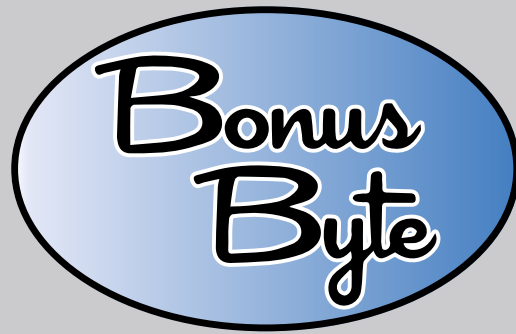


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Balancing the Task and People Sides of Leadership

BALANCING THE TASK AND PEOPLE SIDES OF LEADERSHIP

by Guy Harris

Many leaders, especially those who are new to the role, struggle to find the balance between the task and people sides of leadership.

Task-oriented leaders tend to focus heavily on task accomplishment and goal achievement – sometimes at the expense of developing strong relationships with the people they lead. As a result, they run the risk of getting things done in the short-term in a way that limits long-term team effectiveness and productivity.

People-oriented leaders might focus too heavily on being liked or appreciated and shy away from holding team members accountable for productivity. This relationship focus can also lead to longterm negative impacts on team performance and productivity.

While certain leadership situations might call for a brief imbalance between the task and people sides of leadership, most environments call for balance. In the long-run, leadership is a task-and people role rather than a task-or-people one.

To find the right balance between these two sides of leadership, you need to first develop a good understanding of your natural tendencies. There are two things you can do to develop this self awareness:

1. Complete a DISC assessment (get a free one from the Bonus Bytes page at the Bud to Boss Community)
2. Reflect on the type of feedback you tend to get from other people and the thoughts you frequently have as you work with your team. Here's some things to consider:

You probably tend towards a task focus if other people frequently say these types of things to you:

- “You really know how to get things done.”
- “You're great at solving problems.”
- “You really think things through.”

And you might frequently think these types of things:

- “I wish they would focus.”
- “Just make a decision.”
- “Can we quit talking and get to work?”
- “They are too nice.”
- “Why can't they say no?”

You probably tend towards a people focus if other people frequently say these types of things to you:

- “You are so friendly.”
- “You are so kind.”
- “I just love talking with you.”

And you might frequently think these types of things:

- “They need to smile more.”
- “They need to lighten up.”
- “They really should let it go. Good enough is good enough.”
- “I could get more done if I had someone to talk with while I work.”
- “I would be happy to do that if it helps someone.”

If you have a more task-oriented perspective, getting things done, prioritizing tasks and focusing on results will probably come naturally to you. If you have a more people-oriented perspective, connecting with people, building relationships and encouraging people will probably feel more natural to you.

Neither of these perspectives is inherently good or bad, right or wrong. Remember, most people have a blend of these traits to varying degrees.

Regardless of your natural perspective, you can use it to become a remarkable leader.

Here are five suggestions to help you gain better balance (regardless of your orientation)...

If you are more task-oriented. . .

1. Remember to smile. Smiling communicates that you like people.
2. Seek – and take – opportunities to verbalize your thanks and appreciation for people and their contribution.
3. Listen to people when they tell you their stories. Be careful how you get back to work. Beware of turning away from people while they are still talking.
4. Make interacting with your team one of your daily to-do items. If you have to write “talk with team members” as a daily task so that you can feel accomplished by checking it off your list, do it. Complete this task early in the day.
5. Find someone you can trust to give you objective feedback on your leadership behaviors. Ask them to let you know when you slip into “hyper-task” focus.

If you are more people-oriented. . .

1. Write a daily to-do list and keep it in a place where you can see it. Read it several times a day.
2. Focus on achieving productive rather than friendship relationships with the people you lead. Productive relationships are usually friendly. Friendship relationships are not necessarily productive (in the workplace).
3. Remember that confronting poor performance will help the team even though it might be uncomfortable for you.

4. If organizing and planning are a challenge for you, find someone you can trust to help you get these tasks done. Depending on your situation, you might be able to delegate planning and organizing responsibilities or you might only be able to talk through the planning and organizing. In either case, you have found a person to help fill a gap so that you and your team can be more successful.
5. Find someone you can trust to give you objective feedback on your leadership behaviors. Ask them to let you know when you slip into “hyper-relationship” focus.

Use these suggestions to gain better task-people balance in your approach to leadership. In general, balance should be your goal rather than trying to “become” more task or people-oriented. And, if you must err to one side or the other, it is generally better to err towards the people side.

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.

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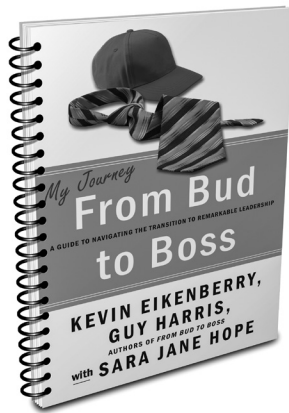
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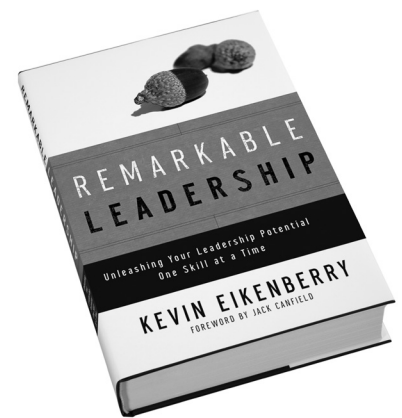


My Journey From Bud to Boss

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.

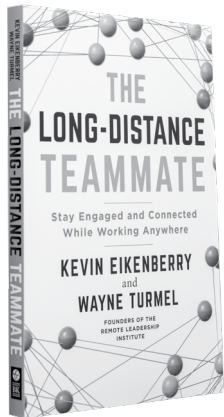
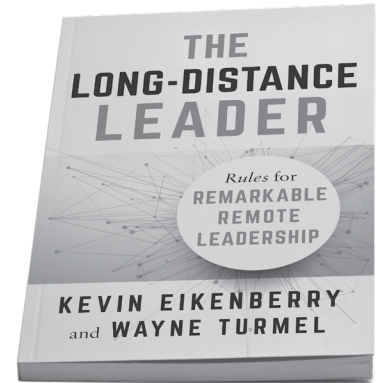
Remarkable Leadership

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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