SCOTT MAUTZ

LEADING
FROM THE
MIDDLE

A PLAYBOOK FOR MANAGERS TO INFLUENCE
UP, DOWN, AND ACROSS THE ORGANIZATION

Wiley

WORKBOOK

*Note: The Answer Key is in the back of this workbook

Chapter 1: The Unique Challenges of Those Who Lead from the Middle

1) Those who lead from the middle:
a) are stuck
b) are those who have a boss, and are a boss
c) are those with the opportunity to lead up, down, and across their organization
d) b and c

2) The unique challenges of those who lead from the middle are captured in the acronym SCOPE. SCOPE stands for challenges of the following nature:
S_____
C_____
O_____
P_____
E_____

3) Leading from the middle can be exhausting because of all the _____-switching.

4) The role of middle manager is filled with tension and conflict. Which of the following are helpful reframes, or ways to view this reality more positively?
a) Yes, you're in a pressure cooker, but you can at least release the pressure you put on yourself
b) You can always lessen your burden by avoiding conflict whenever possible
c) Remember that ongoing conflict is essential to producing the best work
d) a and c
e) All of the above

5) Middle managers can feel like they have to be omnipotent. To combat this impossible standard, it's helpful to remember:
a) Job number one is to look out for yourself
b) There's a cost to knowing everything
c) You only need to know enough to look good in front of the right people
d) Some details of your business are simply beneath you so there's no need to know them

6) True or False: Being "bound by boundaries" is a good thing when it comes to the physical toll that leading from the middle can take.

7) Which of the following take the highest toll, emotionally, on those leading from the middle?
a) the sense of isolation
b) feeling undervalued
c) dealing with opposing agendas
d) b and c
e) a and b

8) Which of the 21 roles that middle managers play should be the first that you make time for given that it impacts every other role you play?
a) Translator
b) Catalyst
c) Strategist
d) Synthesizer

9) True or False: The role of Implementor means taking orders and ensuring the orders are executed exactly as issued.

10) Critical to being a good Intrapreneur is to:
a) avoid favoring ideas that are too close to existing solutions
b) ignore the corporate rules and culture that will slow you down
c) quietly hoard the resources you need to move your idea forward
d) avoid giving autonomy on anything, instead taking control of as much of your idea as you can

11) The key to playing the Buffer role well is to:
a) withhold any information that you don't agree with
b) bend the truth to fit the situation
c) proceed with purity of intent
d) delay sharing the information until the time is exactly right

Chapter 2: The Mindset for Leading Effectively from the Middle

12) In what ways does the Others-Oriented Leadership (OOL) mindset differ from the Servant Leadership (SL) mindset?
a) With the OOL mindset, you're not as likely to lose sight of your authoritative leadership qualities
b) With the OOL mindset, you care as much about achieving your goals as *how* you achieve your goals
c) With the OOL mindset, there's a better balance of energy and attention focused up, down, and across the organization (versus just down)

d) With the OOL mindset, you're more certain to establish your mastery in addition to your servitude
e) All of the above

13) With the Others-Oriented Leadership mindset, when you give informed encouragement, you're giving:
a) a special type of encouragement
b) encouragement based on specific reason and rationale
c) an explanation for *why* you believe someone can do something
d) All of the above
e) a and c

14) To provide unswerving support and encouragement, it's helpful to ask yourself the following: Am I assisting _____ or avoiding _____?

15) When you're focusing on assurance of mastery, are you focusing on influencing up, down, or across the organization?
a) up
b) down
c) across
d) None of the above

16) With the Others-Oriented Leadership mindset, to make it easier to give up information:
a) think of it as an intrusion, but one you must accept
b) think of the act as a worthwhile investment of your time
c) think of it as a critical tool for getting work done through others
d) a and b
e) b and c

17) How does striving for "20/20 vision" help you prioritize workloads (which is a key "given" with the Others-Oriented Leadership mindset)?
a) Doing so focuses you on the most important 20 percent of work until it's time to shift to the next most important 20 percent
b) It helps you set a clear strategic vision for the future
c) It encourages you to give 20 percent bonuses to the top 20 percent most productive employees
d) a and b

18) With the Others-Oriented Leadership mindset, reverse mentors help you realistically assess what you're getting as a result of your OOL mindset. What is a reverse mentor?
a) A mentor who asks you for feedback first
b) Someone who works with you only when you need help unwinding a bad situation
c) A person high-up in the organization that can help you reverse engineer the solution to a problem
d) None of the above

Chapter 3: The Skillset for Leading Effectively from the Middle

19) When the job of leading from the middle is being done at its best, a certain set of skills are displayed--which can be summed up in the acronym AMPLIFY. What does AMPLIFY stand for?
A_____
M_____
P_____
L_____
I_____
F_____
Y_____

