutions including Onsite Training and Certification



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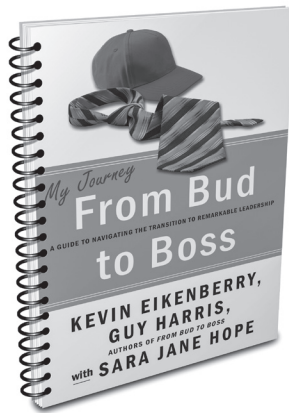
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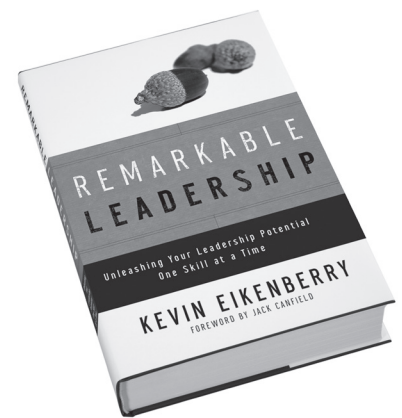


My Journey From Bud to Boss

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.

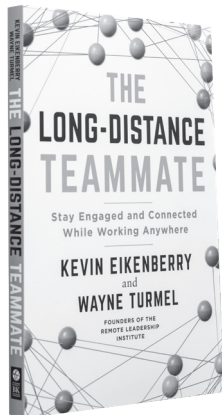
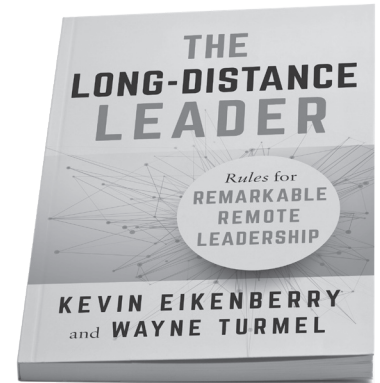
Remarkable Leadership

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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