



## Beyond Belief

### Awaken Potential, Focus Leadership

#### THE SUMMARY IN BRIEF

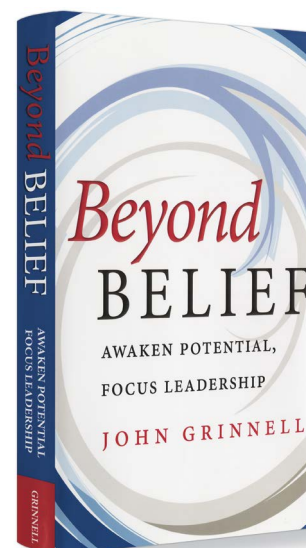
The word *leadership* has been grossly overused to the point that many do not know what it really means and are unaware of the personal commitment required. Today's interconnected world, with its serious economic, environmental and social challenges, cries out urgently for real leadership, yet few know what it is or how to develop it.

*Beyond Belief* uses seven powerful models, case studies, and research from John Grinnell's more than 25 years of experience to clarify the intangible psychosocial basis of organizational life so outcomes of leadership are more predictable. A lucid explanation of the way a leader's self-awareness of personal beliefs influences outcomes lays a solid foundation for pointing out how to more rapidly cause followers to gain perspective, act accountably, and rapidly align to adapt faster in the marketplace.

*Beyond Belief* will show you how to step up to the personal challenge of real leadership. And as Grinnell suggests, whether you do or not is entirely up to you.

#### IN THIS SUMMARY, YOU WILL LEARN:

- To increase self-awareness in yourself and your organization in order to move beyond the old, habitual behaviors that have been holding you back.
- To use your new awareness to align you and your organization with its goals to become "on-purpose" and to motivate others to do the same.
- To use accountability, including its positive side, to hold everyone responsible for achieving their part in reaching set objectives — including you.



by John Grinnell

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# THE COMPLETE SUMMARY: BEYOND BELIEF

by John Grinnell

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For additional information on the author, go to [www.summary.com](http://www.summary.com) or visit [www.grinnellleadership.com](http://www.grinnellleadership.com).

## We Need Leaders Now: Awaken Leadership

Real leadership is one of the most rewarding but difficult challenges a human being can undertake. To step up and do what others can't do or will not do is why there are so few real leaders. It always starts from within oneself and moves out to others. It has less to do with intelligence and analytical ability and everything to do with perspective, integrity and courage.

The problem is that we call people leaders when they are not. They then think they are leading when they can't. Most can't because they don't really understand what it is or are unwilling and don't have the stomach for it. Leadership can be learned, but just because a person is a boss or can charismatically stand up in front of a crowd doesn't mean that person can lead.

Failure of leadership and the consequences of that failure are all around us. Think back over the past decade. The Enron debacle. Then there was the mortgage crisis. More recently, we've seen the IRS appearing to target certain populations in our country. Little is learned, with history repeating itself over and over again. Many have given up hope, believing with grim resignation that we will never be able to escape the gravitational pull of human nature and unaware leadership. These failures represent the next major challenge in the evolution of leadership. That is, to awaken and learn to look within with awareness to become more effective.

### Types of Leadership: A Model

Interpersonal leadership is the leverage point of all organizational success, yet it is probably the least focused on

and least understood. The usual reasons people become leaders are ego gratification, pleasing family and friends, money and security, power over others, achievement and prestige. These reasons often work at first for young leaders, as they underpin the necessary drive and ambition for leadership; but in the long run, if they are not coupled with awareness and clear purpose and values, they can never help a leader reach his or her potential and the potential of the organization that leader serves.

Happy leaders usually have become leaders by choice, have prioritized their values, and often find meaning in serving others, not just themselves. This highlights a key point: Leadership is the most important service a human being can provide for our society. Yet many executives don't realize this truth and don't see that each decision and action is either contributing to or damaging the fabric of society.

Leading others with meaning and toward full potential begins with self-knowledge. It has more to do with our beliefs, relationships, ways of communication and actions than the content of what we say. The mind prompts people's perceptions, reactions and behavior, which are what cause the results in organizational life. By using this insight, leaders can consciously create conditions that allow people's motivations to be directed toward a chosen, better outcome. While the mind is abstract, and reaching the hidden self involves working with the abstract, the insights we can develop about how to reach it are practical.