20) Dispositional flexibility is one of the things that leads to better adaptability. What is it?
a) Not getting emotional about changing conditions in a way that negatively influences behavior
b) Keeping an open mind to new data and drawing conclusions accordingly, switching quickly back and forth between the big picture and detail, using your learning agility (ability to learn), and being creative in forming solutions
c) Having a "can do" attitude in the face of change, being willing to alter your working style, and having the confidence to improvise, experiment, or change course
d) None of the above

21) Why is practicing the 50/50 Rule so powerful for strengthening your adaptability skill?
a) It forces you to see change as happening *to* you versus *for* you
b) It guides you to split your mental energy between pragmatism and possibility in the face of changing conditions, leaving no time for negative thoughts
c) It allows you to better live with your feelings of being a victim to change
d) All of the above

22) You're able to better mesh your organization and foster a collaborative spirit when you provoke the _____ _____.

23) True or False: Leaders who are political advance their own interests, but most often with the greater good in mind and never at the expense of others.

24) The 4 C's of Hyper-awareness (things requiring special attention for you to lock-in on) are:
C_____
C_____
C_____
C_____

25) Put an "X" next to all of the statements that are true about the Theory of Constraints:
___It's best addressed by using Why-Why-Why analysis
___It means that the chain is only as strong as its weakest link, its limiting factor
___It says that working on just your biggest restraint won't have enough impact
___It identifies the biggest things holding your business back
___It says that the performance of any system is held back by output-restricting bottlenecks
___The opportunity to identify constraints is often overlooked

26) To improve your Influencing skills, the Law of Opposites says:
a) Don't do unto others as you'd have done unto you
b) Respectfully take the opposite position of someone you're debating with
c) Hire people who aren't carbon copies of how you think, feel, and act
d) None of the above

27) Fostering compromise requires creating "that's right" moments. Why is this so important?
a) It creates common ground for both sides of a negotiation to build from
b) It lowers defenses for the bargaining party that's at a disadvantage
c) It ensures that the bargaining party that's at an advantage understands the other side's goals
d) a and c

28) You set the right tone when you remember the Attitude Anthem, which says life is ___ percent what happens to you and ___ percent how you react to it.

Chapter 4: Leading Your Boss

29) What's the most important fundamental thing to keep in mind about the boss-subordinate relationship?
a) It's a relationship that naturally has tension
b) It's interdependence between two imperfect human beings

c) You only get out of it what you put into it
d) If you're struggling with this relationship, you're far from alone

30) True or False: Most middle managers struggle with resisting with the desire to push back on their boss, so they end up coming across uncooperative.

31) Research shows that over ____ percent of the time, there are material misunderstandings between boss and employee about performance/behavioral expectations.

32) Which of the following is *not* one of the key aspects of style awareness you need when determining how to best work with your boss?
a) Formality
b) Information receipt and retention
c) Optimal time of day for interacting
d) Task versus people orientation

33) Why isn't Step 4 in the Managing-Up Staircase (Get Personal) one of the very first steps?
a) Doing this step too early risks you being intrusive
b) You first have to establish that you're a very skilled employee
c) It won't come across as genuine if you get personal too early
d) Getting your boss to open up about his/herself is more likely when the basic "rules of engagement" and a baseline of trust have been established

34) Why is Step 5 (Your House in Order) of the Managing-Up Staircase so important?
a) It keeps you from having to defend every decision with your boss
b) It gets your employees to trust you
c) It creates a winning culture
d) None of the above

35) Which of the following are *not* ways you should provide Purposeful Support for your boss?
a) Make as many of their decisions for them as you can to free up their capacity
b) Increase their capacity by taking things off their plate
c) Define problems they didn't know they had and offer a range of solutions
d) Advocate for them in genuine ways

36) When it comes to disagreeing with your boss, it's important to discuss _____ before content.

37) What's a common error that managers make when giving their boss feedback?
a) Being too honest
b) Being too presumptive about the boss's full situation
c) Being too quick to share feedback after an "incident"
d) Being too specific in the feedback given

Chapter 5: Leading Those Who Report to You

38) At what point in the Coaching Conversation Funnel do you set expectations and drive accountability?
a) The middle
b) The end
c) The start
d) None of the above

39) Why is it important in the middle of the coaching conversation to iron out distortions?
a) It's important to establish that you're in command of the conversation
b) You have to showcase your expertise and experience in bringing them back to reality
c) It's important to humble the employee by showing them they're not seeing the full picture
d) Because allowing the coachee to carry on with a distorted view of a situation keeps them from taking effective action

40) True or False: When it comes to the Prescribe versus Guide Spectrum, you should always seek to guide, never prescribe.

41) Which of the following is an example of an open-ended question that you might ask in the coaching conversation?
a) "You should take a stand on that issue"
b) "You should take a stand on that issue—don't you agree?"
c) "Do you think this issue is worth taking a stand for?"
d) "What do you want to do about this issue?"

