EDUCATOR & LIBRARY GUIDE

Passionate About People

Seeing the Whole Person in the Hard, Human Work of Leadership

Matthew Orlando | Bright Root Labs LLC | November 30, 2026

A short, story-driven look at the human side of leadership, drawn from managing engineering teams across the United States, Latin America, and India. The book explores compassion and accountability, employee development, organizational pressure, difficult conversations, and the lives people carry beyond their work.

It offers a practitioner's experiences for students to examine and challenge alongside the theories and research they are studying.

Potential course connections: Organizational Behavior, Engineering Management, Human Resource Management, Leadership Communication, and Cross-Cultural Leadership.

ALL TEN CHAPTERS: TOPICS & DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Chapter / teaching connection	Starting question
1. See the Person Empathy, accountability, and performance	How can a leader recognize the whole person while addressing evidence of a performance problem?
2. Before I Knew I Was Leading Informal leadership, recognition, and growth	How does responsibility shape leadership before a formal title, and how should growing contributions be recognized?
3. What Work Does Not Show Recognition and life beyond the role	What might workplace results leave unseen, and how can leaders recognize effort without assuming they know the whole story?
4. Before You Pass It Down Organizational demands and communication	What should a manager understand, challenge, or clarify before communicating a demanding directive to a team?
5. Across the Distance Distributed teams and cross-cultural trust	How should trust-building and communication adapt across locations, cultures, and individual preferences?

The chapter guide continues on page 2. Each chapter can be discussed independently or connected to a course framework.

Chapter guide, continued

Chapter / teaching connection	Starting question
6. Protection Advocacy and organizational accountability	How can a manager represent a team's constraints accurately while still holding the team accountable for its work?
7. Pushback Speaking up and negotiating support	How can a leader ask for needed support or challenge expectations while remaining open to another perspective?
8. Persistence Coaching and performance development	What distinguishes a credible development plan from prolonging a situation that is not improving?
9. Prayer Reflection, faith, and ethical judgment	How can leaders examine their motives and uncertainty without substituting personal conviction for evidence or imposing beliefs on others?
10. Peace Capacity, boundaries, and sustainable leadership	How can leaders distinguish an honest limit from avoidance, and model responsibility that includes their own well-being?

A SELF-LED, 30-MINUTE DISCUSSION

5 min: Separate what the leader observed from what the leader inferred. **10 min:** Develop two possible responses and their tradeoffs. **10 min:** Compare those responses with a relevant course framework. **5 min:** Identify what additional information could change your recommendation.

Use the chapter's situation or a fictional example; students need not disclose identifiable workplace experiences.

EDITIONS & ORDERING

Edition	ISBN-13	Length	US retail
Paperback	9798982080813	126 pages	$14.99
Hardcover	9798982080806	118 pages	$24.99
Kindle	9798982080820	Reflowable	$6.99

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