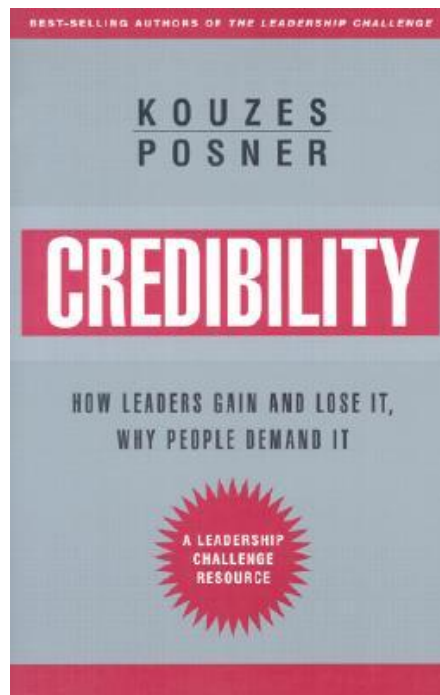




Credibility: How Leaders Gain and Lose It, Why People Demand It

James M. Kouzes , Barry Z. Posner

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"Leadership is personal. It's not about the corporation, the community, or the country. It's about you. If people don't believe in the messenger, they won't believe the message. If people don't believe in you, they won't believe in what you say. And if it's about you, then it's about your beliefs, your values, your principles."-- from Credibility

In this best-selling book, Kouzes and Posner (authors of *The Leadership Challenge*), explain why leadership is above all a relationship, with credibility as the cornerstone. They provide rich examples of real managers in action and reveal the six key disciplines and related practices that strengthen a leader's capacity for developing and sustaining credibility. Kouzes and Posner show how leaders can encourage greater initiative, risk-taking, and productivity by demonstrating trust in employees and resolving conflicts on the basis of principles, not positions.

Credibility: How Leaders Gain and Lose It, Why People Demand It Details

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Ian Colby says

I couldn't even make it past the 2nd chapter. This book was advertised to me as a treatise on the nature of credibility. It's not. It's a self-help book. My experience has taught me to be wary of self-help books. They're full of condescending, unfounded instructions. They leave out data to prove a point the authors have already made up their mind about. No, thank you.

Stephen says

READ SEP 2011

Excellent follow-up to *Leadership Challenge*. Timely treatment of an important leadership gap: credibility. Kouzes and Posner describe six principles for developing and maintaining leadership credibility.

Best quotes: "threat, power, position, and money do not earn commitment; they earn compliance. And compliance produces adequacy, not greatness" (p. 32) and "The intuitive understanding that a single thing is or could be many things, depending upon how you look at it, is central to the learning climate created by leaders." (p. 169).

Jim Razinha says

Kouzes and Posner are masters at saying in many words what could be said in few. I guess there's nothing wrong with that as people won't shell out big money for tracts. This might be a good primer for anyone completely unfamiliar with leadership concepts. If you have kept up with the trends, it is a wordy refresher. But to be fair, told with nice anecdotes.

Soundview Executive Book Summaries says

Credibility: How Leaders Gain and Lose It, Why People Demand It by James Kouzes and Barry Posner was chosen by Soundview Executive Book Summaries as one of the Top 30 Business Books of 2011.

THE SOUNDVIEW REVIEW:

In the early 1990s researchers James Kouzes and Barry Posner released the book *Credibility*. The book was the result of more than a decade of study of the rise and fall of credibility, both in the workplace and beyond. At the time, as Kouzes told Soundview in an interview, credibility was reaching a low, particularly in the workplace. Neither author could have predicted what would occur during the following two decades. As they document in the newly updated edition of *Credibility: How Leaders Gain It and Lose It, Why People Demand It*, the roller-coaster ride of credibility stuttered its way back to a peak as the 1990s gave way to the new millennium. It was at that point that the wheels came off and with each successive crash (Dot Com,

Corporate, Global Financial) credibility plummeted and dragged previously infallible institutions (religion, small business, public schools) with it.

In the newly released edition of *Credibility*, readers will benefit from the authors' three decades of concentrated study on the subject of credibility. Kouzes and Posner are among the best at turning mountains of research into manageable, memorable prose. The authors' labeling of the book as a revised edition is something of a misnomer. It is jammed with new information and provides current case studies with organizations of every discipline and size.

If executives manage to take only one piece of advice from *Credibility*, one hopes that they remember the authors' acronym DWYSYWD (Do What You Say You Will Do). This principle (and its companion Do What We Say We Will Do) lies at the heart of what drives employees to superior performance. Kouzes and Posner certainly do what they say they will do by delivering another outstanding examination of what makes the best leaders tick. *Credibility* is a worthy companion to their previous books *The Truth About Leadership*, *A Leader's Legacy*, and *The Leadership Challenge*.

Soundview's 8-page Executive Book Summary of *Credibility* is available [here](#).

