

# FOREWORD TO THE THIRD EDITION

**B**efore he passed away in 2005, Peter Drucker made an apt but controversial statement: “Everything you have learned is wrong.” He was talking about leadership, and his remarks were right on target. We’ve heard a version of what he said before. Robert McNamara, architect of our approach to war in Vietnam, admitted in retrospect, “We were wrong, terribly wrong.” Taken together, these two quotes reveal the futile path we have taken in our quest to understand and apply the lessons of leadership. Here is a book that has it right.

Leonard Pellicer is more believable than many authors because he practices what he preaches. As Dr. Peggy Redman (also my cousin), one of his colleagues at the University of La Verne, observes, “In my initial meeting with Leonard, I was amazed at how perceptive he was. He radiates caring in dealing with both people and tough issues. It doesn’t make any difference where you are in the formal pecking order. He deals with the custodian or the president with the same authentic touch. He’s made a big difference here.”

The book is a blend of book knowledge and street smarts. Wisdom always trumps knowledge when leaders struggle to do the right things rather than search for recipes for doing things the right way. None of us exists in a world where everything is clear-cut. That’s why managers rarely become leaders. Managers have a solution, but figuring out the problem in a messy, senseless situation eludes the boundaries of rational thinking. Ron Heifetz categorizes problems into three classifications. Type 1 problems are straightforward. Both the problem and solution are known quantities. Type 2 problems portray those challenges where the problem is well defined but the solution is hard to pin down. Type 3 problems present a conundrum: both the problem and the solution are obscure. Managers excel with Type 1 issues and do reasonably well with Type 2 issues. But it takes real leaders to wrestle with Type 3 issues.

Human organizations are fraught with ambiguity, which is why leadership is so crucial.

From this, it follows that leaders must first come to know themselves. That inner journey is a dominant theme in this book. Leadership is inextricably tied with the heart and soul of leaders. But that's only the bud. Flowering comes through the layers of experience. There is no guide for how to become a leader. One is always becoming a leader through the hard knocks of leading. Leaders need the courage to chart a promising course over unknown and treacherous territory. Errors abound. But muddling through with trial and error, good leaders find a path. If you stay on the highway you probably will arrive at a predetermined destination. Venturing on your own may blaze a trail for others to follow.

One of this book's highlights is that Pellicer exposes himself. He bares his soul, which encourages self-reflection on the part of the reader. He identifies the emulation of role models as one of the valuable lessons in learning to lead. In making himself so vulnerable and accessible he becomes what he advocates—an exemplar of the virtues of caring. In *Hero of a Thousand Faces*, Joseph Campbell describes the epic journey of the hero who enters the darkness of the unknown, survives, and then returns to bestow (in his words) boons on those who have not yet ventured out. The fundamental joy of leadership is giving gifts to others. That is precisely what this book represents—a gift from someone who shows us that leading and caring go hand in hand. I have skimmed through all too many books on leadership. Most don't speak to me. This one got my attention. Through a rich collection of anecdotes and stories, rather than pronouncements and recipes, I know it will grab yours.

—Terrence E. Deal