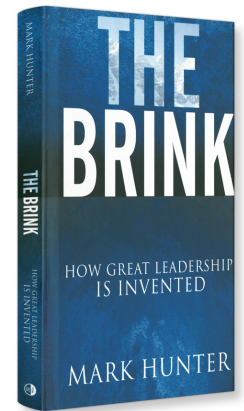


# The Brink

How Great Leadership Is Invented

by **Mark Hunter**



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## THE SUMMARY IN BRIEF

Today's world is suffering from a gap in leadership. Almost every major problem in the world (financial crises, crime, violence, global warming, etc.) can be fundamentally linked to a gap in leadership. *The Brink* provides the solution to closing this gap with step by step actions.

The process of facing great challenge will create the leader within you. The solution to the leadership challenges/gaps that the world faces today starts with your individual leadership. This book serves as a guide to becoming a leader and how to invent leadership in and around you. Everyone can benefit from accepting this leadership challenge.

The new leadership paradigm—the brink—requires an inward focus rather than external management. Taking responsibility, accepting difficult challenges, and facing fears are part of the processes to continually grow as a leader personally and professionally.

## IN THIS SUMMARY, YOU WILL LEARN:

- The practice of making choices every moment.
- To welcome fear and adversity and to avoid the normalcy trap.
- How to embrace practice by using specific principles.
- The necessity of seeking imbalance and staying curious.

## Focus on Your Vision as a Leader

### Pick a Mountain

The first step toward leadership on the brink is to pick a “mountain” (a goal or challenge) to which you can apply yourself; one that is bigger than you can necessarily see possible, even one that causes fear. Embracing fear is necessary when accepting any leadership challenge or climbing a mountain.

Fear will be present on the brink of any challenging leadership possibility. But it may not be outwardly visible in leaders, as leadership is practiced mostly internally.

### Know the Answer to “What for?”

What motivates people differs, but in order to effectively lead a team, all members must get the connection between the mountain and the thing they most want in the world. The job of leaders on the brink is to uncover and distinguish that connection with their team.

The vision of the leader must be put forth regularly, so followers will maintain the focus on the: Why, What, and How. Address these questions in this order for yourself and your team while focusing on context over content. Encourage yourself and your team to stop looking for balance and actively seek out imbalance.

At the brink, we experience reverence, a powerful respect for and relationship to something greater than ourselves. The brink requires reverence—reverence for the team, vision, and mission (mountain). The brink and reverence are inextricably linked. Reverence is a deep respect for something or someone—the experience of awe. Along with reverence, there must be parity within the team to create ownership in each member. This forms a team of leaders. A team of leaders is much more capable than a team of followers. There are three qualities of a leader that create parity: Relationship to self, connection to team, and strength of spirit.

### Choose Everything

The brink challenges leaders to practice putting themselves at crossroads and making choices at every moment. Leaders also realize that not choosing is in fact making a choice. Leaders constantly challenge patterns and remain curious to new possibilities. Curiosity is one of the most important assets of leaders because it invites innovation, collaboration, investigation, and growth. Curiosity is a

choice. Unconditional curiosity separates great leaders from ineffective ones. This curiosity also challenges leaders to not avoid pain and discomfort. The pain and discomfort become signposts of progress along the path up their mountain, rather than road blocks.

## Normalize the Presence of Discomfort

### Practice

The word Buddhists use for practice is translated from Sanskrit more accurately as “complete, together, coherent, wholesome.”

### The Six Principles of Practice Are:

- Persistence
- Intentionality
- Urgency
- Curiosity
- Commitment
- Play

With practice comes discomfort. Practice itself implies learning and therefore the possibility of doing something poorly. On the brink, comfort is a trap, and discomfort is a practice. Here leaders look for places to practice being uncomfortable and normalize the presence of discomfort.

### Collaborate

The most powerful leaders always create powerful teams around them. Leaders don’t need followers, but leadership on the brink will create a following of individuals who relate to themselves as leaders in their own roles. The three components of powerful collaboration are enrollment, empowerment, and truth. **Power** is an essential tool for the leader in collaboration, but it is a tool that is generated from effective leadership, to be wielded from the heart, not from the old paradigm of influence and control.

### The Five Laws Of **Power** On The Brink Are:

- Authenticity Is King
- The Team Is Your Greatest Asset
- Have a Mirror
- Get Needs Met Elsewhere
- Continued Reinvention

## Take Ownership

On the brink, ownership equals leadership. Ownership is akin to relating to yourself as *The One*—the person where the buck stops, and ultimate responsibility lies.

Some of the distinct behaviors of *The One* include: leading as a result of enrollment and value rather than force and imposition, being responsible for the impact of his/her leadership on others and on the goal, and being open-hearted and able to make difficult decisions at the same time.

