



REMARKABLE LEADERSHIP

By Kevin Eikenberry

Unleashing Your Leadership Potential One Skill at a Time

“Kevin accurately reminds us that whatever our job title or position, we are all leaders – and all have the potential to become truly remarkable. [Kevin offers] a clear set of actions that, when applied, will lead consistently and predictably to your success.”

Jack Canfield, author of The Principles of Success and the Chicken Soup for the Soul series

(Indianapolis, IN) -- Organizations are facing a leadership crisis – whether they know it or not. According to the *American Workplace Report 2002*, by 2010 there will be a shortage of 10 million workers in the United States – and the biggest talent and experience gap will be in leadership positions. Organizational leaders traditionally become leaders as they mature and grow within in the company. Those leaders are retiring and being replaced with men and women who are new to the organization or who have never been in leadership positions, or both.

In **Remarkable Leadership: Unleashing Your Leadership Potential One Skill at a Time** (Jossey-Bass, September 2007), Kevin Eikenberry transforms more than 20 years of working with corporate and non-profit organizations as a trainer, consultant and speaker into a practical handbook for leaders who will be filling the leadership gap and leaders who are looking for their own replacements.

Remarkable Leadership identifies the 13 competencies of remarkable leadership and offers a proven method for applying those competencies at any level leadership. Remarkable Leaders:

- Learn Continually
- Champion Change
- Communicate Powerfully
- Build Relationships
- Develop Others
- Focus on Customers
- Influence with Impact
- Think and Act Innovatively
- Value Collaboration and Teamwork
- Solve Problems and Make Decisions
- Take Responsibility and Accountability
- Manage Projects and Processes Successfully
- Set Goals and Support Goal Achievement

The first of Eikenberry's 13 competencies – remarkable leaders learn continually - is the key that helps anyone unlock their potential. Without the skill and habit of learning continually, growth and improvement will be limited.

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“Remarkable leaders know that as they continually improve their skills as a learner, they have the leverage to improve in any other area more effectively,” says Eikenberry. *Remarkable Leadership* takes this focus on learning and applies it throughout the book. “I designed this book to be more than just read, but to be a learning tool,” says Eikenberry. The book includes self-assessments for each competency and specific actionable next steps as well. Because the author views learning as a process, the book also includes over 50 Bonus Bytes – opportunities for the reader to go to the books’ website to download forms, templates and other tools to further the value of the printed book itself.

Eikenberry writes that leaders don’t have to be accomplished in all thirteen areas to experience success. “Anyone can become remarkable by becoming truly outstanding at a few of these rather than needing to become very good or excellent at all thirteen. If you have two or more skills at which you truly excel, others will likely see you as highly effective. This is true for a sport, a hobby, or any other endeavor, including leadership.”

“Remarkable leaders have the tools and the desire to maximize their innate talents and strengthen their weaknesses,” Eikenberry says. “Regardless of past experience or success, everyone has the capacity and the potential to be a remarkable leader. There is no cap on the number of remarkable people the world can support.”

For more information, please visit: www.remarkableleadershipbook.com.

REMARKABLE LEADERSHIP: Unleashing Your Leadership Potential One Skill at a Time

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Kevin Eikenberry is a bestselling author, consultant, trainer, speaker, coach, leader, learner, husband and father (not necessarily in that order).

He is the Chief Potential Officer of the Kevin Eikenberry Group, a learning consulting company that has been helping organizations, teams and individuals reach their potential since 1993. Emphasizing the power of learning, Kevin's specialties include leadership, teams and teamwork, organizational culture and facilitating change.

Kevin has worked with Fortune 500 companies, small firms, universities, government agencies and many more. His client list includes the American Red Cross, Chevron Phillips Chemical Company, John Deere, IHOP, OPTI Canada, Purdue University, Southwest Airlines, Telus, the U.S Marine Corps

and many others.

Kevin is also the creator and content developer of the Remarkable Leadership Learning System, a continual leadership development process focused on developing the 13 competencies of remarkable leaders with virtually delivered content to leaders worldwide.

Kevin gives keynote talks and provides learning opportunities on leadership, lifelong learning, developing human potential, teams and teamwork, creativity and innovation and many other topics.

He is the author of the best-selling book *Vantagepoints on Learning and Life* (2006) and a contributing author to the *Handbook of Experiential Learning* (2007), *Masters of Sales* (2007), *101 Ways to Improve Your Life* (2006) and *Walking with the Wise* (2003). He has been a contributor to 13 training and development sourcebooks since 1997 and delivers a newsletter electronically every week with original articles.

Kevin and his family live in Indianapolis. Kevin grew up on a farm and learned some of his most important leadership skills working in the field with his dad. Kevin earned a B.S. with honors from Purdue University, collects antique John Deere tractors, is an avid reader and loves his family and his team (both on the job and on the gridiron – go Boilers!).

