

DESIGNED TO ACCOMPANY THE AWARD-WINNING BOOK, *THE LEADERSHIP CHALLENGE*

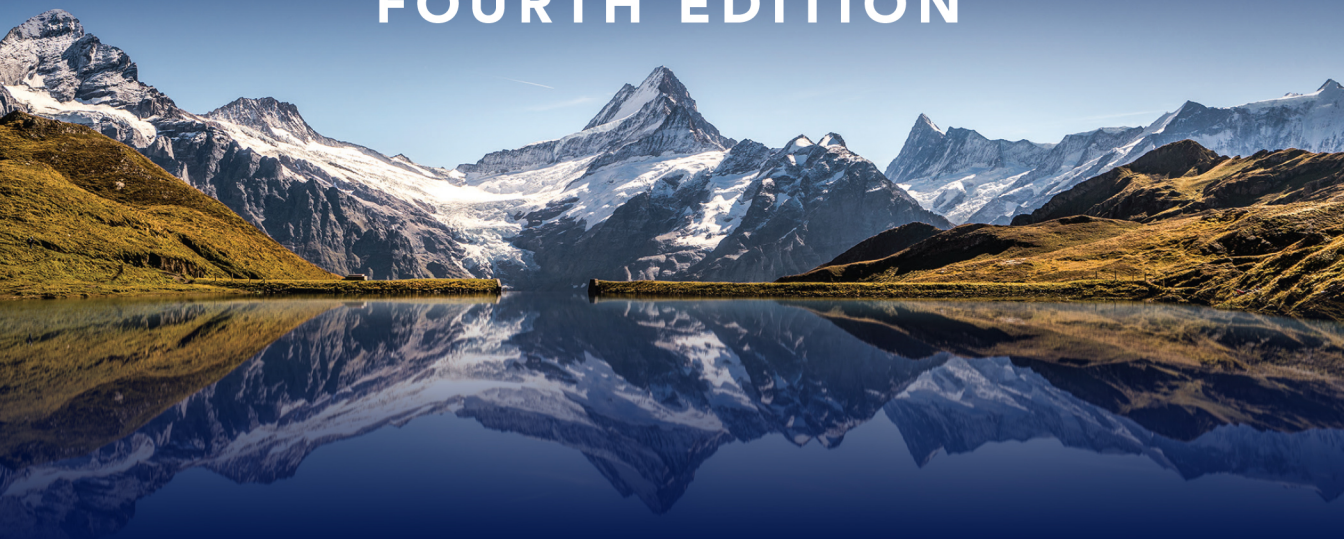
JAMES M.  
**KOUZES**

BARRY Z.  
**POSNER**

THE  
**LEADERSHIP  
CHALLENGE**

**WORKBOOK**

FOURTH EDITION





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HOW TO MAKE  
**EXTRAORDINARY THINGS HAPPEN**  
IN ORGANIZATIONS

**The Leadership  
Challenge**  
A Wiley Brand



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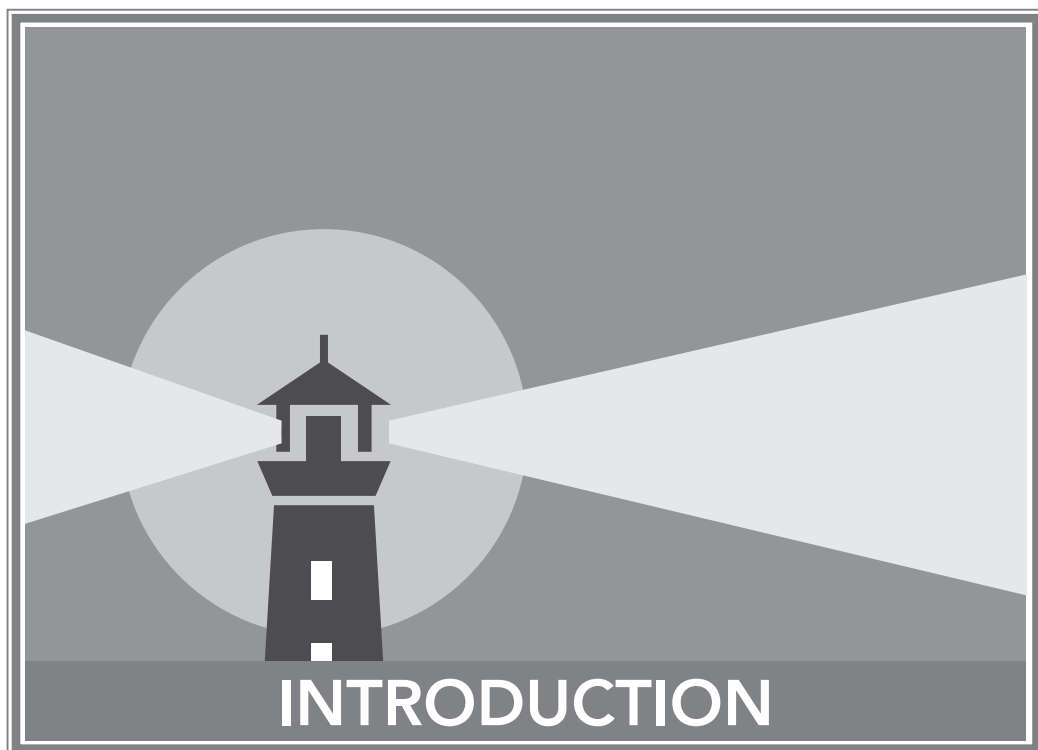
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**WHEN WE INTERVIEWED DON BENNETT** for our first book, he said something that we've never forgotten. Don is the first amputee to climb Mount Rainier. That's 14,410 feet on one leg and two crutches.

"How did you make it to the top?" we asked Don.

"One hop at a time," was his instant reply.

One hop at a time. One hop at a time. One hop at a time.

When you think about it, that's how most extraordinary things are accomplished. As much as you might desire it, you simply cannot leap to the top of a mountain. You can only get there by taking it one step—or, as in Don's case—one hop at a time.

Yet we sometimes find ourselves simply paralyzed by the mere scale of the challenge. We are challenged to do more with less, adapt quickly to changing circumstances, innovate on the fly, deal with extreme uncertainty, and somehow still find time for our families and friends. Sometimes it all feels too overwhelming. But so does looking up to the top of a mountain when you are at

the bottom. That's why Don would tell himself, as he looked just one foot ahead, "Anybody can hop from here to there." And so he did—fourteen thousand four hundred ten times.