### The Grinnell Leadership Vitality Model

Awareness — both self-awareness and awareness of how others think, feel and work together — is the first essential step in developing leadership, in tandem with grasping



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the organization's purpose. Out of awareness, linked to the vision and goals arising from purpose, flow the other components: alignment and accountability. Together, these elements compose the Grinnell Leadership Vitality Model. Alignment coordinates the insights that come to the aware leader with the envisioned goal and with other goals that awareness and knowing the purpose produce. Accountability ensures that the leader, the organization and the leader's followers will carry out the actions necessary to reach those goals.

Real leadership requires the leader to align the work of others with his or her goal by understanding what actions on the leader's part will elicit the necessary motivation to achieve it. And to do so, the leader must gain an awareness of how individuals' minds work and the ways their perceptions and behavior cause them to interact with and relate to each other. A real leader asks, "What can I say or do to get individuals to cause them to motivate themselves to do what I need them to do?"

Self-awareness, the entranceway to the awakening of human consciousness is the next great "age" for humanity as we find our place among the computers and "big data" of the future. Self-awareness is the taproot of leadership and the first step in awakening personal leadership and organizational potential. ●

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### Jump-Start Real Leadership: The Challenge of Real Leadership

Not all organizational leadership is real leadership. Some form of leadership, after all, is inevitable: Someone has to make decisions. But a "decision" can occur by default, a failure to act, what I call "indecision making," and the resulting non-action constitutes a decision. Leaders of organizations abide by conventional patterns of behavior within the organization because doing so seems the safe course. However, when an organization has to adapt to changing conditions, it's not so safe after all.

Real leadership recognizes that changing or transforming an organization requires a change in mind, a change in belief, and a change in behavior. Such change is usually rife with uncertainty. Change is mowing the grass. Transformation is replacing the lawn. And the key to transformation is awareness.

#### The Quit Zone

When leaders disrupt the deep sleep of habitual belief and behavior with conflicting intent, different informa-

tion and new behavior, they often meet the quite normal resistance of established habits and beliefs, first within themselves and then from others. This area where the new path is glimpsed but avoided is the "quit zone." Most of us operate in a memory-based zone, which is comfortable — it's based on beliefs we've accrued in the past. The quit zone, though, is a place of uncertainty and, therefore, for many a cause of anxiety, but it is also a place of exhilaration when we glimpse the future that could exist.

The quit zone is an area full of creative tension: The future is unknown, but if we are aware of ourselves, our core values, other people, and the purpose of our organization, we can form a new belief, one that aligns with our purpose, and engage in new behavior. What separates a real leader is the ability to jump off the edge of the cliff in the quit zone and start a new venture or expand an existing one when success is uncertain and when chosen values, behavior and beliefs are unproven.

Don't underestimate the challenges: making the jump is difficult; sticking to the old beliefs is too easy, and excuses and rationalizations are readily at hand. The force of this inertia is why, once you become aware of how your mind works and what drives your behavior, aligning your behavior with the purpose glimpsed in the future where the leader path (unknown but believed in) will take you becomes the inescapable task if you want to succeed.

Aligning your own behavior, however, is not enough. You also must align the behavior of those working with you. To equip yourself to align behavior with purpose, you have to fulfill two conditions:

- See a goal the organization must drive toward in order not only to survive but also to thrive.
- Perceive what specific actions should occur to accomplish that change.

A stumbling point here is that many people expect to have a clear step-by-step plan that will not change before they take the jump. This is not possible, and there must be an agreement to "building the bridge as we walk on it." Commit to the better future together. Promise persistence, not perfection.

#### The Grinnell Leadership Vitality Model

The stages of leadership are awareness, alignment, accountability and purpose. Expanded awareness forms the foundation of every other part of real leadership, and all the stages build toward fulfilling the purpose. Each stage builds on the previous one to show the logical connection

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from awareness through service to customers, partners in success, and the social environment. Once I am self-aware and aware of others, I will realize how to align my behavior and cause others to align theirs with the mission. When I know how to align behavior, then I need to be accountable to our purpose, myself and my associates; they need to be accountable to me, to themselves and to their colleagues, too.

