

Self-Leadership and the One Minute Manager: Gain the Mindset and Skill Set for Getting What you Need to Succeed

K. Blanchard, S. Fowler and L. Hawkins

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Introduction

The book self-leadership and the one-minute manager is from Thorsons publishing (an imprint of Harper Collins). The book is short, having 139 pages and is written in the English language. The price of the book in India in paperback format is only Rs 299 and in the USA, it is \$12.86 (as found in e-tailor site). This book is primarily intended for the individual level contributors, who find it difficult to design a path of success for themselves when they meet failure. He or she can be an account executive, HR executive, sales executives, a teacher or an office administrator. The book is developed on the idea that *if we are not going to help ourselves then who will?* Therefore, we need to find solutions by ourselves for our development. The concept of self-leadership in the book has been defined as the *proactive behavior shown by an individual contributor to succeed*.

Author's expertise

The authors of the book are experts in the field of leadership and motivation. Ken Blanchard is a well-established name in the field of leadership, better known for the concept of situational leadership model (along with Paul Hersey) and the book one minute manager. Ken along with his team further improved the situational leadership model, which is now known as SL-II. Susan Fowler is a well-established leader and researcher in the field of motivation and is the lead developer of the concept of self-leadership in the trio. Whereas, Laurence Hawkins is an experienced motivational speaker and a management consultant. The team of experts behind this book has made it a tool for self-development for executives.

The concept of self-leadership

The book is divided into 10 short chapters, where every chapter adds to the story of the development of the self-leader, which justifies the tag line of the book – *gain the mindset*



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and the skillset for getting what you want to succeed. The book summarizes that we develop constraints around us when we fail in our careers and we blame others for that (the boss, the client and the teams are always in the hit list). These constraints or our experiences that limit our growth needs to be challenged to set the way forward. The path suggested in the book is the bottom-up approach than the traditional top-down approach, i.e. getting what you need to grow instead of thinking it is the manager's responsibility to make you grow. The authors further develop the concept by saying that we all have some sort of power (five different powers are discussed in the book), which comes to us by position, skills, personality or behavior. These powers need to be activated to remove the hurdles in the accomplishment of the goals. However, we may not be good at all the skills required to achieve those goals due to the dynamics of the business environment. Knowing this, the individual contributors need to activate the other points of power to accomplish those tasks, which can only be done by connecting with those who do possess the required skills. Also, one needs to be proactive enough to get the required help and feedback to succeed in the assigned goals. For example, diagnosing our development level on the set goals will help us in deciding the type of leadership style required from our direct reports. The book has discussed four leadership styles based on the SL-II model.

Practical implications

The book is of utmost importance in the current period because of many reasons, namely, one, the advancement in the technology has enabled the workplaces to become decentralized, which has made it very clear that individuals need to be empowered to the point that they owe their work responsibility. Second, the era of the COVID-19 pandemic has created new challenges and opportunities for the global business environment, which will require more self-leaders than leaders for the organization's vitality. People who have the privilege of working from home are doing their work in lockdown mode: the teachers, the technology people, government employees and many like them. All need to be competent and committed toward their work more than ever before, by self.

Strength and weaknesses

Overall, this book has given some direct and indirect suggestions that can be applied to improve our performance. For example, *not recognizing your own power could be your greatest assumed constraint and do not ask dumb questions.* The book has two main strengths, namely, one, the model of self-leadership is a flipped model of already established and empirically validated model of situational leadership (SL-II). The focus in self-leadership is on followers challenging themselves for their developmental needs, whereas in SL-II it was more about the leadership style to be followed by leaders, based on the development level of their followers. Second, this book was first published in 2005, but at that time it was more of an idea, having low research support. Whereas, its 2018th edition is revised and updated based on the research findings (Fowler, 2018). Making it a proven solution to develop self-leaders. The book has only one weakness i.e. it is very short. The book got a good rating both in India and in the US, as found on an e-tailor site. In India, out of 52 reviewers, 80% of people have rated this book as 5-star and in the US out of 65 reviewers, 83% of people have rated this book as 5-star.

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Reference

Fowler, S. (2018), "Toward a new curriculum of leadership competencies: advances in motivation science call for rethinking leadership development", *Advances in Developing Human Resources*, Vol. 20 No. 2, pp. 1-15, doi: [10.1177%2F1523422318756644](https://doi.org/10.1177/2F1523422318756644).

Further reading

Blanchard, K., Fowler, S. and Hawkins, L. (2018), *Self Leadership and the One Minute Manager: Gain the Mindset and Skill Set for Getting What You Need to Succeed*, Thorsons.