Gwen says

A must read for those desiring leadership roles. Leadership is not just for the workplace but for life in general. The book confirms that credibility is how leaders earn the trust and confidence of their constituents.

Derrick Trimble says

For fans of Kouzes and Posner, please forgive me but I found *Credibility* elementary in content and originality. Even though the introduction suggests those that might benefit from the reading, I could not help but to wonder who in current leadership positions would find anything new from the material. I used mind mapping from the chapters on the six disciplines for earning and sustaining credibility as a filter to personalize the sub-points. Although a useful exercise, it was only employed to keep me interested to the end.

Chris says

I highly recommend this book to anyone who is in a leadership position, whether formal or informal, professional or personal. This is not a book that told me anything I did not know already, as is the case with many professional help books. However, this book did resonate with me regarding many of the leadership qualities I hold dear, and provided research data as well as real-world examples to affirm those principles. It is well articulated and organized.

One of the things that struck me was the idea that "Leadership is a relationship between those who aspire to lead and those who choose to follow." There is a lot of meaning in this. A 'relationship', two people who both gain from and depend upon one another. Also, people choose to follow. You are not a leader simply because you are in a leadership position. People have to choose to follow you. And what will you do to connect with those people to get them to follow you?

The book also talks about doing what we commit to do. This is one that concerns me. It takes years to build up trust with people. Consistently following through on agreements shows people that you are credible. Yet all it takes is one instance of failure to erode that trust.

It is also important to create a culture of trust and excellence. This is harder said than done, and a major culture shift can be painful and slow. We are advised to surround ourselves with people who share our values and tell us what we need to hear, rather than that they think we want to hear. But it is not enough. We have to continually develop those around us in order to be successful. You can develop a greater level of credibility from those you lead if you recognize when to talk and when to listen. And allow people and trust people to follow through on things that will help them grow.

There are many other important keys to gaining credibility, and I suggest that you read this book to get the insights. But I do have to add one last thing that the book suggested that rang true to me: become a story teller. Those who know me know why this is a big deal.

Jon Wallace says

Have Kouzes & Posner's work for years and this recent edition to their contributions to leadership is as always, excellent. The importance of integrity and relationship for leaders at any organizational level can not be denied. The authors story telling abilities and research findings presented in a very readable (as opposed to academic) makes this a must read for anyone looking for self or organizational improvements.

Joey says

I'm so pleased that I found this book because, even though it was written in 2003, it really helped me to make sense of the leadership crisis in our educational institutions, financial institutions, and political institutions. Credibility demands a commitment to "the common good," and we either can't agree on what that means or we don't care anymore. Still, this is an optimistic book full of practical wisdom backed by solid research.

Chad says

A crucial book for any leader or aspiring leader. The foundation for any effective leadership over a long term is credibility. Fear and bullying will eventually run it's course and though may produce in the short term eventually leads to a hollow organization.

This book lasers in on how credibility is important through the mountains of research and walks readers through on what it means to have credibility. It is useful to realize how to gain it, keep it and to regain it.

Highly recommended for anyone in a leadership position or aspiring to be.

Louise Sullivan says

This is one of the best leadership books I have read. While this was required reading for a class, the themes of the book really resonated with me. To be a credible leader one must be honest, approachable,

collaborative, listen among other qualities. Even if a leader has great ideas, without credibility he or she will have difficulty bringing constituents along. My goal is to strive to be the most credible leader possible.

Joy says

Overall, this book gives an in-depth consideration to the topic of credibility in leadership with a lot of cool discussions about stuff like the language of leadership, the disciplines of credibility, the difference credibility makes and the need for relationship-based leadership.

Cyndie says

An easy-to-read research-based book that looks at what characteristics people want and expect from their leaders and the fundamental tensions that exist in trying to simultaneously be a good leader AND a good coworker.

Michael Vincent says

Another excellent work by the authors of one of my all time favorite leadership books, the Leadership Challenge. There is some overlap with the Leadership Challenge, but their emphasis on honesty, competence and and inspiration (vision) is a great reminder for all in leadership. Though the book is now dated, it is still very applicable for our day.

Karl Mueller says

Excellent book that should be read by all leaders. The authors start out by saying that "credibility is the foundation of leadership" and that credibility is about how leaders earn the trust and confidence of those that lead. The first chapter builds on that foundation and establishes the fact that good leadership is all about relationship. People are looking for leaders who are honest, caring, have integrity, are consistent, competent and are forward-looking. Based on extensive research around the globe, this book is a must read for all those who want to lead with effectiveness and integrity. While there is undoubtedly a western bias in terms of approach, my experience in 42 nations of the world working with NGO's, churches, ministries and organizations, tell me that there is much for us to learn no matter what part of the globe we live in. The content of this book, with some contextualization is highly relevant and needed. I can't recommend it more highly.