42) Regarding pinpointing an employee's opportunity area for improvement, which of the following is true?
a) You have to discern between aptitude and attitude issues
b) You have to discern between compliance and commitment issues
c) You have to discern if the issue is based on their values or on them not feeling valued
d) All of the above

43) What is a Personal Board of Directors?
a) A group of people you hire to manage your personal brand
b) A few people that interact with your coachee from an elevated and arms-length perspective that you can tap into for objective input on your coachee's strengths and opportunities
c) A group of higher-ranking people who work outside your coachee's immediate chain of command that are responsible for evaluating the coachee
d) b and c

44) Put an "X" next to the answers that are *not* related to the fundamentals of giving feedback:
____Give feedback from the heart
____ Give about five pieces of positive feedback for every corrective one
____Wait to give feedback when the conditions are right
____Make your feedback like whole wheat bread (granular and nutritive) not white bread
    (generic and bland)
____Use the "compliment sandwich" approach (corrective feedback sandwiched between two
    slices of positive feedback)

45) Which of the following are common feedback traps?
a) Ending a feedback session by backtracking and watering down corrective feedback you just gave with contradictory, positive feedback
b) Forgetting to occasionally ask employees to give feedback on your performance
c) Sugarcoating feedback instead of being direct and sticking to your points
d) Making it all about what others have seen and heard versus putting the primary focus on your personal observations
e) All of the above

46) SHARES is a helpful step-by-step framework for giving feedback. It stands for:
S_____
H_____
A_____
R_____
E_____
S_____

47) Which of the following is the Golden Question of giving feedback to difficult employees?
a) "Do you understand what you're doing wrong?"
b) "Do you understand how off-track you are as to your career objectives?"
c) "How do you think you're doing?"
d) "Can you play back to me why I'm so frustrated with you?"

48) Helping employees see both sides of a disagreement and discussing what great performance looks like versus the mediocre to poor performance they've just displayed are both examples of:
a) Teachable moments
b) Preachable moments
c) Moments of truth
d) Pivotal moments
e) a and d

Chapter 6: Leading Teams

49) Put an "X" next to the actions that will help you foster a high-performing team:
__When it comes to decisions, foster a spirit of debate, decide, commit
__Show empathy to those operating from a negative mindset
__Ensure everyone understands their role and expected contributions to the team
__Create a "Declaration of Interdependence" that lists team goals, deliverables, role definitions, and behavioral expectations for all team members to adhere to
__Spread positive gossip

50) What is psychological safety?
a) Not fearing what anyone has to say about you
b) Not fearing rejection by team members, being confident to share opinions/ideas, feeling able to bring your whole self to work
c) Knowing that no matter what mistakes you make, you won't be held accountable for them
d) Believing that you have the ability to accomplish anything you set your mind to

51) Fostering a balance of the seriousness and commitment it takes to win with the camaraderie and fun it takes to win *on a sustained basis* is known as creating _____ intensity.

52) The Purpose Pyramid helps you identify, articulate, and drive a sense of purpose on a team. The steps in the Pyramid are denoted by the acronym DRIVE, which stands for:
D_____
R_____
I_____
V_____
E_____

53) You know you have a good team purpose statement if it's _____ about the _____ you're thrilled to make.

54) True or False: The intent of the Leadership Team Equity Pyramid is to be intentional about creating the experience you want employees to have as they interact with your Leadership Team.

55) Which of the following is *not* a zone in the Three Zones Test?
a) loading zone
b) comfort zone
c) twilight zone
d) danger zone

56) The Waterfall Effect says that just as every drop of water in a turbulent waterfall effects the course of other drops below it, so does:
a) every CEO's decisions effect the company's performance
b) every leader's behavior effect employee's behavior below him or her
c) every employee's actions contribute positively or negatively to the culture
d) every peer's mistakes effect the motivation level of every other peer

57) Regarding leading a remote team, it's important to treat communication like a _____ instead of an activity.

Chapter 7: Influencing Peers

58) To be able to better work with a difficult peer, it helps to remember that we all _____ something, _____ something, have _____ something.

59) You invoke the Golden Rule of Influence when you demonstrate which of the following:
a) listening
b) teaching
c) mastery
d) All of the above
e) a and b

60) Put an "X" next to the behaviors that will help you build the right reputation with peers (a reputation that draws them to want to work with you):

____Being the smartest person in the room
____Representing peers' point of view fairly, even when they're not present
____Being sure to credit peers and never seeking to grab the glory
____Demonstrating that you rarely make mistakes and thus can be counted on
____Shining in times of adversity

61) Why is making unexpected investments in your peers (like giving them thoughtful feedback or actively advocating for them) such powerful forms of influence?
a) Peers often don't have enough time to invest in themselves
b) Peers often don't get enough positive reinforcement from their own chain of command
c) Peers rarely get such investments outside their hierarchy
d) All of the above

