

BY NEAL DUCKWORTH

# **EXTREME LEADERSHIP FOR NEW LEADERS**

**FIND YOUR PLACE  
AND ESTABLISH YOURSELF**

**E-BOOK GUIDE**



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## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

### NEAL DUCKWORTH

LEADERSHIP EXPERT

**Neal Duckworth** retired after nearly 23 years as a U.S. Marine Corps officer. He served in numerous conflicts, including twice as a NATO peacekeeper in Bosnia-Herzegovina pursuing indicted war criminals; re-establishment and securing the U.S. embassy in Kabul, Afghanistan; and as a combat advisor with the Iraqi Army in Ramadi during the Al Anbar Awakening

- **certified interrogator**
- **human intelligence source handler**
- **counterintelligence agent**
- **university lecturer (leadership, workplace conflict)**
- **government consultant**

Since his retirement, he has served in both the public and private sectors, lectured at multiple universities, and founded his own security consulting firm. He now divides his time between many endeavors, including as a security consultant, university lecturer in criminal justice and terrorism, speaking and writing on intelligence, espionage, active shooter, and security issues.



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# EXTREME LEADERSHIP CHALLENGES

The global pandemic provided—and still provides—extensive challenges to leaders in all areas of the public and private sectors, academia, non-profits, and more.

None of us expected to face the daunting challenge of remote leadership and the responsibility for personnel, task completion, training, mentoring and managing—all via phone lines, emails, and if internet bandwidth permits—video conference calls.

Military service men and women throughout the world are taught numerous leadership traits and principles which are learned in a classroom and **practiced in real life crisis situations.**

The **extreme leadership** challenges you face today can be effectively dealt with using leadership skills honed throughout the world in crisis and combat, by focusing on three key issues:

1. Become a Servant Leader
2. Establish Your Identity
3. Utilize Effective Communications

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# BECOME A SERVANT LEADER

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# BECOME A SERVANT LEADER

None of us can complete our missions alone.

A servant leader will not be threatened by new ideas or approaches of others, but instead will seek out those new ideas, foster creativity, and encourage innovation. **None of us can complete our missions alone.**

There is nothing wrong with defining success by your title, climbing the leadership ladder, and desiring to be the top in your field. But you must understand that your successes are also the successes of your team and your organization.

Here are two key points to consider to develop yourself as a Servant Leader:

## 1. Know yourself.

All of us have unique personalities and we must have a strong sense of self-awareness to succeed as a leader.

- What are your strengths and weaknesses?
- What hidden bias might you have to identify and explore?
- What causes you stress?
- How can you reduce stress?
- What training or education do you need?
- Are you nervous or scared to speak or correct your team?
- Do you struggle with the desire to micro-manager?

**A true Servant Leader makes the effort to increase self-awareness to understand how others may be affected by their actions.**

# BECOME A SERVANT LEADER

None of us can complete our missions alone.

## 2. Know your people.

Knowing those whom you lead is of critical importance.

- What are their goals?
- Do they need/want training or education?
- Do they need/want more responsibility?
- What work-life stressors do they have that you might be able to assist?
- Is there team conflict or struggles on the team?
- Is everyone working their fair share?

**A servant leader takes the time to have regularly schedule "check-in" with their team to stay in touch with all issues which affect your team and the organizational goals.**

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# ESTABLISH YOUR IDENTITY

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# ESTABLISH YOUR LEADERSHIP IDENTITY

To have presence—you need to demonstrate presence

Your attitude, persistence, and your physical and mental presence, all combine together in creating your identity as a leader.



Establishing yourself as a new leader is much more than an introduction and running meetings.

You must demonstrate your competence and confidence to your subordinates, your peers, and your managers. But how do you do that?

You've recently taken this new position—or maybe you've been there for a while. However, do not believe you need to be the expert on everything.

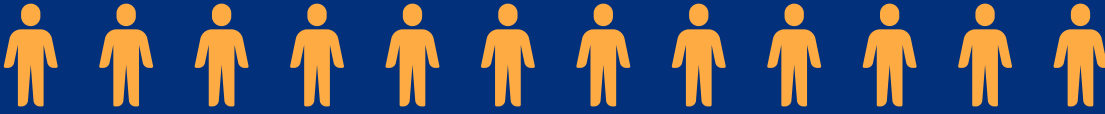
That is why we hire experts. Understand that, and work with them to set timelines and meet objectives.

