



Leading Under Pressure: From Surviving to Thriving Before, During, and After a Crisis

Erika Hayes James, Lynn Perry Wooten

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Leading Under Pressure: From Surviving to Thriving Before, During, and After a Crisis Erika Hayes James, Lynn Perry Wooten

To say that the global workforce is under pressure may be an understatement. At a macro level, there is the pressure of worldwide competition and the need to operate across the globe. At a more micro level, there is the pressure of individuals or departments to produce more with increasingly fewer resources. Pressure is at once the precipitator and the consequence of crisis. It is ubiquitous and it is increasingly defining how we function at work. Leaders who can flourish under pressure will be the ones to guide us through these and future turbulent times.

This new book is organized into four parts. Part one serves to introduce the reader to the concept of crisis leadership and differentiate how leadership under pressure differs from general leadership, or leadership in times of relative calm. Combined, the two chapters in part one provide a solid foundation of key terms (e.g., crisis, crisis management, leadership, and so on) and a comprehensive overview of crisis types and general crisis handling strategies. Part two expands the discussion by focusing on the individual capabilities necessary to effectively lead an organization in times of intense pressure. Here, we highlight critical leadership competencies, decision making, and the important role of designing and leading a crisis team. Part three identifies core organizational capabilities that facilitate leadership under pressure. These include an organizational culture or structure characterized by trust and learning, and one that is facile in operating with a global mindset. The final section of the book brings all of the prior information together to outline the circumstances that allow some leaders to perceive crises as potential sources of opportunity (rather than only as a threat). When this happens, the possibility for organizational innovation and positive change increases.

Each of the the chapters, as appropriate, offer two additional resources intended to guide those that lead organizations, big or small, public or private. Leadership Links are references to web-based sources of information from both academic and practitioner communities. Leadership Links are intended for those readers who would like additional information about the specific topic in the chapter. The Leader's Hot Seat poses a set of questions that managers should consider and corresponding answers. These are intended to encourage application of the ideas from the chapter to one's own situation. Finally, several of the chapters include a section called From Theory to Practice that serves to connect theoretical-based research with practical implications.

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