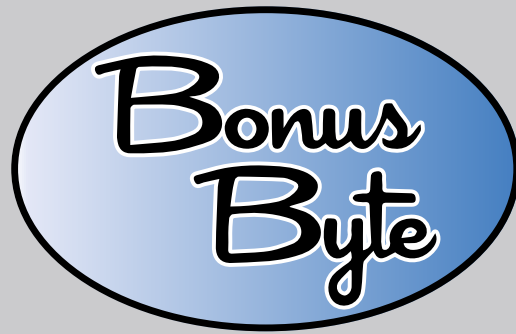


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Five Ways to Recognize and Value Your Expertise

FIVE WAYS TO RECOGNIZE AND VALUE YOUR EXPERTISE

by Kevin Eikenberry

If this title has you scratching your head, wondering if I am suggesting you become an egomaniac, relax! That is the furthest thing from my mind (though I'll talk about it before I'm through).

The truth is, while there are people with super-high self images related to their expertise and knowledge, many more people don't have a healthy, valid confidence, understanding or awareness of their own skills, knowledge, expertise and brilliance.

What follows is for everyone, but especially those who are a bit timid or unsure of their expertise.

Why is this idea important enough for me to write about? In order to be an effective coach, mentor or trusted advisor, you must at the very least trust your own advice!

Let me put it another way. You must recognize, value and trust your expertise before feedback and advice can be best given to others. Yes, feedback and wise counsel is not about you; it's about the other person – and – you must know what you know and be confident in your expertise and perspective too.

So how can you gain a healthy perspective on your expertise? Here are five ways to help you get started:

Listen to the feedback of others. You've received lots of feedback in your life, and not all of it is corrective in nature. Unfortunately, many people ignore, downplay or forget when they're told they are skilled or good at something. Listen carefully and take heed of what people tell you you are good at. They are very likely right.

Realize that expertise is relative. When someone says you are good at something, do you say (or think) "thank you" or do you immediately downplay their comments? If you do the latter it is likely associated with a "yes, but I'm not that good" or "I'm not as good as Carl . . ." Expertise is relative. For instance, it's likely I know more about antique John Deere tractors than most everyone who will read this. Yet even though I own several and have been around them my whole life, in different circles I would be a neophyte. Regardless of the topic, there are people who may be more expert than you – that does not mean you don't have valuable expertise.

Inventory your experiences, skills and knowledge. In order to value something you must take inventory. What are your experiences? What skills have you developed? What knowledge have you gained? You might want to do this as it relates to a specific area of your life – like in your role as a leader or at work in general (as two quick examples). Make this a project for an afternoon. Find a quiet space and think, write and inventory. Putting these things on paper is a big step towards both recognizing and valuing your expertise.

Consider your interests. I mentioned antique John Deere tractors a minute ago – this is just one non-work related interest of mine. I have many interests, and so do you. These are things you think about, read about, talk about and do something about. These interests may give you insights into your areas of expertise. This helps you build your overall confidence and self-image, and may inform you about how that expertise might be useful in other situations.

Remember past feedback successes. Remember the times when someone thanked you for your advice, counsel or feedback. Remembering successes is an important part of this process! If you have trouble remembering them, make a list, put them in a journal or find some other way to recognize and remember that your advice was helpful to others. If your advice has been true in the past, it will be true again!

There are five ways to understand and begin to better value your expertise. There is one more important point that takes us back to the start of this article.

Share humbly. Yes, you need to have confidence in your advice. And, to be most effective, you must remember that your advice should be about helping others, not letting them see how much you know. This is a fine balance, one that you will spend your lifetime working on. Know that some people may misconstrue your intentions. However, if your intention is purely focused on the other

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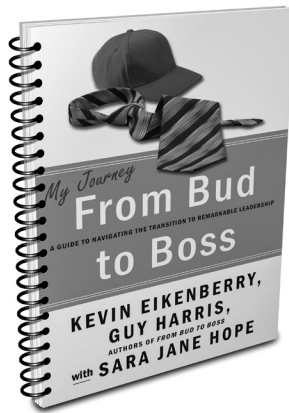
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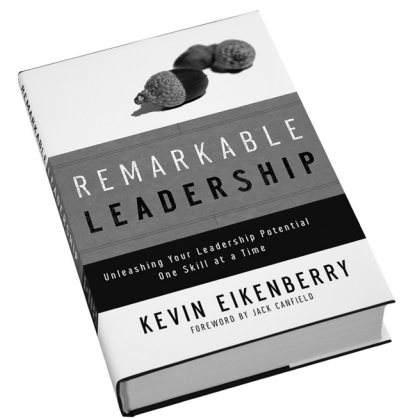


My Journey From Bud to Boss

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.

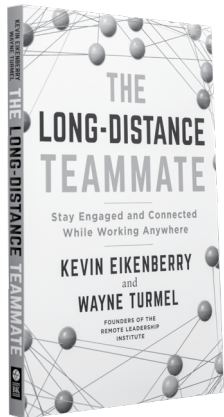
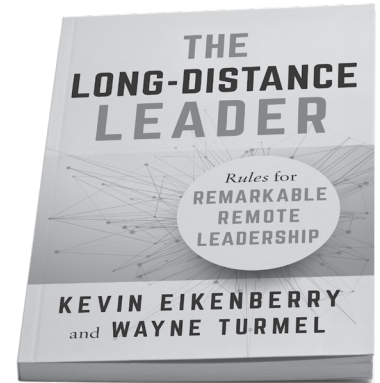
Remarkable Leadership

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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