62) Which of the following are *not* direct ways to influence your peers?
a) Reciprocity
b) Give them 10 percent more
c) Listen to their problems
d) Link your agenda to their agenda

63) Regarding influencing your peers, why is it important to understand the basics of what your peers' job entails and what motivates them?
a) You'll be better able to give them praise that matters
b) You'll have a more informed ask of them and better articulate the benefits to their helping you
c) You can give their boss more informed feedback
d) You can help them do their job better

Chapter 8: Leading Change

64) Place an "X" next to the statements that are true about the Change Curve:
____ As you progress through the curve, there's no going backward
____ It details the emotional journey that change elicits
____Everyone goes through the curve
____Everyone goes through the curve at their own pace

65) True or False: It's critical to move as fast as possible when moving your organization through change, otherwise they won't get the urgency.

66) True or False: The change that people ultimately implement is usually more painful than the transition to that change.

67) What does this phrase mean: "Change is historical"?
a) It means that history repeats itself and that you'll see similar changes over a lifetime
b) It means that it's important to learn from mistakes of past change management efforts
c) It means that change has always been around, and always will be
d) It means that every change happens within the context of our past experience with change

68) What is "change drift"?
a) When the deadline for implementing a change goes unmet
b) The process of documenting all the work that must be done with implementing a change
c) When more changes are instituted than necessary or the changes don't really address the issue you intend
d) When the objectives of a change keep shifting

69) In terms of understanding the organization's readiness/capacity for change, what are you assessing when determining the attitudes and behaviors towards change and the desire to handle new work?
a) The skill
b) The will
c) The hill
d) None of the above

70) What is a Change Coalition?
a) A team of key leaders that serve as visible, role-model change champions
b) The group of executives that must approve any change before it's implemented
c) A team of people who create the agenda for change
d) A governing body that informs its members of anticipated change in the industry

71) Put an "X" next to mistakes typically made by managers when sharing the state of the union (as they make their case for change).
___Sharing the change vision without contrasting it to the unacceptable status quo
___Being disrespectful when discussing the past and what's wrong with the state of the union
___Making clear what *won't* change
___Sharing an uninspiring vision
___Sharing reasons for change that are unconvincing

72) Which of the following is *not* a barrier to creating enthusiasm for change?
a) Fear and misinformation
b) Structures/systems counterintuitive to the change being implemented
c) Overcommunicating the vision
d) Unconvincing reasons for change

73) The BEST Guide is a powerful tool for getting employees truly committed to change. What does BEST stand for?
B_____
E_____
S_____
T_____

74) Why is the BEST Guide such a powerful tool?
a) It pinpoints and celebrates the employees that are the best at handling change
b) It helps employees understand *how* to change
c) It puts leadership "on the hook" to articulate the training/support that will be provided
d) b and c

75) What are the Circles of Commitment?
a) Public forums where leaders promise to serve as change champions
b) Three overlapping dynamics that solidify employee commitment to change
c) An agreement between employee and manager that the change will be implemented on time
d) Three things that employees must commit to changing about themselves in the face of the pending change

76) What is "inbetweenity?"
a) The phase between making the case for change and getting commitment to it
b) When an employee gets stuck between two managers with different change agendas
c) When employees are stressed about letting go of the old ways but not yet adept at the new ways
d) The stage right after an employee quits because of an unwanted change, but before he/she finds a new job

77) In regards to forming new habits, which of the following is *not* a necessary condition of any new systems or processes the change requires?
a) They must be attractive
b) They must be easy to implement
c) They must be satisfying

d) They must be inconspicuous

78) Which of the following is a vital tool for enabling discussions between employee and manager about past experiences with change?
a) The One-on-One Change Conversation Guide
b) The BEST Guide
c) The Coaching Conversation Funnel
d) The SHARES Framework

Chapter 9: Creating Your Personal MAP (Middle Action Plan)

79) True or False: Creating a Personal MAP (Middle Action Plan) using the template in the book allows everyone to create the same "best practices" plan.

80) By reading and applying all the material in *Leading from the Middle*, in which direction will you be able to lead brilliantly?
a) up
b) down
c) across
d) All of the above

ANSWER KEY

Chapter 1: The Unique Challenges of Those Who Lead from the Middle

1) Answer: d) b and c

You're not stuck in the middle—you have the opportunity to lead in every direction.

2) Answer:
<u>S</u>elf-identity
<u>C</u>onflict
<u>O</u>mnipotence
<u>P</u>hysical
<u>E</u>motional

While each of the SCOPE challenges can feel daunting, there are many ways to reframe how you view each of these challenges to be more fully energized as you lead from the middle.

3) Answer: Leading from the middle can be exhausting because of all the <u>micro</u>-switching.

Those who lead from the middle must wear many hats, which requires constantly switching from one role to another, from high deference to high assertiveness tasks (and back again), all day long. Neuroscience indicates just how draining this can be. Remember that the micro-transitions you're constantly making aren't segmented, they're integrated. The 100 jobs you belong to add up to one vital job you're uniquely suited to do well. Value the variety and let it energize you.

