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Leadership Alerts

HBR'S MAKE YOURSELF INDISPENSABLE COLLECTION

Compiled & edited by VCC Library
Jan 3 2013

[Zenger, J. H., Folkman, J. R., & Edinger, S. K. \(2011\). Making Yourself Indispensable. *Harvard Business Review*, 89\(10\), 84-92.](#)

Peter Drucker and other leadership thinkers have long argued that leaders should focus on strengthening their strengths. How should they do that? The authors, all from the leadership-development consultancy Zenger Folkman, present a step-by-step process by which developing leaders can identify their strengths (through either a formal or an informal 360-degree evaluation), select appropriate complementary skills, and develop those skills to dramatically improve their strengths—making themselves uniquely valuable to their companies.

[Goleman, D. \(2004\). What Makes a Leader?. *Harvard Business Review*, 82\(1\), 82-91.](#) (HBR Classic)

In his research at nearly 200 large, global companies, Daniel Goleman found that truly effective leaders are distinguished by a high degree of emotional intelligence. Without it, a person can have first-class training, an incisive mind, and an endless supply of good ideas, but he or she still won't be a great leader.

[Kotter, J. P. \(2001\). What Leaders Really Do. *Harvard Business Review*, 79\(11\), 85-96.](#) (HBR Classic)

The most pernicious half-truth about leadership is that it's just a matter of charisma and vision—you either have it or you don't.

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[Transparency : how leaders create a culture of candor](#)

The fact of the matter is that leadership skills are not innate. They can be acquired, and honed. But first you have to appreciate how they differ from management skills.

[Porter, M. E. \(1996\). What Is Strategy?. *Harvard Business Review*, 74\(6\), 61-78.](#) (HBR Classic)

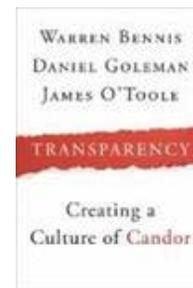
Michael Porter argues that operational effectiveness, although necessary to superior performance, is not sufficient, because its techniques are easy to imitate. In contrast, the essence of strategy is choosing a unique and valuable position rooted in systems of activities that are much more difficult to match.

[Kotter, J. P. \(2007\). Leading Change. *Harvard Business Review*, 85\(1\), 96-103.](#)

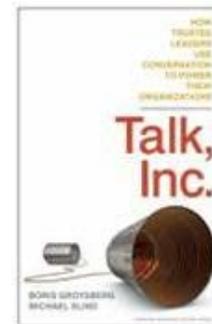
Most major change initiatives—whether intended to boost quality, improve culture, or reverse a corporate death spiral—generate only lukewarm results. Many fail miserably. Why? Kotter maintains that too many managers don't realize transformation is a process, not an event.

[Oncken, J., Wass, D. L., & Covey, S. R. \(1999\). Management Time: Who's Got the Monkey?. *Harvard Business Review*, 77\(6\), 178.](#) (HBR Classic)

Many managers feel overwhelmed. They have too many problems—too many monkeys—on their backs. All too often, they say, they find themselves running out of time while their subordinates are running out of work. This article describes how a manager can delegate effectively to keep most monkeys on the subordinate's back.



[Talk, Inc. : how trusted leaders use conversation to power their organizations](#)



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