These stages also interpenetrate; just like alignment, on-purpose leadership flows out of awareness. And just as you can't change to more fully align behavior until you are aware, you can't align it until you have a firm sense of what the purpose is. The purpose, which includes our chosen core values, also fills out the framework of accountability. You're accountable for whether your behavior matches the purpose. ●

### Being On-Purpose: Focusing Mission and Values for Breakthrough

Leaders create the “new abnormal.” They don't make their target the one that accompanies their feeling of certainty. This is also why people don't usually like real leadership at first, as it creates feelings of uncertainty. But it also is their ship bound for the future.

With a clear purpose, a leader can assess the current conditions of his or her life, leadership and organization, and see the gaps between where he or she is and where he or she needs to be. With a clear purpose, leaders can see what is “at gap,” or out of alignment with the target. They then go about with purpose, changing those aspects of the organization, including their behavior and that of their followers, technologies, infrastructure and people, that stand out in stark relief and that are important. To change them, a leader turns the gaps into objectives and plans how to meet those objectives.

Being on-purpose with our behavior has to start with being on-purpose with our mind. All outward behavior is driven by the mind and its beliefs, so all real transformation starts with a shift of mind. The real leader holds the organization to its purpose and manages his or her mind to be on-purpose when others can't or won't.

If a true transformational change is to occur, the leader and his or her followers must behave in new ways. The key to this new behavior is being on-purpose. The new behavior required for transformation to a satisfying future grows out of awareness of purpose tied to self-awareness. Once

your organization's purpose — and yours — is clear, then you can expand awareness and seek alignment.

### Making Purpose Visible

Make clear to the people you are asking to be real leaders the logical connection between the values, beliefs, behavior, structures and processes you are asking them to change and the approaching future. Translate vision into a meaningful mission and core values, which together are your organization's purpose. Hold regular accountability group reporting sessions on objectives. This is a way for real leaders to tell the truth about progress and problems and to ask for help early.

Values are the light beam guiding you through the uncertainty and darkened unknown of change — getting you from here to your chosen there. We can choose to change to address the future in a manner that will result in our getting the experience we want, or we can go back to sleep and accept what we are programmed to experience. Values are the basis of the path we choose through life. Beliefs drive organizations until leadership decides to choose values that fully align with purpose.

### Setting Core Values

Values need to be part of the most significant leadership decisions and actions. Core values must be set at three levels. The first is conceptual alignment, which means it makes good business sense in terms of where we are going. The second level is ensuring there is behavioral alignment. The third level is “heartfelt.” It is part innate, as deeply held beliefs guide a sense of knowing that the values are right for you. It is a commitment of one's life, energies and focus. This gives a tremendous advantage to the organization as it goes through transformation.

Things you can do to strengthen your core values:

- Make sure you know what your core values are, and use them repeatedly to make tough decisions.
- Communicate the core values over and over and over again.
- Hold people accountable to them.
- Make the values discussion a part of every planning process, strategic or otherwise.
- If you want to alter the culture and values, focus on the positive.
- Demonstrate the cause and effect of your values.

When success occurs, look at how the values play a part in it. ●

### **Expanding Awareness: Perspective or Ego Satisfaction — A Choice**

The problem with beliefs is that because they're part of a survival mechanism in our minds and because they're our theories about reality in our minds, they become ingrained, and they lead us to act habitually. Self-awareness on both personal and organizational levels enables us to recognize the beliefs of an organization and individuals within it — including, first of all, ourselves. When we are not aware of our beliefs, they run the show instead of us. The degree to which a leader or leadership team running an organization is unaware of the beliefs that drive their decision making and behavior is the degree to which they are out of control of the situation that confronts them now.

To expand our awareness zone requires us to go beyond ego or beliefs and our defense mechanisms. This is why self-awareness and knowledge of human nature is so critically important for seeing issues and reaching effective outcomes. To get out of the box, you must understand the box. To go beyond these ego-imposed limitations, to maintain curiosity in the face of perceived critical feedback, and to stay conscious while feeling vulnerable constitute the fundamental path to reducing mistakes of leadership. It should be a primary focus of team leadership to create safe environments where people will step out into this new behavior.

#### **The Controlling Force**

Being self-aware involves cultivation of a free consciousness that can stand outside yourself and look at your actions and beliefs from an observer's perspective, then move beyond the confines of habitual emotion, judgment and thinking. If you want to attain free consciousness, the process starts with understanding how you form your identity, your ego. Your ego is a rigid system of beliefs about yourself that you maintain and reinforce through perception. Over time, by paying close attention, we can develop the ability to recognize behavior, thoughts and perception flowing from our personality. We can then move beyond its constraints to consciousness — of our minds, our emotions, our actions and where they spring from.