4) Answer: d) a and c

Choice b) isn't the right spirit for the effective middle manager. It's about fearlessly tackling conflict head-on, not avoiding it.

5) Answer: b) There's a cost to knowing everything

The cost of knowing everything might be that more important priorities are ignored, speed to market is compromised, or other opportunities are missed. The key is to discern what's important for you to know and to know enough to ask the right questions and instill confidence in those evaluating you. Choices a, c, and d are too flippant and hint at a poor attitude.

6) Answer: True

In fact, establishing boundaries is more important for those in the middle of the organization to do than anywhere else because more people have access to you, and so you're disproportionately exposed to stress triggers.

7) Answer: e) a and b

Remember that research shows the vast majority of employees in an organization readily recognize the extreme importance of middle managers. You're not alone in the middle, even though somedays it can feel like it. Choice c) is a conflict challenge, not as much an emotional one.

8) Answer: c) Strategist

All of these roles are important, but the role of Strategist should be the first thing you make time for (even though it's often what we think we have the least time for). Don't forget the three strategy "jobs to do." Cascade top-down strategies, shape top-down strategies, and champion "on the ground" strategies.

9) Answer: False

It's not just about taking orders, but also about closing the gap between intention and implementation. Understand what the strategy or plan is intended to do, but don't just execute it blindly. Make adjustments and adaptations along the way based on the circumstances.

10) Answer: a) avoid favoring ideas that are too close to existing solutions

Choices b, c, and d are a bit underhanded and unnecessary.

11) Answer: c) proceed with purity of intent

If you have the right intent, you have the right to shape the content. It's about carefully molding communications and maintaining a positive culture to help the organization achieve its goals, while remaining truthful and operating with integrity. The other choices aren't the right spirit at all.

Chapter 2: The Mindset for Leading Effectively from the Middle

12) Answer: e) All of the above

While Others-Oriented Leadership is closely related to Servant Leadership, there are indeed differences.

13) Answer: d) All of the above

And don't forget to think of yourself as the "epicenter for encouragement" given your unique connection to so many people up, down, and across your organization.

14) Answer: To provide unswerving support and encouragement, it's helpful to ask yourself the following: Am I assisting <u>success</u> or <u>avoiding</u> failure?

If you act like you're assisting success, you're living the core role of the leader from the middle. But if you're avoiding failure, your actions look different. You micromanage, you're indecisive, and you're too risk-averse.

15) Answer: a) up

Assurance of mastery is about establishing your authority and mastery to your boss (and further up the chain of command). The "up" part of up, down, and across, in particular, needs to know that you know your business. When they do, you're working from a much better place to confidently serve down and across.

16) Answer: e) b and c

Sharing information openly bolsters employee performance, transparency, openness, and a sense of community. You should never think of sharing relevant information in a timely matter as an intrusion on your time.

17) Answer: a) Doing so focuses you on the most important 20 percent of work until it's time to shift to the next most important 20 percent

Choices b, c, and d all sound good but aren't what's meant in this case by "20/20 vision."

18) Answer: d) None of the above

Reverse mentors are those people you've developed a particularly strong relationship with lower in the organization that can serve as your mentor in reverse, giving you honest feedback and observations about how the surrounding organization is delivering on the six "What You Gets" (or are supposed to get) with Others-Oriented Leadership.

Chapter 3: The Skillset for Leading Effectively from the Middle

19) Answer:
<u>A</u>daptability
<u>M</u>eshing
<u>P</u>olitical savviness
<u>L</u>ocking in
<u>I</u>nfluencing
<u>F</u>ostering compromise
<u>Y</u>ou setting the tone

Think of the word AMPLIFY as both a representation of the net spirit and essence of all the activity the successful middle manager engages in and as the collection of the highest-level, overall skills required to succeed in leading from the middle.

20) Answer: c) Having a "can do" attitude in the face of change, being willing to alter your working style, and having the confidence to improvise, experiment, or change course

Choice a) is referring to emotional flexibility while choice b) is referring to intellectual flexibility.

21). Answer: b) It guides you to split your mental energy between pragmatism and possibility in the face of changing conditions, leaving no time for negative thoughts

Choice a) is reversed, the 50/50 Rule helps you to see that change is happening *for* you, not *to* you. Choice c) is incorrect because the 50/50 Rule teaches that falling prey to victim mentality should simply not be in your consideration set at all.

22) Answer: You're able to better Mesh your organization and foster a collaborative spirit when you provoke the <u>big</u> <u>picture.</u>

People unite and rally around big picture elements like a gripping cause, a powerful purpose, mission, or vision, or even clear, compelling, and common goals.

23) Answer: False

It's politically savvy leaders who advance their own interests, but with the greater good in mind and not at others' expense. Leaders who are being political put their own interests before all others, gaining personally even at others expense.