But Don had something else in mind when he looked up at the top of that mountain. Despite what you might have heard about why people climb mountains, it's not because they're there. When we asked Don why he wanted to be the first amputee to climb Mount Rainier, he told us it was because he wanted to demonstrate to other disabled people that they were capable of doing more than they might have thought they could do. Don had aspirations that went beyond individual glory and success. He was the one doing the climbing, but he was not climbing just for himself. He was climbing for an entire community. He had a vision of others doing great things.

There's another lesson we learned from Don that's directly applicable to leading others to make extraordinary things happen. We asked him, "What's the most important lesson you learned from this climb?" Without hesitation, he answered, "You can't do it alone."

We produced *The Leadership Challenge Workbook* so that you can apply to your projects the leadership lessons we learned from Don Bennett—and from the thousands of other leaders we have studied. This is a practical guide that is designed to help you use The Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership®—the model of leadership derived from, and validated by, more than forty years of research—as a tool for planning and preparing for your next climb to the summit.

*The Leadership Challenge Workbook* is a one-hop-at-a-time guide for leaders. It's a tool that asks you to reflect on each essential element of leading and to act in ways that incrementally create forward momentum. It asks you to think beyond your personal agenda and imagine how your leadership efforts engage others' desires. Because you can't do it alone, it also helps you engage others in the planning and the doing.

