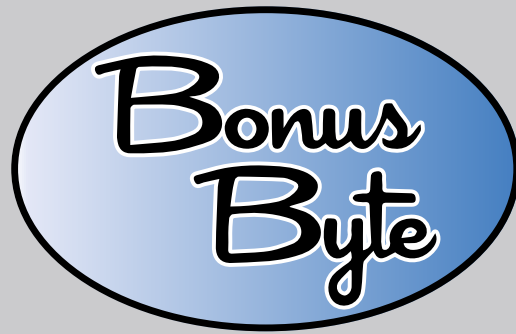


**BUD**

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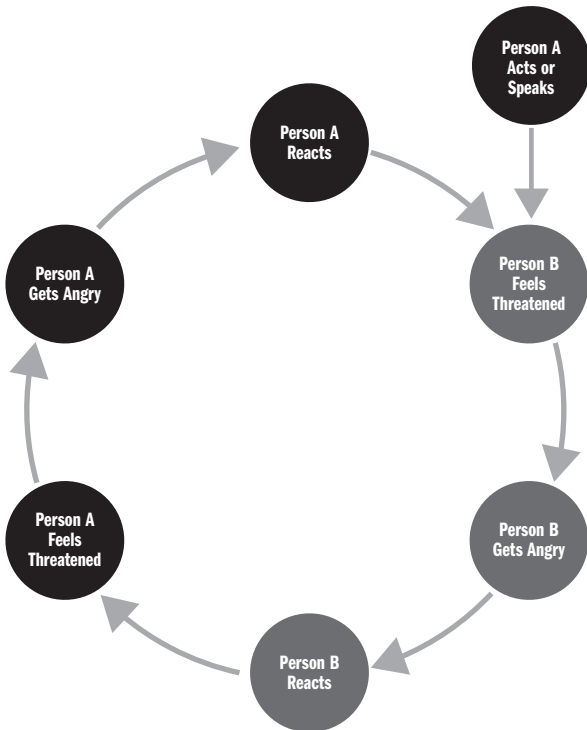


**BOSS**

**How to Break the Conflict Escalation Cycle**

# HOW TO BREAK THE CONFLICT ESCALATION CYCLE

The conflict escalation cycle (From Bud to Boss Figure 37.1) gives perspective on why conflict escalates:

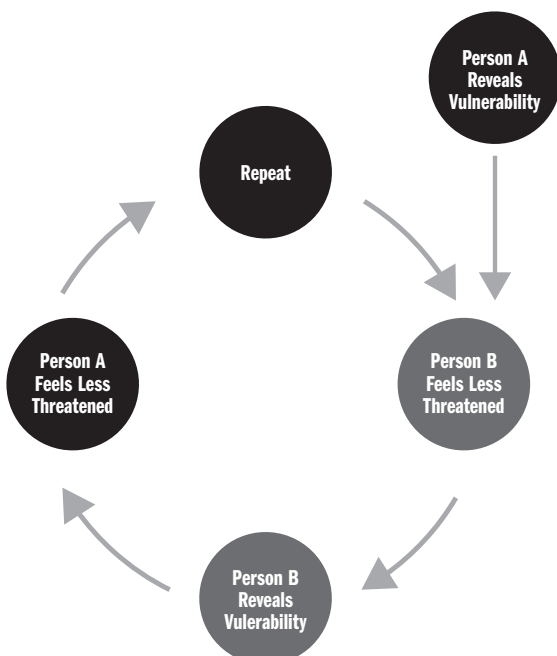


The challenge with conflict is often the emotional implication of our actions, reactions and subsequent interpretations of actions and reactions. Conflict is a dynamic situation with many possible causes, scenarios and outcomes.

When you understand the conflict cycle, the implications of people interpreting other people's words and actions as a threat, and what you can do to counteract the tendencies, you can act in ways that deescalate rather than escalate conflicts.

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The opposite of the conflict escalation cycle is the de-escalation cycle (From Bud to Boss Figure 38.1)



The key to making the deescalation cycle work is to act in ways to show the other person you are not a threat to them.