24) Answer:
<u>Con</u>straints
<u>Ca</u>pacities
<u>Ca</u>pabilities
<u>Cul</u>ture

Given your role in leading from the middle, you're best suited to lock-in on all of these critical indicators of business/organizational health.

25) Answer:
 X   It's best addressed by using Why-Why-Why analysis
 X   It means that the chain is only as strong as its weakest link, its limiting factor
 ___ It says that working on just your biggest restraint won't have enough impact
 X   It identifies the biggest things holding your business back
 X   It says that the performance of any system is held back by output restricting bottlenecks
 X   The opportunity to identify constraints is often overlooked

Even if you only have the capacity/desire to work on just your biggest constraint identified, it still has the biggest impact of any constraint you could address.

26) Answer: d) None of the above

The Law of Opposites is about recognizing the most common, dysfunctional behaviors that occur in meetings, then doing the opposite (which will stand out and draw others to you).

27) Answer: a) It creates common ground for both sides of a negotiation to build from

Creating that's right moments lowers defenses on both sides of the negotiation (not just for the disadvantaged party) and ensures both sides understands the goals of the other.

28) Answer: You set the right tone when you remember the Attitude Anthem, which says life is <u>10</u> percent what happens to you and <u>90</u> percent how you react to it.

Role-modeling this belief is one of the single-most powerful and far-reaching ways you can set the tone as someone who leads from the middle.

Chapter 4: Leading Your Boss

29) Answer: b) It's interdependence between two imperfect human beings

Choices, a, c, and d are all true but the most important point here is that the boss and employee need one another, and neither are perfect. Keeping this in mind cuts off many dysfunctional behaviors that arise in poor boss-subordinate relationships.

30) Answer: False

Most middle managers struggle with being too deferential to their boss and not pushing back or speaking their mind when appropriate. The key is to strive for a balance between the two.

31) Answer: Research shows that over 80 percent of the time, there are material misunderstandings between boss and employee about performance/behavioral expectations.

The odds are great that there's at least an aspect or two of what's expected of you that you don't fully understand (so use the questions in the "Step 2: Understand the Asks" section to get clear).

32) Answer: c) Optimal time of day for interacting

While understanding the best time of day to interact with your boss may indeed be something good to know, it's not a nuance of your bosses preferred style that's most important to understand.

33) Answer: d) Getting your boss to open up about his/herself is more likely when the basic "rules of engagement" and a baseline of trust have been established (via the first three steps)

Choices a, b, and c are either untrue or irrelevant.

34) Answer: d) None of the above

While choices a, b, and c might be true, none of it is the central reason you must have your house in order. If you don't, your boss will be too distracted that you don't have a firm grip on your core job to engage in anything else with you.

35) Answer: a) Make as many of their decisions for them as you can to free up their capacity

When it comes to providing Purposeful Support on Decision-Making, it's not about making decisions for your boss, but about properly framing them up to aid your boss in the decision-making process.

36) Answer: When it comes to disagreeing with your boss, it's important to discuss <u>intent</u> before content.

When your boss acts defensive, it's not the content itself that provokes him/her as often as the perceived intent.

37) Answer: b) Being too presumptive about the boss's full situation

Regarding choices a, c, and d, you can never be too honest (for the most part), or too timely or specific in sharing feedback.

Chapter 5: Leading Those Who Report to You

38) Answer: b) The end

Ending each coaching conversation by clarifying expectations and creating a sense of accountability for next steps drives action on the part of the coachee, which is where the transformational power of coaching lies.

39) Answer: d) Because allowing the coachee to carry on with a distorted view of a situation keeps them from taking effective action

Choices a, b, and c are too manipulative in nature or are simply missing the point.

40) Answer: False

While in general you should be striving as a coach of others to engage in guiding behaviors, there are times when you simply must prescribe (like in times of crisis when you must move fast and are clearly the right person to move things forward).

41) Answer: d) "What do you want to do about this issue?"

Choices a through c go from not asking a question, to a leading question, to a closed-ended question. Choice d is open-ended and leaves it to the respondent to determine if there's an

issue or not, and what to do about it in general (which may or may not include taking a stand or some other action). Asking more open-ended questions helps the coachee to expand their point of view, rather than just forcing them to adopt your point of view.

42) Answer: a) You have to discern between aptitude and attitude issues

If the employee has an aptitude issue they need to work on, that informs one set of action. If it's an attitude issue, that informs a very different course of action. Thus, it's critical to discern between the two. Choices b and c have nothing to do with pinpointing an employee's opportunity area.

43) Answer: b) A few people that interact with your coachee from an elevated and arms-length perspective that you can tap into for objective input on your coachee's strengths and opportunities

Don't be confused by choice c—while the coachee's Personal Board of Directors are indeed higher-ranking executives that work outside the coachee's immediate chain of command, they're not responsible for evaluating the coachee. They're volunteers that you enroll to offer incremental (but quite valuable) perspective.