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## **ARE YOU LEADING AT YOUR "PERSONAL BEST"?**

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When we began our research, we wanted to find out what practices characterize exemplary leadership, so we created a question that framed everything else. The question we asked everyone we studied was, "What did you do

when you were at your ‘personal best’ as a leader?” We did not want to know what the most famous and the most senior leaders did. We wanted to know what leaders at *all* levels and in all contexts did. We asked people to tell us a story about the one project they led that they considered their Personal-Best Leadership Experience—an experience that set their individual standard of excellence. We collected thousands of stories of leaders performing at their peak, and we looked for actions that were consistent across all the stories.

After many years—and several thousand quantitative and qualitative analyses—we found that there are Five Practices that define exemplary leadership. When operating at their best, leaders:

- Model the Way
- Inspire a Shared Vision
- Challenge the Process
- Enable Others to Act
- Encourage the Heart

You might already be familiar with The Five Practices from our book *The Leadership Challenge*, which describes this research in detail. Or you might know The Five Practices because you have used our 360-degree assessment instrument, the *Leadership Practices Inventory* (LPI), to further your development as a leader. In case the practices are new to you, we provide a brief overview in Chapter 2 of this workbook.

Whether or not you are familiar with our other work, we ask you to keep this in mind: when you engage in The Five Practices more frequently than you do at present, you *will* be more effective. We know from our research that those who Model, Inspire, Challenge, Enable, and Encourage more frequently significantly increase their probability of making extraordinary things happen. Exemplary leadership, in other words, is not an accident of birth or circumstance. It’s a result of conscious and conscientious practice.

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## **PROJECTS PROVIDE THE CONTEXT**

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Projects are how we tend to organize work these days. Projects create the context for our goals, determine with whom we work, and set our schedules. We will be more specific in Chapter 3 about what kind of project to use as the framework

for applying The Five Practices while you go through this workbook. But you might start thinking now about one that you are currently leading or about to lead that could benefit from the application of exemplary practices.

One important point to keep in mind is that every new project provides you with an opportunity. It's an opportunity to do things the same way you have always done them, or it's an opportunity for greatness—an opportunity to achieve a personal standard of excellence. It all depends on how you approach the challenge.

No world-class athlete ever set foot on the playing field saying to themselves, “I think I'll settle for performing at my average today.” The same is true of world-class leaders. Every day is an opportunity to improve your performance, and the most challenging projects are the ones that create the most opportunity. Your next project is your chance to create extraordinary results for your organization and to develop your leadership capabilities. This workbook is designed to help you plan and prepare so that you can lead at your personal best.

## **WHO SHOULD USE THE LEADERSHIP CHALLENGE WORKBOOK?**

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This workbook is designed for anyone in a leadership role. Its purpose is to help you further your abilities to lead others in making extraordinary things happen. Whether you are in the private or public sector, an employee or a volunteer, a first-line supervisor or a senior executive, a student or a parent, you will find that this workbook applies to you. That's because leadership is not about being in a formal position. It's about action. You can grant someone the title of manager, but that does not make them a leader. Leadership is earned.

You get to be a leader in the eyes of others because of what you *do*. Leadership is about having the courage and spirit to move from whatever circumstances you are in to a place of making a difference in the world. This workbook is designed to help anyone who has the desire to lead and the will to make a difference. It's for anyone who is in a role that requires mobilizing others to want to struggle for shared aspirations.

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## **LEADERSHIP IS EVERYONE'S BUSINESS**

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The next time you say to yourself, “Why don’t they do something about that?” look in the mirror. Ask the person you see, “Why don’t *you* do something about that?” By accepting the challenge to lead, you come to realize that the only limits are those you place on yourself.

