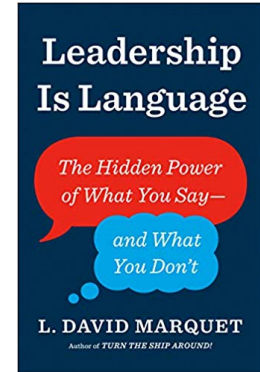




**Read2Lead Module**  
***Leadership is Language***  
***The Hidden Power of What You Say – and What You Don't***  
**by L. David Marquet**



Book Summary from Google Books: “You might imagine that an effective leader is someone who makes quick, intelligent decisions, gives inspiring speeches, and issues clear orders to their team so they can execute a plan to achieve your organization's goals. Unfortunately, David Marquet argues, that's an outdated model of leadership that just doesn't work anymore.

As a leader in today's networked, information-dense business climate, you don't have full visibility into your organization or the ground reality of your operating environment. In order to harness the eyes, ears, and minds of your people, you need to foster a climate of collaborative experimentation that encourages people to speak up when they notice problems and work together to identify and test solutions.

Too many leaders fall in love with the sound of their own voice, and wind up dictating plans and digging in their heels when problems begin to emerge. Even when you want to be a more collaborative leader, you can undermine your own efforts by defaulting to command-and-control language we've inherited from the industrial era.

It's time to ditch the industrial age playbook of leadership. In *Leadership is Language*, you'll learn how choosing your words can dramatically improve decision-making and execution on your team.”

### **What is Read2Lead?**

Read2Lead is a series of book studies published by the Center for Junior Officers, a small Army research center dedicated to empowering junior officers to develop themselves and their teams. Read2Lead modules give junior officers a ready-to-use product that they can integrate into leader professional development programs.

## **What's in this module?**

Every Read2Lead module contains:

- A short summary of the book that you can circulate to prime people for reading
- Advice for running your Read2Lead session
- A series of questions that can be used in multiple sessions, with options for using the questions over different lengths of time
- Additional resources that may be helpful for the facilitator

## **What do I need to provide to run a Read2Lead program?**

First, the time. Read2Lead sessions work best when they're done over multiple sessions, so participants can digest books in small "chunks" instead of trying to cram them in all at once. Make sure you give your participants enough time to read the book and not fake the funk.

Second, the books. Books can be purchased with a government purchase card if they remain in the hands of the unit. Buying books for a Read2Lead session can be a great kickstarter for a battalion or even brigade library. You can also provide the books to Soldiers with the expectation that they pass them along to another Soldier when they are done with them. If you choose this approach, you should ensure you mark the books appropriately per the purchasing regulations and legal guidance of your organization.

Third, the space. Read2Lead sessions should be conducted in spaces where everyone can hear and see one another. Be creative: maybe you do them as hip-pocket training on a range, or at the end of motor stables. Or as a brownbag lunch in a barracks dayroom.

When you run the actual session, think of it as a time for your Soldiers to think outside the box, discuss something beyond the day-to-day concerns of the unit, and improve their communication skills. The questions provided on the subsequent pages are a starting point, but feel free to add or substitute your own to make the session more meaningful for your Soldiers.

## ***Leadership is Language 10 Week Program Questions***

10 weeks is the optimal timing for this book. It minimizes the number of pages Soldiers have to read every week and breaks the book into meaningful chunks.

### *Week 1: Introduction, Chapter 1 (36 pages)*

- How do you balance getting things done while allowing others to make contributions if you are more skilled and knowledgeable in that area?
- What are your reactions to the initial story of El Faro?
- What are your thoughts on the “share of voice” concept discussed in chapter 1? Do you think it has applicability in the military? if so, how can we help ensure we have a balanced share of voice in our organization?

### *Week 2: Chapter 2 (39 pages)*

- Where do you see the balance of redwork and bluework in your organization? Is this optimal?
- Do you tend to see more of the “prove” mindset or the “protect” mindset in your organization? What can you as a leader do to shift people towards the “prove” mindset?

### *Week 3: Chapter 3 (31 pages)*

- What ways have you seen leaders prevent a pause in your organization?
- How could you/your organization make a pause possible?
- How would you rate yourself on the steps you take to make pauses possible?

### *Week 4: Chapter 4 (33 pages)*

- What are ways you use to build collaboration within your organization? How effective are they? What ways have been most effective? What ways have been least effective?
- What are your thoughts on the seven sins of questioning? How do you see those impact you as a leader or impact the organization?

### *Week 5: Chapter 5 (23 pages)*

- The book talked about committing actions, not beliefs. How effective do you think this tool is? Are there times when this might not be the best tool to use? Can you think of examples that support or refute the use of this tool?
- The escalation of commitment bias is when we stick to a course of action because we have already committed something towards it, even when there is evidence to support a change. Are you or your organization falling into the escalation of commitment bias currently? Are there examples you can think of where you, the organization, or someone else you know may have been unknowingly falling trap to this bias?