44) Answer:
____Give feedback from the heart
____Give about five pieces of positive feedback for every corrective one
 X Wait to give feedback when the conditions are right
____Make your feedback like whole wheat bread (granular and nutritive) not white bread
     (generic and bland)
 X Use the "compliment sandwich" approach (corrective feedback sandwiched between two

You shouldn't wait to give feedback, but rather give it in a timely fashion, soon after the occasion occurs that requires praising or pushing. And regarding choice e), not everyone likes to receive the compliment sandwich – (you find out by asking).

45) Answer: e) All of the above

Research shows that on average, leaders are quite poor at giving effective feedback. It's so important for you to practice and get good at it because it's the most direct, impactful way to influence those who report to you.

46) Answer:
Situation (describe the situation that is the backdrop for the feedback)
Halo (the discussion with empathy, sincerity, and a clear intent to offer support)
Articulate (specific details of what you're pushing on or praising)
Result (share the result that the behavior/outcome had on the business and/or organization)
Example (give an example of the desired alternative behavior)
Solicit (the employee's point of view while listening to understand and empathize)

47) Answer: c) "How do you think you're doing?"

The employee might be more self-aware than you realize. If you ask the Golden Question, they might bring up some of the toughest things you wanted to cover, thus softening the blow, or at least give you a less abrupt, gentler way in to broach the topic. While choice a) is close to the Golden Question, it's not open-ended enough—you don't want to imply at first that anything is wrong (which can place the employee on the defensive) but rather, let them lead the discussion there. Choices a, b, and d are too aggressive and lack any empathy.

48) Answer: e) a and d

Teachable moments are pivotal moments because they're golden opportunities for you to coach an employee at a highly pliable point in time—when they've just exhibited a performance shortfall of some sort and are ripe to establish new behaviors or patterns.

Chapter 6: Leading Teams

49) Answer:
 X When it comes to decisions, foster a spirit of debate, decide, commit
 ___ Show empathy to those operating from a negative mindset
 X Ensure everyone understands their role and expected contributions to the team
 X Create a "Declaration of Interdependence" that lists team goals, deliverables, role
     definitions, and behavioral expectations for all team members to adhere to
 X Spread positive gossip

While showing empathy in general is important, you should have impatience for those with a negative attitude. You get the attitude you allow.

50) Answer: b) Being unafraid of getting rejected by team members, being confident to share opinions and ideas, feeling able to bring your whole self to work

Fostering psychological safety is one of the most important things you can do as a leader to foster a high-performing team.

51) Answer: Fostering a balance of the seriousness and commitment it takes to win with the camaraderie and fun it takes to win *on a sustained basis* is known as creating <u>relaxed</u> intensity.

Showing all intensity all the time will burn your team out. Better to express it more thoughtfully, blending it with empathy, emotional intelligence, and a heavy dose of just wanting to have fun.

52) Answer:
<u>Di</u>scover
<u>R</u>ole model
<u>I</u>nternalize
<u>Va</u>lue
<u>E</u>vangelize

Crafting a purpose for your team is so powerful because one of the first places employees turn to for a sense of purpose in their life is to their work, their company—and within that, their team.

53) Answer: You know you have a good team purpose statement if it's <u>definitive</u> about the <u>difference</u> you're thrilled to make.

Another indicator that you have a good team purpose statement is if the thought of fighting for it reenergizes the team.

54) Answer: True

By being intentional about defining and living your desired team equity, identifying and delivering your team's desired points of difference, and by consistently crafting a great experience for those who visit your Leadership Team (LT), your LT will be a great cultural contributor.

55) Answer: a) loading zone

By applying the Three Zones Test before deploying a goal, you ensure that the goal is motivating and will be truly meaningful when it's accomplished.

56) Answer: b) every leader's behavior effect employee's behavior below him or her

The Waterfall Effect describes the flow of organizational behavior during times of bad results. It's important to be aware of it as a leader and to not feed into it.

57) Regarding leading a remote team, it's important to treat communication like a <u>strategy</u> instead of an activity.

When leading remotely, put clear communication systems, processes, and agreements in place. Spend as much time on it as you would a key strategy—because communicating effectively from a distance is indeed a strategy.

Chapter 7: Influencing Peers

58) Answer: To be able to better work with a difficult peer, it helps to remember that we all <u>fear</u> something, <u>love</u> something, have <u>lost</u> something

Fear might explain much of the peers' behavior that you find undesirable. That peer is most certainly loved by someone, which requires qualities worth loving. So, expand your capacity to "love" and try to accept them as their loved ones do. The peer may also have lost something that explains their behavior (their dignity, support, sense of confidence, or career momentum)—all of which is worthy of your compassion.

