

FOREWORD

We're excited to write the Foreword to this book. For decades we—father and son—have worked to advance personal and professional effectiveness by focusing on key dimensions of leadership, including character, competence, and trust. We have sought to identify and articulate universal leadership principles that lead to sustained, superior performance—principles that are able to stand the test of time, cross cultures, and endure.

In *Triple Crown Leadership*, Bob and Gregg Vanourek—another father-son team—make powerful new leadership contributions, supplementing their own illuminating experiences with rich stories from leaders around the world. The result is a rare combination of deep insight and helpful research, and an important book that simultaneously speaks to foundational principles and higher aims while advocating clear and specific practices.

The “triple crown” quest to build excellent, ethical, and enduring organizations is a vital one for all leaders. It is highly consistent with our own message of character (ethical), competence (excellent), and sustained superior performance (enduring). Effective leaders excel today even while looking to the horizons of tomorrow. They create exceptional value for all stakeholders (not just shareholders) through sustainable practices. Indeed, one of our definitions of leadership is *getting results today in a way that, by inspiring trust, increases our ability to get results tomorrow*.

Bob and Gregg not only recognize this; they insightfully point to *how* to make it happen. They show leaders how to achieve compel-

ling results without cutting corners—by unleashing the abundant talent of their colleagues, leading with both head and heart, and flexing between “steel and velvet” as the situation requires. The reality in our lives and organizations is that ends and means are inseparable. *How we do what we do* makes all the difference.

Triple Crown Leadership is relevant and timely. It addresses the important organizational challenges of our age. It cuts through the clutter of complexity and slogans, providing smart and helpful guidance for leaders about today’s pressing problems. The book rejects easy, quick-fix answers. Instead, it identifies the principles and illuminates the practices leaders are using to craft high-trust, high-performance organizations and avoid the traps that lead to organizational breakdowns.

Triple Crown Leadership is also actionable—for CEOs, senior executives, board members, managers, supervisors, individual contributors, and even workers without formal authority. It contains practical insights from leaders who have clearly been in the trenches about how to hire great people, create a culture of trust, and align teams for sustainable performance.

Finally, *Triple Crown Leadership* inspires. It calls us to the post of the race of our lives—one worthy of our best efforts and deepest aspirations. It signals hope in a fast-moving world full of big challenges and concentrates our gaze on the exciting track ahead. In effect, it is an offering of trust—and nothing is as inspiring as an offering of trust.

We live in a world that is overmanaged and underled. The greatest need in our global society today is for better leadership—from all of us. The call has been made; now it’s time for each of us to take the reins.

—Stephen R. Covey and Stephen M. R. Covey
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