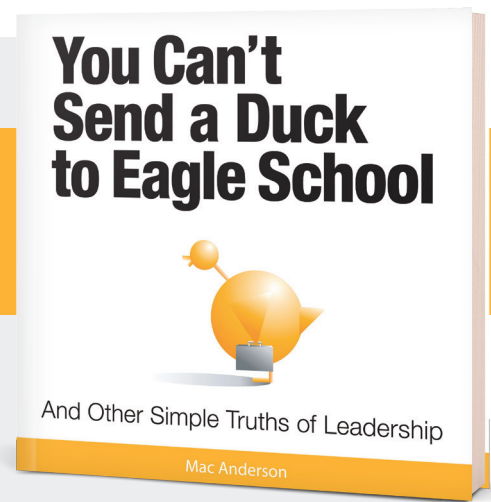


Discussion Guide

You Can't Send a Duck to Eagle School... and Other Simple Truths of Leadership

by Mac Anderson



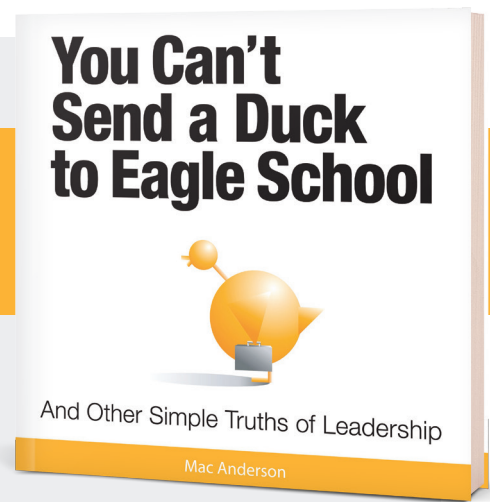
Provide copies of *You Can't Send a Duck to Eagle School* to each meeting participant to serve as both a learning tool and a future resource to reinforce training ideas. Giving the book to participants prior to the meeting allows people to read the material and come prepared for discussion. Books given at the beginning of the meeting allow for an interactive study of material.

1. One of the driving principles behind *You Can't Send a Duck to Eagle School* is that when looking to hire people for your organization, there are things that can be taught and things that can't. While things such as a positive attitude and personality can't be taught, excellent customer service and product knowledge can be. Think of a recent hire for your organization. Review your company's hiring process and think of ways the Duck and Eagle principle already exists and how it can be improved upon.
2. When is the last time you asked one of your employees how YOU could help them? Are there areas right now where you know some of your employees are struggling? Write down 3 simple ways you can help them do their job better.
3. Change is the key that unlocks the door to growth and excitement in any organization. Name a time recently that you inspired a culture of change, as a leader, and what the result of such change was. Think of the 3-year "every product will be obsolete" example in the book and how Bill Gates and Peter Drucker put each of their products on "trial" every three years in order to beat the competition to it.
4. T.S. Elliot said, "Only those who risk going too far can possibly find out how far to go." Describe some ways you/your company rewards employees who are innovative, creative, and risk takers in their ideas.
5. Identify what your strengths and weaknesses are as a leader. How can you strengthen the areas in which you're not as strong? (i.e., hiring someone with more aptitude in that area, delegating those tasks to someone else, getting more training or education in that area, etc.)
6. "We need to replace our brain with our heart because that's often how people make decisions." In accordance with this quote from the book, your competitive advantage many times lies in the fact that the emotions and feelings of your customers drive their actions. How does your company go about creating a good experience to go along with its products and services?
7. How can you, as a manager, encourage out-of-the-box thinking from your employees? What are some ways to reward such thinking?

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8. What are some personal touches you can put in place (i.e., sending a small gift to new employees at their home, a note to new customers thanking them for their order), to create a good first impression?
9. Write out a list of current “to-dos” that are waiting for you back at the office. Circle the 3 that you least want to do and make those 3 your top priorities for tomorrow morning.
10. Write down a few ways you can simplify your business or everyday operations in order to utilize the “less is more” approach detailed in the book.
11. We learned that managing your own attitude (as a leader) is not only a personal thing, but can affect the attitude of the team as a whole. Mac Anderson talked about how exercise is essential in maintaining his positive attitude. What are 3 things you do in order to keep your attitude from “heading south”?
12. Take a recent customer service problem at your company and dissect it, essentially identifying every point of contact between the customer and your employees. Where did the moment of truth occur? What steps need to be taken to improve upon the process to ensure that sort of situation doesn't happen often or again?
13. Think about your recruiting processes and the applicants you attract. How can you put the “companies don't succeed, people do” principles into action?
14. Create your one-page strategic plan using this outline:
 - Vision—a clear picture of your destination:
 - Mission—the driving purpose of your business:
 - Values—the guide you use for making decisions and how you treat each other:
 - Objectives—the numbers you track:
 - Strategies—the paths you've decided to take:
 - Priorities—the work that needs to get done and who needs to do it:
15. Identify a few ways to challenge (“push”) your best people right now.
16. In what areas of your life or your work are you “above the zone,” “in the zone,” and “below the zone”? What changes do you need to implement in order to be “in the zone” the majority of the time?
17. Brainstorm ideas about how you can help initiate turning up the “Fun-O-Meter” in your office.
18. What is the one word that is oftentimes the difference between a good leader and a great leader? How good are you at giving credit where credit is deserved?
19. The three keys to effective communication are listed in the book as:
 - I. What's happening: share as much as you can about the company's goals and current projects,

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especially good news. Also be proactive if things aren't going as planned.

- II. **What's coming up: coming attractions—your team is always interested in what's new.**
- III. **How they're doing: This one is critical. Look for opportunities, private and public, to say good things or talk about how they could do better. Most people want to know how they're doing, but are afraid to ask. It is important to visit and connect with team members personally. If you were standing in front of the whole company right now, detail some current events (good news), coming attractions, and feedback you would want to share with your employees.**

