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The Road Within: In Search of Authentic Leadership Behavior
Arri Pauw
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Five Stars (out of Five)

In *The Road Within*, Arri Pauw discusses the impact a leader has on the results he or she obtains. As Pauw says, “what I do is what counts.”

It may be a simple premise, but *The Road Within* offers a welcome departure from books about business leadership that address external influences and conditions. Instead, this work deals directly with the leader’s behavior, “which often is well-intended but still has a negative impact.”

The book is divided into two parts, the first concerning “Where to Go?” and the second, “How to Get Through.”

Part One is an overview of the drivers of behavior – what makes individuals do what they do. The author cautions leaders to understand both conscious and unconscious motivations, in particular, “which old emotions easily haunt us and distort today’s reality.”

Part Two covers five “leadership dynamics” in detail: the dynamics of choice, growth, power, connectivity, and authenticity. Pauw provides an introduction, a discussion of the forces shaping each dynamic, and a description of both the “healthy” and “unhealthy” behaviors associated with the dynamic. A closing section for each, “How to start from here?” offers “questions and reflections” – a kind of self-guided exercise for the leader to recognize and evaluate healthy and unhealthy behaviors.

Every chapter in the book includes relevant examples that show how leaders’ positively or (more often) negatively affect their organizations. Some of the examples involve Pauw’s own failures and successes. These mini-case studies serve to dramatize the author’s points and reinforce the book’s value.

One story, for example, demonstrates how a leader’s behavior results in a damaging double message. This particular leader makes a speech to his company’s employees about the

bold and visionary new steps that will be necessary to drive the organization forward. Then, immediately after the speech, he meets with his closest direct reports and informs them, "Whatever new we do, let's take care we maintain the old organization as well, because we have to guarantee the results will be delivered." The outcome was that "confusion scattered around the room like lightning."

Despite the fact that *The Road Within* comprises less than 150 pages, the book is packed with good advice, relevant anecdotes, and actionable strategies that leaders can apply immediately to "grow awareness for delivering results." Pauw's message – "the more I master my own behavior as a leader… the more my subordinates will experience working with me as safe, liberating, inspiring" – is a message that virtually every leader can benefit from. This is a book that should be on every business leader's reading list.

Barry Silverstein