Leadership Development in the Real World

Leadership development traditionally is a pretty standard process: 1. Do your job well; 2. Be identified as a leader; 3. Attend the prescribed leadership workshop – usually with little, if any, preparation and hardly any follow-up; 4. Go back to your ‘real’ job (which is even busier now that you’ve been away for training); and 5. Try to apply what you learned in your “spare” time. This is also known as the “spray and pray” approach to leadership development.

Even with the very best intentions, high-quality training experiences, and very willing learners, the chances for significant impact with this traditional approach are slim. When any one of those assumptions (good intentions, good training and willing learners) is incorrect the chances for success are slimmer yet.

The traditional approach is certainly better than having no program or process at all, but it is far from desirable. It is flawed due to the underlying philosophy that training alone will create new performance.

Developing a New Model

Training is an event, but learning is a process. We don’t learn complex life skills in an instant. Skills come to us only over time (even with a great course and/or trainer); skills develop with practice and application. Leadership development is skill development – so to be most lasting and effective it must be a process.

Create discovery and desire. When we are eager to be successful, we are willing learners. Unfortunately not everyone is eager. Leadership development processes must engage participants in ways that create desire to learn new skills. Learners need to understand the relevance of these skills to their work life and they must understand and see the need for modifying their current behavior.

Success comes faster with help. Organizations are filled with people with varying experience and backgrounds. These different perspectives can help leaders develop their skills faster – if they are exposed to them. Leadership development processes must engage more than the participant; they must engage others across the organization too.

People – especially leaders – are busy. Leaders often have a hard time applying what they have learned because they are so busy. You have to *find* ways to practice and *find* ways to learn that fit within the flow of the work day. Organizations can (and should) create repeatable processes to support individual leadership development. Taking a holistic, intentional approach to developing leaders cuts through the busy-ness and creates opportunities for success.

The Real World

A leader must make the tough decisions about where to focus the resources of time, money, and energy to meet organizational goals. On a personal level leaders must juggle these resources to improve their leadership skills and help create those opportunities for others as well. This approach requires more than a workshop from the training department, but practical, relevant and intentional practices. These approaches provide the real path to remarkable leadership.

Better Learner = Better Leader

Highly effective leaders share many common skills: they are visionary; they are compassionate; they are communicators; they are relationship builders; and many other things.

However, at their core, to truly be remarkable, leaders must be continuous, lifelong learners.

Leadership is a complex endeavor. Humans are complex, and a leader is dealing with more than just his or her own complexities. Leaders must understand the complexity of human behavior *and* lead groups of people each with their own issues.

Something this complex won't be understood quickly. Remarkable leaders know that the mastery of these complexities is a lifelong journey with no defined endpoint. The result? The need and desire to be in a continuously learning mindset.

Status quo requires no leadership. If everything in the current situation was great – if there was no need for change – how much leadership would be needed? Leadership is required because we want to *move somewhere*.

The need for leadership is predicated on change, so leaders must be prepared to work under changing conditions. If conditions change, then learning is required to continually adapt to and work under the changing conditions. Remarkable leaders know their job is to move people through status quo. Therefore they know that they must continue to grow themselves to meet the needs of the situations and the people they are leading.

Leaders model behavior. While the needs and forces for learning are great, leaders aren't just learning for themselves. They are setting a tone and modeling behaviors for those that are following them.

When you are a leader, whether by position or reputation, people are looking to you as the example of the 'right' thing to do – whether you like it or not. How then, can leaders expect their teams to continue to grow and develop if they aren't doing it themselves?

Better leader = better human. The best leaders are learners for all of the reasons above, but they also know something else. They know that in the end, the skills that make them better leaders also make them more highly functioning human beings.

Remarkable leaders are learners because they want to be better leaders *and* because they want to be better people. Learning how to communicate more effectively makes you more effective in more than in just your role as a leader – that skill development, that growth, spills out into every part of your life.

People become remarkable leaders because they are willing to learn, grow, improve and change. They know that to become more effective they must continue to improve. They know effective leadership is a journey – so they remain focused on becoming more effective, not on arriving and maintaining.

What Makes a Leader Remarkable?

- Remarkable leaders learn continually.
- Remarkable leaders champion change.
- Remarkable leaders communicate powerfully.
- Remarkable leaders build relationships.
- Remarkable leaders develop others.
- Remarkable leaders focus on customers.
- Remarkable leaders influence with impact.
- Remarkable leaders think and act innovatively.
- Remarkable leaders value collaboration and teamwork.
- Remarkable leaders solve problems and make decisions.
- Remarkable leaders take responsibility and accountability.
- Remarkable leaders manage projects and processes successfully.
- Remarkable leaders set goals and support goal achievement.

Poll 100 hockey fans and chances are in every single conversation Wayne Gretzky's name will be mentioned as one of greatest hockey players of all time (if not THE greatest, but that's a different issue).