Breaking free of blind spots, denial and the fear of change is not easy. It is uncomfortable. You must go through that discomfort and pain the ego generates to reach a better place. You first need to be honest with yourself, and recognize and understand the beliefs, judgments, perceptions and resulting behavior that produce unsatisfying outcomes.

Once you understand them, you have to accept responsibility — an important step in human growth and leadership development. Everyone makes mistakes or gets negative feedback. What the real leaders, young or old, seem to do is hurt for a bit, then pick themselves up by the bootstraps and figure out how to solve the problem. We can meet the challenge and lead, or we can stay in our familiar unaware state and play victim.

If you believe your team or organization would benefit by becoming more adept in expanding awareness, here are some recommendations: Have your team members attend a self-awareness-based leadership development program. Hold facilitated feedback sessions. Have your executive team participate in personality assessments, and make sure they are tied to the business. Finally, build a common language and model of leadership and self-awareness. Use systematic reinforcement. ●

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### **Seeking Alignment (With Purpose, Self and Others): Integrity or Hy- pocrisy in Leadership**

Awareness of old patterns of belief and behavior is only the starting point. Aligning, focusing and realigning mind-sets, beliefs and behavior around a common purpose is the next step. Organizational self-examination — of its purpose, anchored in those core values — provides a vision of where the organization should go. That vision will guide you as you align the organization, peers and followers, and yourself with the purpose and new behavior so that the business can fulfill that purpose.

No leader can achieve his or her goals without the efforts of others. The follower supplies the energy for achieving an outcome. Do you want to create dependents requiring your help and energy or strong adults taking on responsibility and getting the monkey off your back? Real leaders who perceive the needs of their followers respond to them with appropriate action, which means not only understanding those needs but consciously adapting their own behavior to take them into account. Once followers know you understand their views and have considered them with openness and transparency, they will usually go along with you even if you don't accede to their requests.

#### **Integrity in Self-Alignment**

Showing subordinates that you value honest feedback about your actions leads them to trust you and to share

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more personal, valuable information about processes and operations in the organization. Some feedback may be painful to your ego to hear, but real leaders expand beyond the pain, realizing it is temporary and wanting to see clearly and listen for any valuable information. It's easy to get good news, but you have to dig deep to get the bad, which is often the most useful. Since hearing criticism and interpreting the thinking behind it helps you discern a follower's needs, it provides valuable information indeed.

When leaders change their own behavior to align with the organization's purpose and goals, followers have permission, so to speak, to change their own behavior — they are encouraged to do so by the example of the leader. Leaders must be all in, or others will not follow fully.

### The Art of Causing Followership

The essence of instilling new beliefs, perception and behavior in followers is “need-goal alignment.” The leader works to align the satisfaction of the followers' needs with the goals for which the leader is responsible. The art of causing followership rests on three fundamental principles:

- People do what their minds and emotions tell them to do, not what the leader says to do.
- The follower provides the motivation.
- All motivation is self-serving.

By seeing clearly what the organization's goals are and the changes they call for and by understanding your followers' needs, you gain the ability to link those needs to the goals by demonstrating how the new behavior will benefit the followers. If they see no benefit, they are unlikely to change their behavior regardless of how inspiring a speaker you are.

Followers also must clearly see the connection between the new behavior and processes and the bigger strategic picture — the purpose and goals. Your picture must present all these factors in images that are personally meaningful to your followers. The employees who are going to freely exert the most effort to change will be those who see that the perceived gain outweighs the perceived cost.

No leader can motivate others. A leader can only move followers to motivate themselves. An individual's efforts toward achieving a goal are done for personal, satisfying reasons. All human action fulfills a personal need and is self-serving. If you can align your followers' needs with the organization's goals, creating an environment in which followers will achieve those goals when they satisfy their own needs, the rewards will far outweigh the costs. ●

### Acting Accountably: Courage or Compromise of Leadership

Unless the new beliefs and new habits you introduce into your organization's new culture include accountability at every step, then your effort to change course is likely to flounder and ultimately fail. Just as awareness begins with self-awareness and builds from there to awareness of others' motivations, for leaders, accountability starts with themselves and then spreads to their followers. Without accountability, habitual behavior kicks back in.