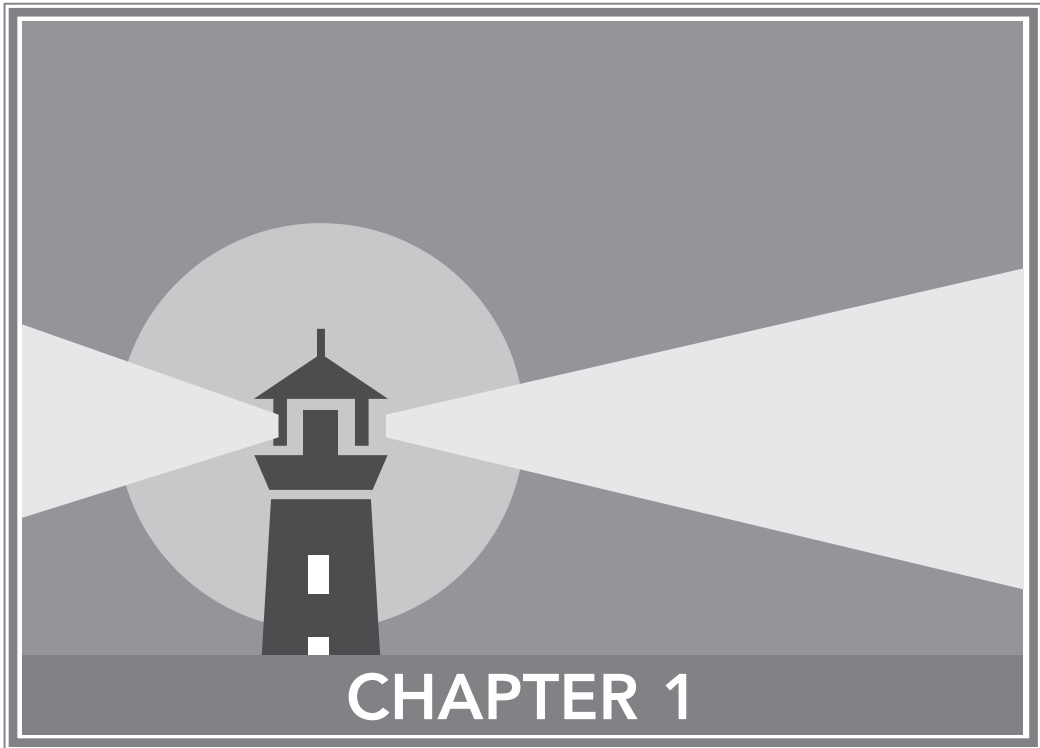
While our research has taught us many things about the practice of leadership, our interaction with the thousands of individuals we have studied has taught us something vitally important: leadership is everyone’s business. In today’s rapidly changing, highly competitive, increasingly global world, we need more leaders, not fewer. We need more people to accept responsibility for bringing about significant changes in what we do and how we do it. We need more people to answer the call. The world is in great need of your talents.

We believe that you are capable of developing yourself as a leader far more than tradition or mythology has ever assumed possible. Simply imagine yourself standing at the base of Mount Rainier, and then start climbing—one hop at a time.

We wish you great joy and success on your next leadership adventure.

Jim Kouzes, Orinda, California  
Barry Posner, Berkeley, California  
2023





## How to Use This Workbook

**THE BEST LEADERS ARE CONTINUALLY LEARNING.** They see all experiences as learning opportunities. But there's one condition. Rich insights only come from reflection and analysis. Unexamined experiences yield no lessons. If you want to become a better leader, you need to study your own performance and become more conscious about the choices that you are making and how you are acting on your intentions.

The purpose of *The Leadership Challenge Workbook* is to help you become a better leader by applying The Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership® to a project of your choice. As with the learning of any new discipline, we will ask you to do some exercises that isolate specific skills. This may seem a bit artificial at first, but it's no different from any form of practice—you are not actually in the game, but you know you are improving your capacity to play the game.