Week 6: *Chapter 6 (29 pages)*

- This chapter talked a lot about celebrating. How do you celebrate things in your organization? What do you specifically do as a leader to recognize others' accomplishments?

Week 7: *Chapter 7 (27 pages)*

- A central theme is the struggle between “be good” self and the “get better” self. To what degree do you see this struggle in yourself or your organization?
- What are ways your organization can encourage the “get better” self/improve mindset?

Week 8: *Chapter 8 (35 pages)*

- The question proposed at the beginning of the chapter is: How is it that a person could be more afraid of pushing a button without permission than dying in a fiery explosion? What are your thoughts on this question? What experiences do you have that could relate to this? How can you build in steps to ensure this does not happen within your organization?
- The military tends to have high power gradients. Given what was discussed in this chapter and your own experiences, what are your thoughts on how the military power gradient functions? Are there ways to make it more optimal?

Week 9: *Chapter 9 (33 pages)*

- This chapter outlines many examples of the principles at work. Which examples resonated with you the most? Why?
- What examples do you have from your own experiences where someone applied one or more of these principles?

Week 10: *Chapters 10-11 (35 pages)*

- The author makes an argument that goals are not great in many contexts. To what extent do you agree with this? Why? If not goals, then what?
- How do you incorporate periods of learning/growth, “bluework,” into your life?
- The final chapter outlines an alternate outcome for the El Faro. Discuss/think about where you could apply these principles in your organization to create better future outcomes.

**Additional Resources:**

- [DavidMarquet.com](http://DavidMarquet.com): The author's website contains additional videos and cards for group-based exercises.
- *“Turn the Ship Around!”*: The author's first book provides additional insights and context that you may find useful.
- [Radical Candor](#): This Forbes article discusses how radical candor can increase results. There is also a book by the same title which you may find a good compliment. You can also watch a [TED Talk](#) on the topic.

## ***Leadership is Language 5 Week Program Questions***

If you are pressed for time, the smallest number of sessions we recommend is five. The timing and questions for that approach are listed below.

### *Week 1: Introduction, Chapters 1-2 (75 pages)*

- How do you balance getting things done while allowing others to make contributions if you are more skilled and knowledgeable in that area?
- What are your thoughts on the “share of voice” concept discussed in chapter 1? Do you think it has applicability in the military? If so, how can we help ensure we have a balanced share of voice in our organization?
- Do you tend to see more of the “prove” mindset or the “protect” mindset in your organization? What can you as a leader do to shift people towards the “prove” mindset?

### *Week 2: Chapters 3-4 (64 pages)*

- How could you/your organization make a pause possible (or mor possible)?
- What are ways you use to build collaboration within your organization? How effective are they? What ways have been most effective? What ways have been least effective?
- What are your thoughts on the seven sins of questioning? How do you see those impact you as a leader or impact the organization?

### *Week 3: Chapters 5-6 (52 pages)*

- The book talked about committing actions, not beliefs. How effective do you think this tool is? Are there times when this might not be the best tool to use? Can you think of examples that support or refute the use of this tool?
- The escalation of commitment bias is when we stick to a course of action because we have already committed something towards it, even when there is evidence to support a change. Are there examples you can think of where you, the organization, or someone else you know may have been unknowingly falling trap to this bias?
- Chapter 6 talked a lot about celebrating. How do you celebrate things in your organization? What do you specifically do as a leader to recognize others' accomplishments?

### *Week 4: Chapters 7-8 (62 pages)*

- A central theme in Chapter 7 is the struggle between “be good” self and the “get better” self. What are ways your organization can encourage the “get better” self/improve mindset?
- The question proposed at the beginning of the chapter 8 is: How is it that a person could be more afraid of pushing a button without permission than dying in a fiery explosion? What are your thoughts on this question? What experiences do you have that could relate to this? How can you build in steps to ensure this does not happen within your organization?

- The military tends to have high power gradients. Given what was discussed in this chapter and your own experiences, what are your thoughts on how the military power gradient functions? Are there ways to make it more optimal?

Week 5: *Chapters 9-11 (68 pages)*

- The author makes an argument that goals are not great in many contexts. To what extent do you agree with this? Why? If not goals, then what?
- How do you incorporate periods of learning/growth, “bluework,” into your life?
- The final chapter outlines an alternate outcome for the El Faro. Discuss/think about where you could apply these principles in your organization to create better future outcomes.

**Additional Resources:**

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- [Radical Candor](#): This Forbes article discusses how radical candor can increase results. There is also a book by the same title which you may find a good compliment. You can also watch a [TED Talk](#) on the topic.