## Trust in Possibility, Not Probability

### Trust

The brink also requires trust and faith not only that the goal is possible, but that it will happen. Trust in this model is based in possibility, not in probability. Possibility is unlimited and based in commitment and vision. Probability is limited by the evidence of experience and is based on odds and measuring likely failure. Probability is trying to answer the possibility question without trust or faith. Having complete trust and faith in the vision is revealed when all escape routes and back doors to the goal are closed. This intentionally eliminates options. Focus is enhanced when there is no way to turn back.

*The how trap* outlines the fact that the question “How?” derails most goals before they are ever attempted, because the question is asked before the commitment and choice are made. The answer to the question “How?” will unfold once the choice to move forward is made and the first steps are taken. The truth is that much of it will have to be discovered and is impossible to figure out beforehand. Leaders intentionally create these types of risks to overcome or shift an unwanted pattern. This is called *risk loading*.

## Embrace Fear to Become Unstoppable

### Welcome Fear and Adversity

On the brink, fear is normalized and accepted, rather than mitigated and avoided. The entire relationship to fear needs to be reinvented for a leader to be able to take action in its presence, rather than waiting for it to go away. Fear is unavoidable but suffering as a result of that fear is optional. Facing fear and adversity is how new answers are found. Alternate perspective can produce fear, but deviants or outliers are assets on the brink. The outlying or deviant perspective challenges leaders and the team to remain

open and curious. The old model of requiring uniformity is ineffective at this level of leadership. These alternate perspectives cannot be hidden in the closet. Closets are places where opportunities and unfulfilled goals are hidden because of fear. Leaders must know that these closets exist, be aware of what’s in them, and clean them out regularly, otherwise leadership will be sabotaged.

On the brink, success is a choice, drama is eliminated, and inconvenience is normalized. Success is optional and needs to be a conscious choice. Choice helps generate the success as teams embrace the choice and actively seek out new challenges.

“Being willing without wanting to” allows leaders to act from commitments without needing to feel like it.

*The evidence myth* highlights the fact that, by definition, there will be no evidence of past success when we are up to creating something that has never been created before. By using *The persistence principle*, which states that the degree to which leaders are persistent in an endeavor is inversely related to the depth and duration of fear that they will endure, leaders on the brink are relentlessly persistent in order to move past any lack of evidence.

Persistent focus and relentless action leave no room for distraction by fear. “Being willing without wanting to” allows leaders to act from commitments without needing to feel like it. Problems become challenges on the brink. Challenges are exciting to face, while problems are exhausting to have to fix.

### Create Integrity

On the brink, integrity is redefined to mean that there are no power leaks, in the same way that the hull of a ship has no water leaks when it is in integrity. This removes the judgment of good or bad and allows for addressing the power leaks directly, rather than first having to deal with

the judgments about them. The leaks must be addressed for reintegration.

The four stages to generating reintegration when integrity goes out are:

- Awareness that there is an integrity leak.
- Choice to put it back into integrity.
- Willingness to get uncomfortable in doing so.
- Practice putting things back into integrity through what may be multiple iterations of the process.

Leaders on the brink know that peace comes from integrity and peace needs integrity in order to grow and last. The brink requires commitment to and relentlessness around its undertaking, which means to be constant and incessant in one's actions, past the point of reason. The brink requires a leader to avoid shortcuts, make bold declarations to generate integrity, and let go of the idea of safety in order to focus on integrity.

### Be Unstoppable

On the brink, unstoppable is a way of being. Results are directly proportional to the sum of resilience and focus. Being unstoppable actually includes the possibility of being stopped. It simply also requires making sure that you don't stay there. Relentless pursuit is an art in that relentlessly pursuing a goal means relating to all experiences and adversity along the way as part of that goal, rather than opposing forces. Being unstoppable includes the willingness to take on hard work and surrender to the fact that there will be obstacles and breakdowns along the way and then committing to overcoming them.

*The insight trap* is a trap that leaders can fall to by stopping at the point at which they are aware of what is so and what needs to be done but have not actually done anything about it. The insight into action pattern outlines the path that needs to be taken with an insight to bring it into action. This pattern is awareness, choice, action, and results.

### The Big Picture

Leadership is most effectively created when we pursue a large endeavor that we cannot see the other side or guarantee its success. Leadership is needed in all organizations, teams, and individuals. The intention in creating this model is to lay a path for leadership. The brink defines transformation through a journey. It begins with a choice to lead and positions the individual as an agent for change and a "stand for" (commitment to) a result. Leaders are forged through that challenge and the growth it provides. In the process, they instill leadership in those around them. This is the seed for transformation from the old paradigm to this new paradigm of leadership.

The world needs leaders willing to step to the edge and climb. Your leadership, your life, and the world will be forever changed by that single first step.



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