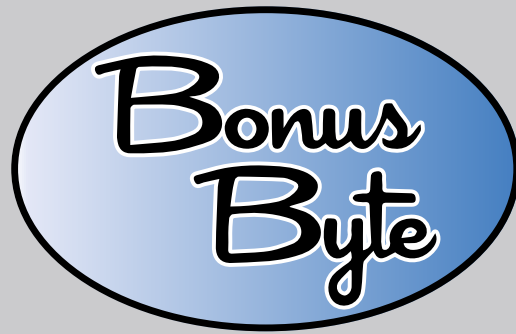


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**Nine Steps for Creating and Maintaining
Team Ownership of Ideas and Goals**

NINE STEPS FOR CREATING AND MAINTAINING TEAM OWNERSHIP OF IDEAS AND GOALS

by Kevin Eikenberry

As a leader you know results and productivity are higher when people are committed to their work. You also know higher levels of commitment or engagement also increase job satisfaction, safety performance and focus while reducing on-the-job stress and turnover.

Commitment, engagement or buy-in – whatever you want to call – it’s a good thing.

One sure-fire way to increase all those things is for people to feel ownership of something. When people feel ownership for problem solving, ownership of the ideas created in a meeting or ownership in their personal or organizational goals they are working towards greater success will occur.

The question you might ask is how do you do that?

It is an important question, and I’m glad you asked. There are at least nine things you can do to improve the likelihood of ownership by others. These are listed as steps because, generally speaking, this is the order you would do them in any situation.

The Nine Steps

- 1. Be genuine.** If you have already decided on a course of action, or if the goal has already been set, please don’t ask for people’s input. These steps are not meant to manipulate. In fact, if you try to manipulate, none of this will work. If that is your intention, please stop reading now; it will be a waste of your time.
- 2. State your intention (sometimes).** Most of the time it is a good idea to tell people what you are doing. “I want your input and ideas before we go any further. While I have some ideas, I want to hear yours too.” If trust is high enough, that might not be needed, you may simply ask for input taking careful note of what is being said.
- 3. Be prepared.** Don’t shoot from the hip. Think about the goals or ideas beforehand. You have a valid and valuable perspective into whatever is the matter at hand, be ready to share your insights when the time is right.
- 4. Give context, not opinions.** Your perspective is important. Set the stage, talk about boundaries (if they exist), and tell people you want to hear their ideas. Context and boundaries will be very helpful, as will clarification of the expectations of the overall process. Even if people don’t like the boundaries you set, it is better to set them than to have people feel like you delivered a “gotcha” when an unstated boundary is crossed.
- 5. Talk about why.** This relates to context, but is so important it must be singled out. Help people understand why the ideas are necessary. Help them see the value in the effort and their ideas. When people agree with a why, ownership is heightened significantly!

6. **Ask. Yup, ask for their input.** Get their ideas. Write them down. Show them you value those ideas. Ask follow up and clarifying questions (not questions that are seen as critical or belittling). People won't argue with their own input, and their input constitutes the first part of ownership. Ask!
7. **Shut up and listen.** I'm guessing this is the behavior you must work on most. Once you have asked for their ideas you must shut up and listen. Don't add your ideas. Don't agree with some (that you have already thought of) and ignore others. Too many leaders talk too much in too many settings. Resist the urge always, especially when you want to build commitment and ownership. Shut up!
8. **Think "and" leave your "but" mindset at home.** When you follow up someone's idea with a "but", you have sent a powerful message – and not one that is conducive to ownership by others.
9. **Summarize and add as needed.** When the group has exhausted its list of ideas and you have prompted them again, only then can you comment. If you have prepared, perhaps you have ideas they haven't considered. Now you can mention them. Perhaps as you hear their ideas you get other new ones – commend the team for the inspiration and then add them too. People expect you to have ideas; it is just that if you go first all the ideas will seem to be yours.

Will these nine steps guarantee that your team will feel 100% ownership and commitment to what is said?

Unfortunately, no.

However, using these steps will significantly increase the engagement, belief and, yes, ownership people feel in the ideas, goals and next steps created through this process.

Think about a situation, big and complex or even simpler and safer, where you can apply these ideas. Once you determine the situation, try it! You'll be pleased with your results.

ABOUT BUD TO BOSS

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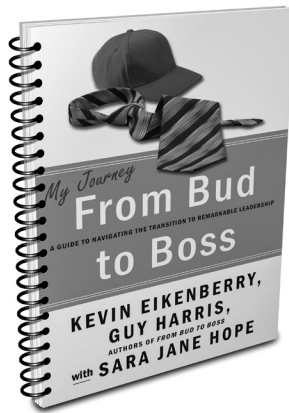
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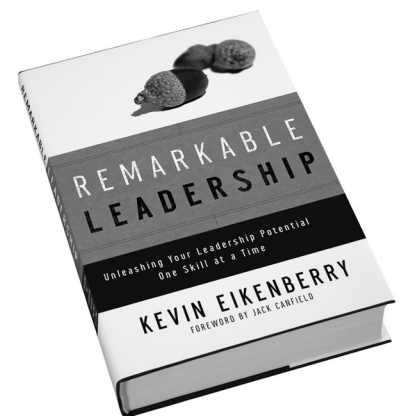


My Journey From Bud to Boss

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.

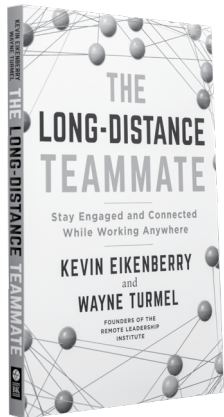
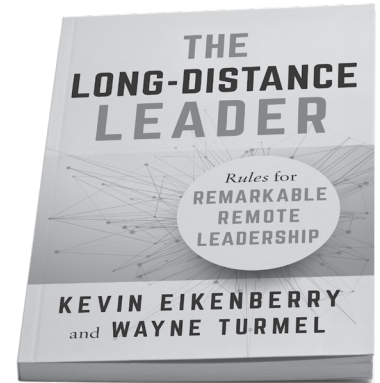
Remarkable Leadership

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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