However, ask the same 100 people if Gretzky was the greatest skater or the fastest skater, or the best defenseman, the best goalie, or the most physical player ever, those people would say no in almost every case – yet they still consider him to be the greatest player ever.

Finally, ask those same 100 people if Gretzky was the best passer, the best scorer, the best at anticipating the game on the ice, or the most competitive to ever play and those answers would be very different than the last set of questions – in these areas he is clearly outstanding

Granted, if Gretzky couldn't skate, his other skills would not matter since he's a *hockey player*. The same is true for leaders. If someone is unwilling or unable to learn or has extremely low interpersonal communication skills it won't matter much how strong his or her other skills might be. Learning and communication are necessary to even be in the leadership game.

What does this say about strengths and weaknesses and how they relate to greatness?

On the list of competencies for a remarkable hockey player, Gretzky's name comes up many times – phenomenal scorer; amazing vision; makes everyone around him better – but not in *every* category.

Remarkable leaders know they don't have to be, nor can they be, remarkable at *everything*, so while they work on their developing all their skills, they specifically play to their strengths whenever possible.

To become a remarkable leader, focus first on your strengths. As you improve those skills at which you truly excel you will likely be seen by others as highly effective. Like Gretzky you will want to continue to improve your areas of weakness, but it is through your strengths that you will most quickly become remarkable.

Solving The Problem Solving Problem

By Kevin Eikenberry

The meeting started like a hundred others before. There were five people sitting around the conference table, like they always did, trying to solve a problem that had popped up in the last few weeks. If you could watch and listen from another room you wouldn't find major arguments or conflicts. These people had worked together before and from all outward appearances were pretty effective as a team.

After nearly an hour though, they seemed at a stalemate. People had begun to describe possible solutions to the problem and an agreement was nowhere to be found. The longer they talked, the more disagreement there seemed to be. Finally Susan, the newest member of the group, asked a naïve question, "Are we all trying to solve the same problem here?"

They scoffed, both mentally and through their body language – and Tom, the old veteran of the team, spoke for everyone else when he said, "Of course we are solving the same problem. Where have you been for the last hour?" Since the meeting time was over, and people had other meetings to attend, they hastily scheduled a continuation for later in the afternoon.

Drew, the team leader, couldn't get Susan's question out of his mind though, and so after his next meeting he stopped by her desk. Since she wasn't there, he went to his desk and dropped a quick email to learn why she asked that question.

When Susan got the email she wrote back saying that a mentor had taught her something about problem solving several years before and that as she watched the meeting progress the words she had learned kept coming up in her mind. Then she typed the phrases that she kept thinking about, phrases that had been burned into her mind by her mentor:

"Many problems go unsolved by groups because people aren't working on the same problem."

"A problem well stated is a problem half solved."

"What problem are you really trying to solve?"

She then explained she had been taught to always start problem solving by writing a problem statement and she through that experience had learned problems were typically solved much quicker. She closed by typing, "If we had started by writing a problem statement this morning, we would likely not need to meet again this afternoon." As she re-read the note before clicking "send" she erased the last sentence.

As people arrived for the second meeting Drew was already there. On the flipchart he had written in red marker – "What is the problem we are trying to solve?"

He re-started the meeting by asking everyone to write down their answer to the question. People groaned and shot quizzical looks his way, but everyone wrote. They started quickly, but if you were to ask them later, it took them longer to write this statement than they had expected.

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Once everyone was looking up again, Drew asked them to read their statements. After each person had done so the room got really quiet. Tom broke the silence by saying what they were all thinking – that Susan had nailed the issue with her question in the morning - they weren't all working on the same problem.

Action Steps

This scenario – at least the first half of it – takes place in organizations every day. Too frequently, people want to rush to a solution and in doing so waste time, resources and the equity in their relationships by battling over solutions to different problems.

Of course people are working on very similar problems. For example, let's say the meeting was called to discuss the cost overruns on the new project. Everyone wants to solve it, and so they come to the meeting with their own biases and slant on the situation, which leads them, without a clear statement of the problem, to search for solutions from their own perspective.

Intelligent, capable and motivated people then become stalemated because they didn't all start with the same question.

You can avoid this in your next problem-solving meeting (and everyone there after for the rest of your life), by starting at the true beginning. Resolve to start your next problem-solving question by asking, "What is the problem we are trying to solve?"

Get everyone's input, and come to agreement on this *first*. This initial discussion, especially the first few times people do it, will expose many symptoms and even some possible solutions. Write them down, but don't let those ideas distract the conversation until a clear statement has been formed, agreed to, and written down.

Once you have it written down, it becomes your north star, your guidance system, as you search for and find solutions to the real problem.

