

Leadership on the Line: Staying Alive through the Dangers of Leading

By Martin Linsky, Ronald A. Heifetz

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To lead is to live dangerously. It's romantic and exciting to think of leadership as all inspiration, decisive action, and rich rewards, but leading requires taking risks that can jeopardize your career and your personal life. It requires putting yourself on the line, disturbing the status quo, and surfacing hidden conflict. And when people resist and push back, there's a strong temptation to play it safe. Those who choose to lead plunge in, take the risks, and sometimes get burned. But it doesn't have to be that way say renowned leadership authorities Ronald Heifetz and Marty Linsky. In Leadership on the Line, they show how it's possible to make a difference without getting "taken out" or pushed aside. They present everyday tools that give equal weight to the dangerous work of leading change and the critical importance of personal survival. Through vivid stories from all walks of life, the authors present straightforward strategies for navigating the perilous straits of leadership. Whether parent or politician, CEO or community activist, this practical book shows how you can exercise leadership and survive and thrive to enjoy the fruits of your labor.

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review
Climbing Mount Everest: dangerous. Hitchhiking in Colombia: very dangerous. Leading through change: perilous. Perilous but possible, say Heifetz and Linsky in their encouragingly practical guide to putting yourself on the line and negotiating the hazards of leadership. As the authors acknowledge, many leadership books are "all about inspiration, but downplay the perspiration." This one doesn't. Leadership is always a risky business, but those risks can be understood and reduced. Effective leadership comes from doing more than the technical work of routine management; it involves adaptive work on the part of the leader, and a willingness to confront and disturb people, promote their resourcefulness, and engage their ability to adjust to new realities. But adaptive change always encounters resistance. Heifetz and Linsky examine four forms of resistance--marginalization, diversion, attack, and seduction--before presenting a number of practical resistance-response skills to nurture and employ. Some are fairly obvious (like developing and maintaining perspective, and holding steady in the midst of change), and others more complex (like thinking politically when dealing with friends, foes, and fence sitters), but shimmering nuggets of insight and practical wisdom can be found in each. The dangers of leadership also spring from within, however, and the book's final section addresses ways to recognize and manage competing "hungers" and learn to distinguish one's roles from one's self. The authors' points are illustrated by the experiences of leaders from all walks of life, making this a useful and inspiring manual for anyone hoping to put themselves on the line and make a difference in the lives of others. --*S. Ketchum*

From Publishers Weekly
Recognizing that it can be both lonely and difficult at the top, the authors faculty members of Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government set out to lend emotional and practical support. Whether leaders represent a local planning board or a Fortune 500 company, they "live dangerously," say the authors, "because when leadership counts, when you lead people through difficult change, you challenge what people hold dear their daily habits, tools, loyalties, and ways of thinking with nothing more to offer perhaps than a possibility." To that end, Heifetz and Linsky offer useful strategies leaders can employ, such as building political constituencies, trying to orchestrate the inevitable conflict, and forcing those who cause problems to actually solve the problems. Indeed, the book does dwell on the negative aspects of leadership, serving more as a troubleshooting guide than a how-to leadership handbook. Some of the examples are informal (e.g., the 1994 Chicago Bulls), while others are more traditional (e.g., city planning and politics). Showing a sympathetic side, Heifetz and Linsky offer tactics to help leaders not to take conflict personally. Remember, they counsel, you are more than your job. This book will undoubtedly provide leaders and managers comfort on days when everything seems to be going wrong in their department or organization.
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Review

“Widely acclaimed book” — *The Huffington Post*

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Linda Manuel:

In this 21st century, people become competitive in each way. By being competitive currently, people have do something to make all of them survives, being in the middle of the actual crowded place and notice by simply surrounding. One thing that occasionally many people have underestimated this for a while is reading. That's why, by reading a reserve your ability to survive increase then having chance to stand up than other is high. For you who want to start reading some sort of book, we give you this kind of Leadership on the Line: Staying Alive through the Dangers of Leading book as beginner and daily reading guide. Why, because this book is more than just a book.

Betty Giuliani:

Spent a free time and energy to be fun activity to complete! A lot of people spent their free time with their family, or their particular friends. Usually they doing activity like watching television, planning to beach, or picnic from the park. They actually doing ditto every week. Do you feel it? Will you something different to fill your personal free time/ holiday? Can be reading a book could be option to fill your free time/ holiday. The first thing that you'll ask may be what kinds of e-book that you should read. If you want to try look for book, may be the book untitled Leadership on the Line: Staying Alive through the Dangers of Leading can be good book to read. May be it is usually best activity to you.

Nathaniel Mathis:

Your reading 6th sense will not betray you actually, why because this Leadership on the Line: Staying Alive through the Dangers of Leading reserve written by well-known writer who knows well how to make book which might be understand by anyone who read the book. Written inside good manner for you, dripping every ideas and publishing skill only for eliminate your hunger then you still question Leadership on the Line: Staying Alive through the Dangers of Leading as good book not merely by the cover but also from the content. This is one guide that can break don't assess book by its cover, so do you still needing yet another sixth sense to pick that!? Oh come on your studying sixth sense already said so why you have to listening to a different sixth sense.

Danny Solberg:

As a pupil exactly feel bored to reading. If their teacher asked them to go to the library or make summary for some book, they are complained. Just minor students that has reading's soul or real their leisure activity. They just do what the trainer want, like asked to the library. They go to presently there but nothing reading significantly. Any students feel that examining is not important, boring and can't see colorful pictures on there. Yeah, it is being complicated. Book is very important for you personally. As we know that on this period, many ways to get whatever you want. Likewise word says, ways to reach Chinese's country. Therefore , this Leadership on the Line: Staying Alive through the Dangers of Leading can make you sense more interested to read.

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