Accountability is a way of sharing the consequences of failure — but it's also a way of sharing the consequences of success. With accountability, the likelihood of success goes way up. Accountability is a way to know that an individual or organization is making progress toward an objective. The more objective and measurable the gauging of that progress is, the more accountable it is — and we are.

Accountability is inseparably tied to responsibility. We are responsible for something, and we are responsible to someone or something. Holding oneself accountable means accepting responsibility for the outcome. “When accountability is seen as a positive tool that can foster development and full communication as opposed to the ‘witch hunt’ that it is sometimes perceived to be,” said one executive, “the organization's potential can be unleashed, and success beyond our most optimistic hope can be realized.”

### Measuring Expectations

To use metrics most effectively to gauge performance, the leader must let followers know from the beginning, and clearly, what standards he or she will use to assess them. Equally important is keeping tabs on progress and keeping in touch throughout the process. This, again, can be a positive experience rather than the grown-up equivalent of going to the principal's office. Leaders who can empower followers through sharing the organization's vision can enable them to claim ownership of the organization's goals, which is an effective approach to both alignment and accountability.

### Accountability to the Future

Holding yourself and your followers accountable might seem to cover the subject, but leaders have broader responsibility. They are accountable to the organization itself as future conditions shift and change, but also to immediate society and beyond. Being accountable to the organization means you have responsibility to the future in three ways:

- Stay on-purpose: You as leader must ensure that the direction and values remain viable but also that everyone

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remains on-purpose, aligned with an organization's vision and its goals and accountable to that purpose.

- Anticipating gaps: A leader must anticipate problems by projecting the company's activities into the future or re-examining current practices to discern where they could come up short or go wrong.

- Invisible social contracts (that bind the leader): Who is going to lead the organization in the future? Developing future leaders is one of the most important tasks an organization can undertake. Yet frequently organizations thwart it by playing favorites and not basing these decisions on what's good for the organization going forward. ●

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### Transforming Organizations: Changing Minds to Change Performance

Transformation requires expanded awareness, alignment and accountability — always in support of the mission and values, which is the organization's purpose. Leadership is the adaptive force of the organization. In nature, organisms that don't change fast enough to meet the demands of the environment don't survive. The same is true of organizations. Leadership is not an external factor; it is an internal, personal commitment.

Leaders don't make certainty their purpose. Until a leader makes the jump into uncertainty, he or she is not really leading; few, if any, will follow until that leader does jump. Leaders lead minds. Organizations are composed of individuals working together using certain processes and following policy to achieve a common outcome. These individuals hold a set of beliefs in varying degrees of alignment with the values and goals of the organization, and they act out of those beliefs.

All organizational transformations come from a change of mind and perspective. Until this occurs, with the accompanying decisions, actions and behavior that arise from those changed minds, nothing in the organization really changes.

The leadership system is the network of individuals who are the "keepers of the culture" and all the perspectives, behavior, judgment and expectations therein. Transforming the organization begins with changing the perspectives, behavior and expectations of those keepers and thus changing the culture. Once they are able to expand awareness, seek alignment, act accountably and be on-purpose, you have a powerful leadership culture in place to balance the need for stasis.

Leaders must change their own minds before others will change theirs. Some have to "fake it until they make it," acting behaviorally in alignment even when their passion isn't there yet. Often this requires a "leap of faith" and the ability to "stomach" many difficult decisions and actions that must be undertaken.

Here is a list of steps to keep in mind while going about the work of transformation:

- Find a better way, a difference that makes a difference — and commit!
- Articulate the new direction; contrast it to what you have been doing.
- Make sure your top team is clear and in true agreement with the new direction.
- Overcommunicate the new direction, and invite your key people to help you figure out how to get there.
- Translate the new strategies and tactics into key objectives, and assign stakeholders in achieving the objectives.
- Stay intensely focused for 18 months to three years. Follow up regularly. Hold regular accountability meetings.
- Make the change experience a "leadership development" experience.
- Never get mad or show frustration when people bring problems to you.
- Never, never, never get so busy that you forget to celebrate success!
- Give feedback quickly, and coach the "good people with old habits."
- Quickly change processes and people that aren't going to work.
- Communicate the vision to people three or four levels down. Build the culture there. ●

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### Leading and Living Beyond Belief: Experience Your Experience

Seeing clearly beyond the limitations of existing beliefs is the hallmark of a real leader. This is not a typical definition of leadership, but it is true. Think of what leadership requires in this way: Real leaders are the few who can kick themselves out of the nest.