The Rest of the Meeting

After the surprise beginning, the afternoon meeting went very well. There were some challenges in hammering out the problem statement, but people were amazed at how fast they came to agreement on the best next steps once that was done. Everyone, that is, except Susan.

The next time Susan walked into the conference room, she smiled as she saw, scrawled on the white board, "A problem well stated is a problem half solved." The statement had been circled, and in writing she thought was Tom's, someone had written "Don't Erase."

What They're Saying About REMARKABLE LEADERSHIP

"The best measurement of success is the number of choices available to you. Kevin Eikenberry in this book infinitely increases those choices for you. Choose to devour this book. It's Brilliant!"

-- Jim Canterucci, Author of *Personal Brilliance*

"Kevin's book, *Remarkable Leadership* is a must read for anyone wanting to improve their leadership skills. I highly recommend this book."

-- Dr. Ivan Misner, NY Times bestselling author and Founder of BNI

"What is so remarkable about *Remarkable Leadership* is that Kevin has found that the key to being a great leader doesn't have to come with being a remarkable person. His book can take the ordinary and human in all of us and help us meld ourselves into remarkable leaders. His book invites all of us to find what kind of leader we can truly be".

-- Rusty Rueff, CEO, SNOCAP, Inc

"Kevin is a true believer that leaders can be made. He has identified the key behaviors that remarkable leaders exhibit. More importantly, he has given us practical ways to develop these behaviors. This book will be encouraging for those who desire to become remarkable leaders".

-- Steve Boeckman, President/CEO, Great Lakes Energy Cooperative

"One of the most thought-provoking and creative activities I invest in as a leader is to have breakfast with Kevin. Innovative, cost-effective and practical ideas jump out of his head. Now, he has graciously written down an entire book of these types of ideas around leadership, creating a pragmatic asset for all leaders. Kevin does a great job balancing a leader's need for a checklist with the need for practical tips and tools. He combines ideas from many leaders melding them into cohesive lessons. For example, he helps you learn the difference between being a good leader who delegates and a great leader who empowers. This is a book that will help you get from where you currently are as a leader to where you strive to go."

-- Lou Russell, best-selling author and President of Russell Martin & Associates

"Kevin's ability to focus, empower and push leaders to a higher standard is what makes his insights illuminating. He has proven one of our association's greatest friends and trusted advisors. I wouldn't just recommend his book. I recommend you dog ear it, high light it, scratch random thoughts in it and then buy a copy for your second in command as required reading."

-- Tony Scelzo, Founder of Rainmakers

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"I can't think of a better book than Remarkable Leadership to put into the hands of aspiring leaders -- or people who want to become more effective leaders. It's well-written, filled with practical suggestions, and, for my money, hits the truly important aspects of leading inside an organization."

-- Rick Maurer, Author of *Beyond the Wall of Resistance* and the Change Management News Blog

"In my assessment, Kevin Eikenberry is leading one of the most powerful and inspiring conversations about Leadership now occurring on our planet. His new book *Remarkable Leadership* brings the reader a concise distillation of all the most useful insights and actions regarding what actually works in Leadership into one enjoyable volume. If you ever thought to yourself 'I could never be a great leader' reading this book will not only change your mind -- it will launch you on a journey of fulfillment you didn't know was possible. At a time when many are 'cynical and resigned' Kevin's book injects fresh new DNA into the intellectual gene pool of possibility. I urge you to read this book. Then go out and make a difference."

-- David Chard, Regional Director, Edelman Asia Pacific Academy

"Remarkable leaders are not born—they are made and developed. That's why I loved this book. Kevin Eikenberry shares a set of powerful principles, skills and action steps that develops leaders at all levels of the organization and anyone aspiring to be a leader. If you want to be a better leader or develop skilled leaders within your organization then read this practical and powerful leadership manual and follow the action plan."

-- Jon Gordon, best selling author of *The Energy Bus: 10 Rules to Fuel your Life, Work and Team with Positive Energy*.

"Eikenberry does a masterful job dissecting the key elements of effective leadership and makes a convincing case that becoming a master leader is always a work in progress, even for remarkable leaders. Becoming an effective leader means becoming an active learner, acquiring skills best mastered through carefully planned activities and practice. This book can help leaders at all levels build and strengthen their leadership skills."

-- Dr. Vic Lechtenberg, Vice Provost for Engagement, Purdue University

"*Remarkable Leadership* is classic Eikenberry. Buy this book if you want to read about leadership. USE this book if you want to be challenged to move out of your leadership comfort zone and develop skills that will release your untapped potential. Kevin has included every competency it takes to be a remarkable leader. He not only identifies and explains them, but goes on to challenge you to self assess and further develop each competency in your life. From a human developmental standpoint, this book should be required reading, and learning, for anyone assigned the responsibility of being in leadership."

-- Greg Shaffer, Training Supervisor, Chevron Phillips Chemical Company