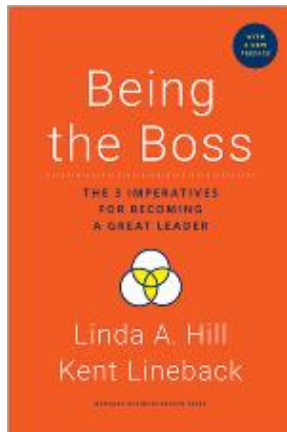

PM WORLD BOOK REVIEW



Book Title: ***Being the Boss: The 3 Imperatives for Becoming a Great Leader***

Author: **Linda A. Hill and Kent Lineback**

Publisher: Harvard Business Review Press

List Price: \$35.00 Format: hardcover, 320 pages

Publication Date: 2019 ISBN: 978-1-63369-689-3

Reviewer: **Sherrie Dotson, PMP**

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Introduction

No one goes into management with the vision of being a poor manager, but many who were star performers as individual contributors do find themselves unprepared and untrained for the complexities and the paradoxes involved in today's management landscape. Fortunately, for those willing, the skills needed to manage multifunctional, multicultural and multigenerational work forces within fluid, constantly changing organizations can be learned. In a world where external forces such as globalization, technology changes and competition require companies and their employees to be ever more agile and responsive, it is imperative for managers to honestly look at their management style and its effectiveness and be willing to master the art of being a good boss.

According to authors Linda Hill and Kent Lineback, effective management is more than finding ways to cope or even about delivering outcomes. It is about developing and sharing a clear vision of what is important now, and in the future, and then using that vision to set priorities, drive decisions and achieve goals. In "*Being the Boss*," Hill and Lineback cover their studies on what effective managers actually do and the common mistakes of less effective managers. They have distilled their concepts into three imperatives:

- Manage yourself
- Manage your network
- Manage your team

Overview of Book's Structure

“Being the Boss: The 3 Imperatives for Becoming a Great Leader” opens with a short script about a new manager, named Jason, and how his morning progresses phone call-by-phone call. This short account demonstrates, painfully, how he is immediately thrown into the deep end with urgent and critical expectations and issues. It makes for a perfect and engaging lead into the first chapter of the book. In this chapter, the authors discuss why being a manager is so hard. A short survey at the end of the chapter allows the reader to explore her own management style.

After the introductory chapter, the book is split into 3 parts – one for each imperative. Throughout the book, the reader follows Jason and his daily experiences as a manager. None of these situations is simplistic or easily resolved. Instead each one provides an opportunity for the reader to really stop and consider how he might respond and to what outcomes.

While Hill and Lineback never give pat right and wrong answers, they do ask pointed questions about the reader's responses and behaviors to various situations and point out the behaviors and characteristics of effective managers. They also provide a roadmap of tasks that managers should be doing to master each imperative. It takes time to ingrain these actions into habits, but the benefits are clear.

At the end of every section, a short survey allows the reader to consider the concepts in terms of what he or she believes and helps in discovering areas of improvement.

Highlights

Managing yourself is the first imperative. This part discusses your beliefs around management and how you interact with others. Because formal authority is an ineffective management strategy, leaders must learn more effective methods of influencing others to succeed. However, the type of influence cultivated matters. Managers who are authentic and approachable garner more trust, but it is critical not to cross boundaries. For example, a manager really cannot afford to be a close friend to an employee and still be impartial enough to make the hard decisions that may be required.

Managing your network covers lessons on the importance of achieving broad influence. It's great reading for anyone who feels office politics are to be avoided at all costs. The authors make it clear that point of view and integrity can go a long way in making one successful, and that managers owe it to their teams to develop this crucial skill.

The final imperative is *Managing your team*. While it is well documented that diversity is great for companies and innovation, in all honesty, it adds complexity to management and team dynamics. Successful managers deal with people as individuals and recognize

unique strengths. Yet, they must also level-set standards of performance and ensure fair administration and evaluation of an employee's work. This part of the book offers approaches to helping teams work successfully together.

Highlights: What I liked!

I loved the "Manage Your Network" part of the book. This is a true imperative to the success of teams and projects. It is easy to become siloed with "your team" and "your deliverables," and avoid what seems like soul crushing politics. However, it is a disservice to those you lead if you are not in a position of influence within the company. Your team depends on you to promote the importance of their work, as well as ensuring they remain relevant with changing business imperatives. You owe it to the careers of those you lead and yourself to build these networks, and to proactively and positively navigate office politics.

Who might benefit from the Book?

Whether you are a new manager or an experienced manager who feels like the old methods are just not working, this is a good book for you. It provides excellent questions to ponder and the fundamentals about your role, how influence is key to achievement, and how to your leadership style dictates your team's overall accomplishments.

Conclusion

Everyone can get stuck in the daily urgent tasks and deliverables; however, it is imperative to step back and look at the bigger picture. Are you just getting by or are you and your team exceling? Do you demonstrate the skills of a truly effective and exceptional leader? Do you practice the imperatives of managing yourself, your team and your network? If you truly want to answer in the affirmative, I recommend you read "*Being the Boss: The 3 Imperatives for Becoming a Great Leader.*" It is a practical guide for anyone who wants to build the skills for leadership success.

For more about this book, go to: <https://store.hbr.org/product/being-the-boss-with-a-new-preface-the-3-imperatives-for-becoming-a-great-leader/10239?sku=10239E-KND-ENG?autocomplete=true>

Editor's note: This book review was the result of a partnership between the publisher, PM World and the [PMI Dallas Chapter](#). Authors and publishers provide the books to PM World; books are delivered to the PMI Dallas Chapter, where they are offered free to PMI members to review; book reviews are published in the PM World Journal and PM World Library. PMI Dallas

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About the Reviewer



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Sherrie Dotson, PMP is Learning and Development Program Manager with over 25+ years helping create and implement global training programs. She earned her PMP in 2015 and has since helped organizations implement more robust project management techniques in their training development cycles. Her background has been focused on cybersecurity and IT networking companies supporting their customer, partner and technical employee training and development programs.

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