Each of us leaders have different styles—different identities. Your identity is your presence in your work—how you present yourself is so important. Your attitude, persistence, and your physical and mental presence, all combine together in creating your identity as a leader. And remember that there are three different viewpoints of all leaders: from subordinates, from seniors, and from your colleagues and peers.

When you establish your identity, focus on **two key areas**:

- understanding multidirectional leadership
- establishing an executive presence.

# MULTI-DIRECTIONAL LEADERSHIP



**We traditionally think of leadership as a top-down activity.**

However, when establishing your identity, you need to understand that your leadership is observed and evaluated not only by your subordinates, but your bosses and peers, as well.

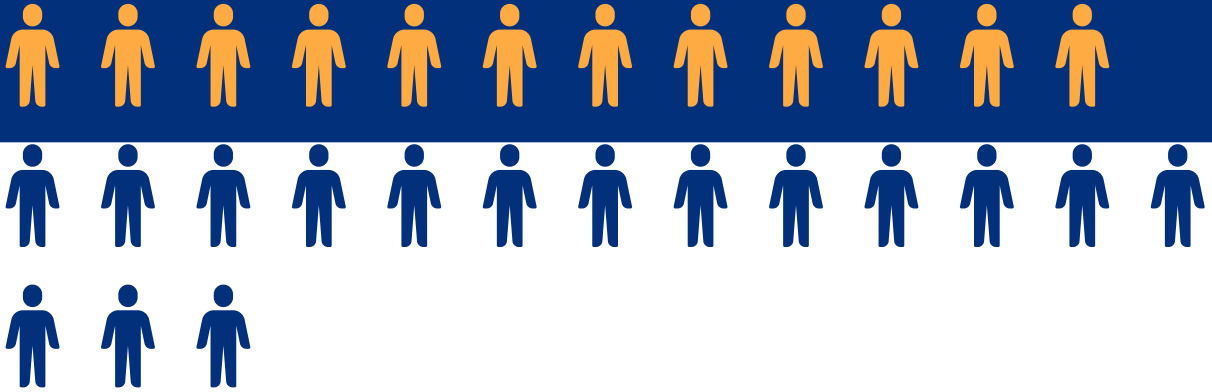
## ● STAKEHOLDERS

**Subordinates** are looking for guidance, integrity, recognition, compassion, and more.

**Bosses** are looking for a confident leader that can accomplish their tasks, create and maintain a positive work culture, and reduce staff turnover.

**Peers** are looking for collaboration, integration, and team effort—all in a non-threatening (and non-backstabbing) manner.

# EXECUTIVE PRESENCE



## ● EXECUTIVE PRESENCE

Executive presence is something all leaders must achieve. You need to project confidence to those around you and define yourself with an identity or "brand" that will allow you to influence others. We want to be seen as "the leader" and not just someone sitting in a seat and forwarding emails.

**But how do you do that?**

**Be Seen and Heard.**

To have presence—you need to demonstrate presence. Facilitate meetings. If you are not an expert, select an issue, a project, a product, or something with which your team has experience with and facilitate a review of that issue. You are seen leading and facilitating, all while you are learning key issues and how your people interact.

- **Recognize team member contributions.** Look for a reason to highlight a good job by someone in your team.
- **Appearances matter.** Whether you are online or in-person, you need to be professional in both your clothing and your grooming.
- **Control your emotions.** You must be able to manage your own emotions if you wish to lead, mentor, and influence others.