We must learn to use our new interconnectedness, technology and big data effectively. The challenge is to go beyond the beliefs that no longer serve us with a process of increasing self-awareness. We are naturally bound to

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our past and the comfort these past mindsets and beliefs provided us. To go beyond belief is the heroic act of the leader who wishes to attempt to make a real, meaningful “difference that is a difference.”

How do leaders take themselves and their people beyond the dictates of the past, and how do they consciously choose values and achieve what I call “awakened leadership”? This is a realization of consciously chosen beliefs, values and purposes that guide us to what we want, not what is habituated and unconsciously expected. Leaders who live their lives by choice beyond automated beliefs are the ones who also can help free others to reach their full potential.

### Bringing Potential into the Open

Organizations are extensions of the humans who work within them, driven by the collective minds and beliefs therein. Many who lead an organization mistakenly believe their task is changing processes, policy and technology. Culture is the hardest and most important task for leaders to do well. Once the minds of employees change, the organization can change; and the key to this is alignment. Once there is the capacity and ability to truly learn, that is, change so as to go beyond ego-defended limitations with expanded awareness, the result will be a platform from which one can find not only new but truly different and better paths and a purpose and solutions that will allow that alignment to go beyond the ego and achieve a shared, purposeful future.

Integrity is also an essential characteristic for successful alignment within an organization. Integrity comes from knowing oneself and having the emotional discipline to say “no” to wrong impulses. At its root is a variation of the Golden Rule — to help or hurt another in our society is to help or hurt ourselves. Real leaders contribute enormously to both their organizations and society when they improve the likelihood of sustainability of those organizations so that families can provide for themselves, organizations prosper and hiring increases, helping our world economy recover more fully.

Given the scope of challenges organizations and society face, encouraging an individual to look inward may seem a backward approach, a turning away from confronting the problems, but it is instead the key to doing so. Real leadership flows from an earned perspective, reflecting a subtle but significant shift inside oneself. Looking inward cultivates the ability to examine problems outside the self clearly and discern which actions will be most effective and adapting to change. It is the only way to truly prepare people to use the power of the mind to create the future that leaders want and that we will share in. ●

## The Big Ten Collaborative Leadership Behaviors

1. **Communicate openly, accurately and quickly:** Interorganizational process issues as well as interpersonal problems are made worse when not brought up soon enough within the team.
2. **Lead strong:** All organizations have crises. The worse the storms, the stronger the leadership and courage required — feel the gut tighten and act well.
3. **Trust, verify and urgently solve problems:** The sooner you can spot a problem, the better. Trust is essential for success, but verification helps find blind spots and issues early.
4. **Decide with the purpose in mind:** Be on-purpose by keeping what’s best for the larger enterprise and values in the forefront of your thinking and decision making.
5. **Recognize vulnerability:** Team members need each other to meet the organizational purpose and aren’t completely in charge of their own destiny — you are vulnerable to your teammates’ performance.
6. **Know when to lead and follow:** You may be leading today but following tomorrow. It’s about getting the job done — not who’s in charge.
7. **Keep the transformation moving:** To keep things moving may require help from a higher authority when goals of team members are misunderstood, misaligned and in a logjam.
8. **Forgive (self and others); it’s practical:** Learn the lesson and take action. Let go of the embarrassment (shame), and move forward — fast.
9. **Find opportunity:** While the team is busy, make time to look ahead, and find ways to work more efficiently and collaboratively.
10. **Show appreciation:** Catch people “doing it right.” If you see on-purpose behavior, thank them.

### RECOMMENDED READING LIST

If you liked *Beyond Belief*, you’ll also like:

1. ***The Accountable Leader* by Brian Dive.** Centered around three themes — leadership, accountability and organizational structure — this book explores what it means for managers to be held accountable at every level.
2. ***The Oz Principle* by Craig Hickman, Tom Smith, Roger Connors.** The authors detail how people and organizations armed with attitudes of workplace accountability can overcome obstacles, excuses and biases.
3. ***Goals!* by Brian Tracy.** Tracy offers specific advice to help executives and others achieve their personal and workplace goals.