

Turn the Ship Around!

By L. David Marquet (2013)



HELMWISE

[Amazon Link](#)

- Author: L. David Marquet (2013)
- Leader-Leader concept (p.xxvii), not Leader-Follower (p.xxv)
- **Starting Over**
 - How has failure shaped you? (p.3)
 - Retaking control when delegation (empowerment) failed (avoiding pain). (p.8)
 - The leadership structure, which was strongly reinforced by the behavior and expectations of most captains, was "Do what you are told."(p.9)
 - One of the things that limit our learning is our belief that we already know something. (p.9)
 - Open yourself up to new ideas about leadership. (p.9)
 - Why do we need empowerment?
 - Do you need someone else to empower you?
 - How reliant is your organization on the decision-making of one person or a small group of people?
 - What assumptions are embedded in your images (from reading, movies, etc.) of leadership?
 - Are you and your people working to optimize the organization for their/your tenure or forever? (p.11)
 - It is precisely the success of the top-down, leader-follower structure that makes it so appealing. (p.15)
 - As long as you are measuring performance over just the short run, it can be effective. (p.15)
 - Officers are rewarded for being indispensable, for being missed after they depart. (p.15)
 - When the performance of the unit goes down after an officer leaves, it is taken as a sign that he was a good leader, not that he was ineffective in training his people properly. (p.15)
 - Another factor in the leader-follower approach is induced numbness. (p.15)
 - It absolves subordinates of the hard work of thinking, making decisions, and being responsible and accountable.
 - You are just a cog, an executor of the decisions of others - "Hey, I was only doing what I was told." (p.15)
 - What's your level of commitment? (p.17)
 - The hardest thing about a planned turnaround project is your own fortitude. (p.17)
 - What must leaders overcome mentally and emotionally to give up control yet retain full responsibility? (p.21)
 - What are you will to personally risk?
 - Sometimes taking a step for the better requires caring/not caring - Caring deeply about the people and mission, but not caring about the bureaucratic consequences to your personal career. (p.21)
 - Are you curious or only questioning? (p.22)
 - Are you asking questions so that *you know* or so that *they know*? (p.26-27)
 - Can't know everything (avoid 'knowledge is power')
 - Trust others may know more than you (and that is okay)
 - Be curious (ask questions to learn and understand), rather than testing others (already know the answer)

Turn the Ship Around!

By L. David Marquet (2013)



HELMWISE

- When was the last time you walked around your organization to hear the good, the bad, and the ugly of top-down management? (p.28)
- Is the crew's time being wasted and their talents ignored? (p.33)
 - Are things too comfortable? (p.34)
 - Is there a feeling on complacency? (p.34)
- What goes on in your workplace every day that reinforces the notion that the guys at the top are the leaders and everyone else is simply to follow? (p.35)
- Achieve excellence, don't just avoid errors (p.43-46)
 - Don't operate to avoid problems/avoid mistakes (e.g., perform just to pass inspection)
 - Don't try not to fail, rather perform to achieve... Do what is right, rather than avoiding what is wrong
 - Accomplish positive outcomes, rather than avoid negative ones
 - Celebrate success over critiquing errors
 - Act in the interest of success, rather simply do what you are told
- **Control**
 - Shift from a 'position of privilege' to 'accountability, responsibility and work' (the higher your position the more you work because you are responsible and accountable for more) (p.60)
 - Act your way to new thinking ('walk' don't 'talk') (p.65-68)
 - Short, early conversations make efficient work (p.75)
 - Trust means that direction that is given isn't questioned. Those who receive the direction *believe* it, rather than you *actually* mean Y, even though you are saying X. (p.76)
 - Lower level leaders state what they are going to do, rather ask for permission or worse, wait to be told what to do (p.81-83)
 - Use "I intend to..." to turn passive followers into leaders
 - I intend to...
 - I plan on...
 - I will...
 - We will...
 - NOT
 - Request permission to...
 - I would like to...
 - What should I do about...
 - Do you think we should...
 - Could we...
 - Resist the urge to provide solutions (p.91-93)
 - If urgent, make the decision and have lower leaders 'red team' (critique) it after the fact
 - If short-fused, ask for input, then make the decision
 - If longer term, have team provide inputs/recommendation
 - "If everyone thinks like you, you don't need them."
 - Eliminate top-down monitoring systems (p.96-99)
 - Focus on achieving the objective, not following a process
 - Data collection and measurement processes 'make the invisible visible,' not checking up on lower level leaders
 - 'Process checkers' are overhead
 - Think out loud (vocalizing thoughts and actions) (p.105-106)
 - Knowing what lower leaders are thinking makes it easier for the senior leader to stay out of the way

Turn the Ship Around!

By L. David Marquet (2013)



HELMWISE

- Includes hunches and gut feels
- Displaying a lack of certainty can be a strength and certainty can be arrogance
- **Competence**
 - Take deliberate action (p.119-121)
 - Avoid 'automatic actions'
 - Pause, verbalize, act
 - We learn (everywhere, all the time)
 - Learn, but train... training implies passivity (we are trained), learning is active (something we do) (p.129)
 - The more we learn, the higher our technical competence (p.133)
 - Don't brief, certify (p.138-140)
 - Briefing is passive for attendees (no prep needed) and no decision is made (it is going to happen and we're just talking about it)... can't fail a brief
 - Certification is active, attendees ask questions to verify that the task is done and decision is made to proceed... can fail a certification
 - Continually and consistently repeat the message (p.148-150)
 - Old habits die hard
 - Specify goals, not methods (p.155-157)
 - Provide the objective and let the lower leaders figure out the method (state the 'what,' not the 'how')
- **Clarity**
 - Build trust and take care of your people (p.166-169)
 - "Taking care of your people does not mean protecting them from the consequences of their own behavior. That is the path to irresponsibility."
 - Use your legacy for inspiration (p.175-177)
 - Use guiding principles for decision criteria (p.182-183)
 - If deciding between two courses of action, will the principles provide the right criteria to select the right course of action
 - Guiding principles need to do just that: provide guidance on decisions
 - Innovation: Looking for new ways to do the same thing
 - Go out and ask 3 people what the company principles are
 - Simply the principle so all understand
 - Use immediate recognition to reinforce desired behaviors (p.186-187)
 - Begin with the end in mind (p.190-192)
 - Write end of year evaluations at the beginning
 - Encourage a questioning attitude over blind obedience (p.199-200)
 - Do you want obedience or effectiveness?
- Don't empower, emancipate (p.212-213)
 - Empowering is top-down, leader-follower thinking
 - The leader empowers the followers
 - Emancipation recognizes inherent genius, energy and creativity in all people... the leader just has ensure he doesn't prevent it from coming out