Bonus Tool

Book Club Discussion Questions for Your First Leadership Job

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Your First Leadership Job

BOOK DISCUSSION GUIDE

Part 1: Catalyst Leadership

Chapter 1: Now You’re a Leader
• The first time you managed people (not just a project) the emotion you felt was....?

Chapter 2: Boss or Catalyst?
• What made you most anxious when you reviewed the Frontline Leadership Success Profile (Tool 2.2)?

Chapter 3: Navigating the Transition to Leadership
• Think about the first time you told friends about getting (or wanting) your new leadership job.
  - What was appealing to you?
  - What did you think it would mean for your career?
  - Did you talk about perks or power?
  - Competing with others?
  - Getting away from people or job functions you didn’t like?
  - Be honest: What’s really driving you?
• Who believed in you before you believed in yourself?
• Who in your life (or on your team) needs you to believe in them?

Chapter 4: Your Leadership Brand, Part 1
• With shrieking Tanya from the opening story in mind, consider these three points:
  - What should Tanya have said to her team about her mistake?
  - Have you ever faced (or seen someone face) something similar? What worked about how you feel (or he) handled it? What didn’t?
  - Where do you personally draw the line between authenticity and disclosing too much?

Chapter 5: Your Leadership Brand, Part 2
• Would you like to share your legacy statement?

Chapter 6: Leadership is a Conversation, Part 1
• Who on your team needs to know what you truly think of them? Who in your life? What feedback or compliment can you give these people that would make a difference for them and maintain their self-esteem?
• What was the best compliment you ever got from your manager?
• Think back to your last interaction with a team member. What was your seek/tell ratio?

Chapter 7: Leadership is a Conversation, Part 2
• Think back to a time when you were surprised by a major development at work.
  - What happened?
  - How did it make you feel?
  - What could your boss have shared with you in advance that would have helped?
  - How did it affect your relationship with your boss going forward?
  - Your colleagues?

Chapter 8: Your Five-Step Conversation Road Map
• Looking at the common leadership styles, which one or ones do you relate to most?

Chapter 9: Nothing Else Matters Unless You Get Results
• Are you a Stresscator? Think about what gets you the most stressed at work. How can you address it before it becomes a problem for others?

Part 2: Mastery and Leadership Skills

Chapter 10: Hiring and Selecting the Best
• Remember back to when you were hired for a job or picked for a team, committee, or board.
  - What was the process like?
  - Were you a good fit every time?
  - What was missing?
  - What clicked?

Chapter 11: What Your Boss Really Wants From You
• Take a moment to think about all of the bosses you’ve ever worked for. Or, if you’re still pretty new to work, any “boss” type characters you’ve seen in movies, in books, or on television.
  - What made them bad?
  - Good?
  - What made them tick?
Chapter 12: Engagement and Retention

- Think about a time when you considered leaving your job.
  - What was missing for you?
  - Did you think things would be different?
  - Did you have needs that weren’t being addressed?
- Do you regularly meet with your team members to ask about their level of engagement?
  - If so, do you cover all three engagement and retention drivers?
  - If not, how would they react to the questions posed in Figure 12.1?
- What praise did you get from your boss that meant the most?
- How engaged are you? Engagement is all about energy. Engaged leaders create an engaged team. Take a moment to reflect on your personal level of engagement:
  - On a scale of 1 to 4, with 1 being “not at all engaged” and 4 being “highly engaged,” how would you rate yourself? And, what impact does your level of engagement have on your direct reports?
  - What will you say to share with your supervisor what matters most to you at work? What ideas will you suggest to your leaders to increase your own interest and job satisfaction?

Chapter 13: Meetings

- Think of five things you’ve observed someone do or say in meetings that really got your attention in a bad way.
  - What happened?
  - How did others respond?
  - How did you wish they had responded?
  - If you could have done something without getting into trouble, what would you have said or done?

Chapter 14: Coaching

- Think back to anything you’ve worked hard to get good at. It could be school, sports, dancing, making videos, public speaking, mastering spreadsheets – anything. Do you prefer to learn from your successes or failures?

Chapter 15: Feedback Fundamentals

- Do people in your organization get enough feedback?
  - How confident do you feel about giving both positive and constructive feedback? Does your team’s performance suffer because people don’t get the feedback they need to perform to their potential?
  - If Jack Welch was giving a private speech to just your team, would the members’ hands raise in response to his question, How many of you get straight-between-the-eyes, honest feedback on your performance?
Chapter 16: Handling Difficult Employee Situations
• When was the last time you became angry (or hurt, or confused) by something someone did or said? What went wrong? How did it resolve? To whom did you turn for advice? What do you wish you had done differently?

Chapter 17: Delegation
• Have you ever had a boss who dumped a task on you, providing little or no instruction regarding requirements or coaching to help you succeed? How did that feel? How did you cope? How do you want to be thought of as a leader – as a delegator or as a dumper?

Chapter 18: Performance Management
• Do you want your boss to tell you how you’re doing at work? Do you enjoy doing performance appraisals?

Chapter 19: You and Your Network
• How does your personality help or hinder your ability to network?
• What’s your best advice for building your network?

Chapter 20: Influence
• Think about the people in your life who have influenced you to take a risk. What got you to take the leap?
• Your influence opportunity:
  - What idea, alternative, or opportunity requires you to influence others to take action?
  - How does your idea support the organization’s goals, values, and objectives?
  - Who are the key stakeholders you need to influence, and why do you need their commitment?
  - What challenges do you anticipate, and what support do you need?

Chapter 21: A Woman’s First Leadership Job
• Take a moment to think about your body language when you join a meeting.
  - Do you slip in late?
  - Take a seat away from the table?
  - Do you walk in quietly? Or, instead strike a power pose?

Chapter 22: Leadership Changes the World
• Do you see leadership as a profession?
• What chapter did you find most valuable?
• How are you going to use the skills you learned about in your leadership position?