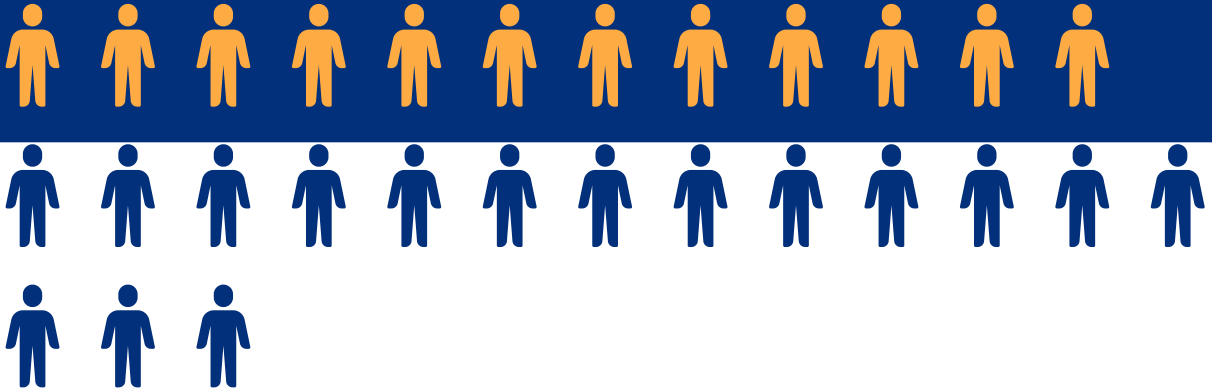
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# COMMUNICATE EFFECTIVELY

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# EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATION



## ● EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

One of the most important skills which you must possess and continually assess as a leader is effective communications. Whether it be face-to-face, in video conferences, by email, text, or another method, you need to communicate **effectively**.

Stressors and distractions can provide confusion.

The last thing you want is to contact someone on a task due-date and they say "what are you talking about?"

Two things to remember when passing along tasks and information is to answer the basic questions and ensure you are understood:

**Basic  
Questions**

**Clear  
communication**

# BASIC QUESTIONS

Some questions might overlap—so think about what questions you should answer

- WHO is in charge and who supports?**
  - Multiple people in charge often leads to confusion
  - One person needs to be assigned as the lead, and others must be directed to provide the support.
  
- WHAT is the exact task and any specific requirements?**
  - Are there sub-tasks or multiple tasks?
  
- WHEN is the task due?**
  - A task without a due date is not a task.
  - If there are no check-in dates, you will want to establish your own milestones to determine if you are on-track for completion.
  
- WHERE is the final product/task/action to be presented/conducted?**
  - Online?
  - In-person?
  
- WHY is this task critical to the organization?**
  - You want the team to understand where they fit in the larger organization.
  
- HOW is the task to be accomplished—or is there flexibility?**
  - We often try to leave the "how" up to those working the task, but sometimes organizations have a specific requirement.

# CLEAR COMMUNICATION

Leaders create and maintain clarity by skillful communication

## □ Ensure Clear Understanding

Utilizing the basic questions above to provide clear guidance is the first step.

However, you always need to ensure you are understood.

Some people are not native speakers, have different levels of education, or utilize dialects which can be confusing.

## □ Check understanding

One easy thing to do is to always have the person(s) to whom you provided guidance, repeat back what they understand to be the task. While this might be a bit uncomfortable during a phone call or video conference, I find an email response works very well.

## □ Check your OWN understanding

Separately, you need to also ensure that YOU have a clear understanding.

Both of what your task from your boss is, but also understanding the questions that are asked from your team. You need to be a **good listener, ask for feedback, and make yourself available for follow-ups.** Take care of your verbal and body language

# KEY TAKE-AWAY POINTS

Many of us probably have not taken the time to self-assess exactly how much stress we have been under for more than a year, which in many countries still continues.

## ● EVOLVE AS LEADERS

As leaders, we need to recognize that we and our teams are operating every day under stress. Don't let the stress and pressure define us, but evolve us as leaders.

## ● MANAGE STRESS

The extreme stresses which many of us have been through can transform from struggle into success with your skilled leadership

## ● BECOME A SERVANT LEADER

Know the individuals whom you manage, listen to their needs, connect with them and enable and support them as needed.

## ● ESTABLISH YOUR IDENTITY

Demonstrate your competence and confidence in an authentic way

## ● COMMUNICATE EFFECTIVELY

Effective = accurate, clearly understood, adapted to the audience and appropriate

## ● DEVELOP STRONG EXECUTIVE PRESENCE

Project confidence to those around you and define yourself with a leadership "brand" that will allow you to influence others.



# YOUR NOTES / QUESTIONS

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**Neal is a compelling speaker and a charismatic and passionate trainer and leadership coach. His 23 years of service in the US Marines Corps, his time in the U.S. government and academia have given him a unique set of skills which he applies in his assignments as a security expert, conflict resolution consultant and leadership development specialist.**

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