*From Bud to Boss proposes that you ask yourself this question prior to reacting:*

*Did the other person mean that action or comment the way I took it?*

The point of this question is to stop you from reacting in a negative way that continues to escalate the conflict.

Here are some other thoughts to help you act in ways to break the conflict escalation cycle:

- Listen until they finish speaking. Resist the urge to interrupt.
- Pause before you respond. Think about what you just heard, and respond calmly.
- Ask for clarification. “If I understood you correctly, your concern is . Is that correct?”
- Reflect back what you heard. “It sounds like you are frustrated. Am I hearing you correctly?”
- Acknowledge their emotion. “I can certainly understand how that would be frustrating.”
- Apologize. “I am sorry I said/did that.” Or, “I am sorry I came across that way.”
- Clarify your perspective or intention. “I had no intention to .” Or, “I understood that you wanted by Tuesday.”
- If they say something positive about you, thank them and draw attention to it. “Mary, thank you for recognizing my efforts on the project.” Or, “Mary, I appreciate that you noticed I got the report to you by the deadline.” (Even people who are angry and venting their frustration will often say at least one positive thing about you in the middle of their venting. Focusing their attention on what they like about you can have a deescalating effect.)

In many cases, you can mix-and-match these approaches.

Remember, your goal in the interaction is to create mutual understanding and clarity rather than to prove who is right or wrong. For example, “I had no intention to \_\_\_\_\_ ” will lose its impact if you add “I was only trying to \_\_\_\_\_ .” The second part tends to sound like a justification from the listener’s perspective, and it detracts from the clarifying power of the first part of the sentence.

# 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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Our products and services include:

- Books & Learning Resources, including the best-selling book *From Bud to Boss*
- Classroom & Virtual Workshops
- The Bud to Boss Toolkit eLearning Course
- A Variety of Enterprise Solutions including Onsite Training and Certification



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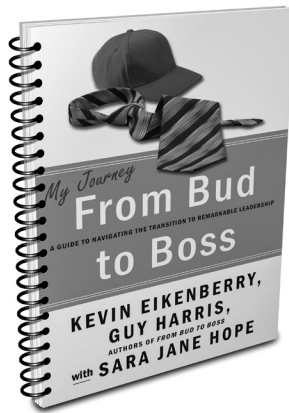


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**The Kevin Eikenberry Group**  
8021 Westover Drive  
Indianapolis, IN 46268

**(317) 387-1424**

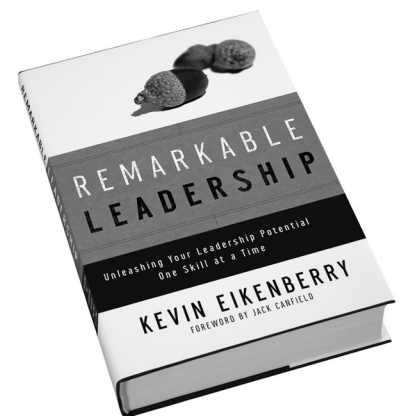


## My Journey From Bud to Boss

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.

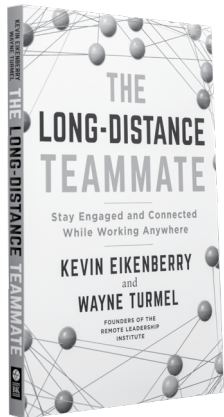
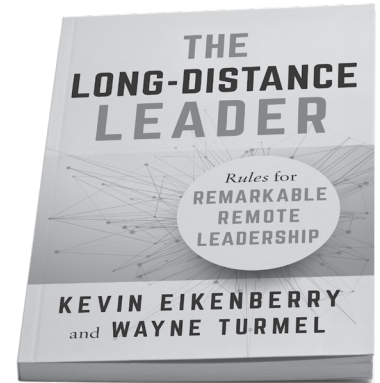
## Remarkable Leadership

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.

Check out our website for additional leadership resources including our free video training series, blogs, newsletters, podcast and more!

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