



Key Concepts from *When Everyone Leads*

You don't need a title to start leading. Leadership is an activity, not a position; anyone can exercise leadership, and when *everyone* does, organizations make progress on their toughest challenges.

In *When Everyone Leads*, you'll learn how to:

Identify The Gap, the distance between your current reality and your aspirations

- Ask yourself, when you think about the future—of your company, organization, team, family, or community—what concerns you the most, and what's your greatest aspiration? What makes it difficult to bridge the gap between those concerns and goals?
- Channel dissatisfaction with the status quo and persistent issues into progress.
- Understand the distinction between technical problems and adaptive challenges: the former can be solved by somebody with authority or skilled expertise; the latter requires everyone to lead.

Overcome barriers to progress

- Learn to accept a degree of loss in some areas in order to move in the big picture.
- Acknowledge competing or conflicting values within your team, and lean into conversations about how to navigate them.
- Take risks—true leadership is inherently risky, but it's all too easy to take the safe path.

Start with you

- Authorize yourself to lead: only you can make the decision to exercise leadership as an activity.
- Start where you have influence. Regardless of your position, you can make an impact by engaging with your friends, colleagues, and peers about your group's biggest challenges.
- Ask yourself, “What's my part of the mess?” and start by addressing issues that you can tackle—and encourage others to do the same.

Use the heat

- Think of your organization as a skillet and avoid having the heat too low—people avoiding tackling difficult or comfortable issues, or too high—when tempers flare and conflict gets in the way of progress.
- Keep the heat in the productive zone, where people are enthusiastically collaborating to address tough questions without clashing over how to tackle them.

How everyone can lead

- Whether you're an assistant, part of the c-suite, or anybody in between, everyone can ask powerful questions, look for multiple interpretations of a situation, and act experimentally to find creative ways forward.
- If you're in a position of authority, make leadership less risky for others by encouraging leadership as an activity and celebrating those who make that effort.
- A culture where everyone leads is countercultural, but we won't solve our biggest problems by doing more of what's already been done. Engage with your teams to get everybody leading involved in the *activity* of leadership.