59) Answer: a and b

The Golden Rule of Influence comes into play when you demonstrate listening and teaching as well as giving and caring. These are the ways that people in your life who had no authority over you were still so influential.

60) Answer:
____Being the smartest person in the room
 X __Representing peers' point of view fairly, even when they're not present
 X __Being sure to credit peers and never seeking to grab the glory
____Demonstrating that you rarely make mistakes and thus can be counted on
 X __Shining in times of adversity

Peers want to know that you can be trusted and that you're worth collaborating with to achieve a goal (that your competent and credible). Trying to show that you're the smartest person in

the room doesn't serve either of these things, nor does demonstrating infallibility (demonstrating vulnerability is far more powerful).

61) Answer: c) Peers rarely get such investments outside their hierarchy

While a and b may or may not be true, neither are what makes unexpected investments so powerful. You'll stand out by going the extra mile to invest in your peers.

62) Answer: c) Listen to their problems

There's nothing wrong with listening to your peers' problems, but it's far better when you can partner with them to solve it. The partnership pulls you closer to together and increases your influence.

63) Answer: b) You can have a more informed ask of them and better articulate the benefits to their helping you

This is about encouraging the expenditure of your peers' discretionary energy to enlist their help, so understanding where your peer is coming from is key.

Chapter 8: Leading Change

64) Answer:
___ As you progress through the curve, there's no going backward
 X   It details the emotional journey that change elicits
 X   Everyone goes through the curve
 X   Everyone goes through the curve at their own pace

When discussing the Change Curve with employees, you can let them know that they're not alone in going through it, and you can show empathy for their journey each step of the way.

65) Answer: False

Adjusting to change takes time. For certain show a sense of urgency, but also plan for and act as if the change will take time to seep in, because it will.

66) Answer: False

It's the transition to a new state that people most dislike so much. This means you have to have a solid, thoughtful plan to help usher employees to the desired new state.

67) Answer: d) It means that every change happens within the context of our past experience with change

While a, b, and c are true, they don't get to the core of what "Change is historical" means. Since the way an employee views an upcoming change will be based on their past experience with change, it's important to understand what those experiences are.

68) Answer: c) When more changes are instituted than necessary or the changes don't really address the issue you intend

It's important to get clear on exactly what's changing and why before enrolling the organization in implementing that change. Otherwise the change initiative is doomed to fall into the 70 percent of efforts that ultimately fail.

69) Answer: b) The will

In assessing the organization's will in taking on change, you may have to enable adjustments in behaviors and attitudes or eliminate/reprioritize work to facilitate organizational readiness for new work associated with the change.

70) Answer: a) A team of key leaders that serve as visible, role-model change champions

The Change Coalition should be people enthusiastic about the change, but that also see the challenges of implementing the change and how it will affect those living it.

71) Answer:
 X   Sharing the change vision without contrasting it to the unacceptable status quo
 X   Being disrespectful when discussing the past and what's wrong with the state of the union
 ___Making clear what *won't* change
 X   Sharing an uninspiring vision
 X   Sharing reasons for change that are unconvincing

Making clear what won't change is a good thing – it gives employees something to anchor to when so much else feels uncertain.

72) Answer: c) Overcommunicating the vision

In fact, the real barrier when it comes to communicating the change vision is that it tends to be under-communicated by a factor of 10X.

73) Answer:
<u>B</u>ehaviors
<u>E</u>xpectations
<u>S</u>kills
<u>T</u>raining

The Best Guide gives employees the information they're hungering for in times of change--the behaviors that will be expected of them (as well as overall expectations), what skills they'll need to have, and what training will be offered.

74) Answer: d) b and c

By the time the BEST Guide is issued, employees will have a good understanding of what's changing and why. They'll thus be eager to understand *how* to change, i.e. the specifics of what they need to do to move from the old state to the new state.

75) Answer: b) Three overlapping dynamics that solidify employee commitment to change

When employees feel safe, involved, and accountable (the Three Circles of Commitment), it takes them beyond enthusiasm to commitment.

76) Answer: c) When employees are stressed about letting go of the old ways but not yet adept at the new ways

You address "inbetweenity" by making the old ways unavailable sooner and by providing training, coaching, and access to experts to help employees become adept at the new ways faster.

77) Answer: d) They must be inconspicuous

To create new habits, any system or process required (or behavior) to get to the new state should be obvious and leave nothing to guesswork.

78) Answer: a) The One-on-One Change Conversation Guide

While all of the choices list valuable tools from the book, the One-on-One Change Conversation Guide is the tool specifically designed for enabling understanding and empathy for past experiences with change.

Chapter 9: Creating Your Personal MAP (Middle Action Plan)

79) Answer: False

With the Personal MAP, you create a customized plan that's tailored to your interests and needs, to meet you where you're at in your efforts to lead effectively from the middle.

80) Answer: d) All of the above

Now, go lead brilliantly, in all directions, for all around success!