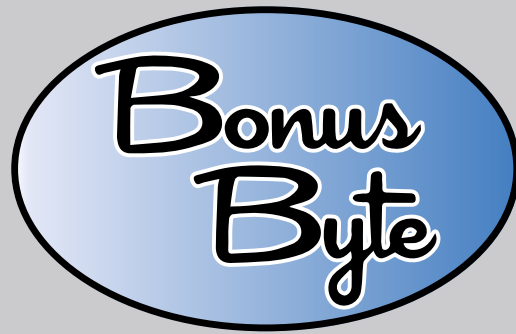


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**Consciously Triggering the
Conflict De-escalation Cycle**

CONSCIOUSLY TRIGGERING THE CONFLICT DE-ESCALATION CYCLE

by Guy Harris

For additional insights on this topic, see Bonus Byte *How to Break the Conflict Escalation Cycle* (keyword – cycle breaker).

The four psychological pressures exerted by the 5D's conflict resolution process are:

- **Catharsis** – giving people a chance to vent their frustrations so they are heard and understood by others.
- **Conciliatory reflex** – the tendency to withdraw an attack when the person who is perceived as a threat withdraws the perceived threat.
- **Desire for peace** – few people can maintain an elevated state of anger when they are face-to-face with the person with whom they are in conflict. Most people would prefer to be at peace with others.
- **Fatigue** – people get physically tired when they discuss emotional issues and the fatigue leads to a willingness to resolve.

The nature of the 5D's process creates an environment for the last two pressures to bear on the conflict.

Here are some practical steps you can take to consciously apply the first two psychological pressures to urge conflicts towards resolution.

If you are personally involved, you can:

- Listen a lot and speak a little.
- Stay objective. Use assertive communication strategies to speak about behaviors objectively and to explain their emotional impact on you without lapsing into criticism, sarcasm or judgment. (More on this in the Bonus Byte keyword “Assertive”.)
- Take responsibility for your actions, and verbally acknowledge when they take responsibility for theirs.
- Look for and offer solutions that both honor their viewpoint and your concerns.
- Apologize if your behaviors created a negative impact on them. Remember to apologize for your words or actions rather than for their feelings. (“I’m sorry I said that.” is better than “I’m sorry you felt that way.”)

If you are serving as a leader-mediator, you can:

- Listen a lot and speak a little.
- Clearly state the ground rules before the meeting begins.
 1. No one walks out before time is up or resolution is reached.
 2. No threats or aggression allowed.
- Encourage the parties to speak with each other rather than “make their case” to you. Faceto- face is often the best positioning. Remember to consider the DISC behavior styles of the two parties. In some cases, face-to-face is too aggressive for one party or the other. In this case, you can adjust physical positioning while still encouraging personal interchange rather than appealing to you.
- Notice and verbally acknowledge any positive comment offered by either party about the other party. For example, “John, thank you for noticing that Mary is a hard worker.” – or – “John, thank you for accepting responsibility for how your behaviors impacted Mary.”
- Listen for the emotion behind each person’s comments. Reflect back what you hear. For example, “Mary, it sounds to me like you are frustrated. Is that right?”
- Encourage complete disclosure. For example, “Can you tell me more about that?”
- Resist the urge to force either person to see or acknowledge a point.
- After the initial venting, quickly direct the discussion toward future actions and resolution and away from continuing to revisit the past. For example, “What can we/you/John do to avoid this result in the future?” As a general rule, it’s better to ask each person what he/ she can do rather than what the other person can do.

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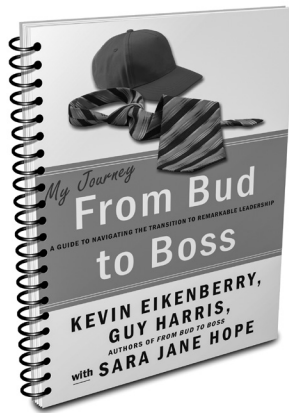
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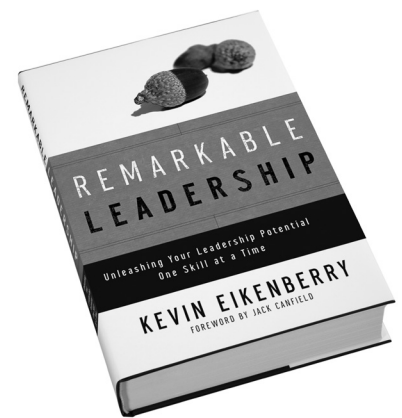


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A companion volume to the From Bud to Boss book, the Journey is a workbook designed to help you apply the knowledge gained to actual work experiences. It includes activities, questions, and exercises designed to take you beyond the concepts introduced 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.

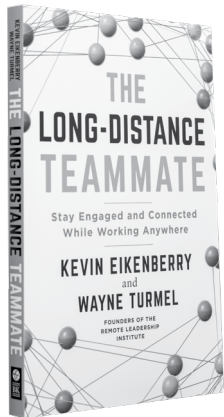
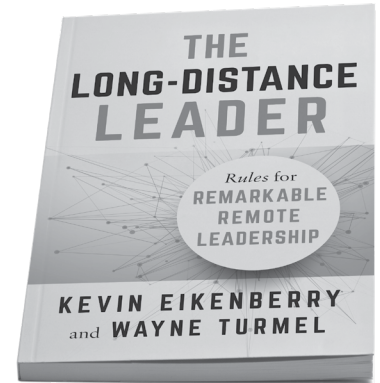
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is a practical handbook written for anyone who wants to hone the skills needed to become a remarkable leader. This book outlines a framework and a mechanism for both learning new things and applying current knowledge in a thoughtful and practical way. 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.



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