



Judgment: How Winning Leaders Make Great Calls

By Noel M. Tichy, Warren G. Bennis

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“With good judgment, little else matters. Without it, nothing else matters.”

Whether we’re talking about United States presidents, CEOs, Major League coaches, or wartime generals, leaders are remembered for their best and worst judgment calls. In the face of ambiguity, uncertainty, and conflicting demands, the quality of a leader’s judgment determines the fate of the entire organization. That’s why judgment is the essence of leadership.

Yet despite its importance, judgment has always been a fairly murky concept. The leadership literature has been conspicuously quiet on what, exactly, defines it. Does judgment differ from common sense or gut instinct? Is it a product of luck? Of smarts? Or is there a process for making consistently good calls?

Noel Tichy and Warren Bennis have each spent decades studying and teaching leadership and advising top CEOs such as Jack Welch and Howard Schultz. Now, in their first collaboration, they offer a powerful framework for making tough calls when the stakes are high and the right path is far from obvious. They show how to recognize the critical moment before a judgment call, when swift and decisive action is essential, and also how to execute a decision after the call.

Tichy and Bennis bring their three-dimensional model to life with interviews with world-class leaders who have thrived or suffered because of their judgment calls. These stories include:

- Jeff Immelt, CEO of General Electric, whose judgment to grow through research and development transformed GE into the world’s premier technology growth company.
- Joel Klein, chancellor of the New York City Department of Education, who made tough calls about teachers, students, and parents while turning around a troubled school system.
- Jim McNerney, CEO of Boeing, whose strategic judgment helped him reinvigorate his company and restore a culture of trust and respect.
- The late general Wayne Downing, who found an unexpected opportunity in the

midst of crisis when he led the Special Operations raid to capture Manuel Noriega.

- A. G. Lafley, CEO of Procter & Gamble, who bet \$57 billion to purchase Gillette and reinvent his company.
- Brad Anderson, CEO of Best Buy, who made the call to commit totally to a customer-centric strategy and led his people to execute it.

Whether you're running a small department or a global corporation, Judgment will give you a framework for evaluating any situation, making the call, and correcting if necessary during the execution phase. It will show you how to handle the overlapping domains of people, strategy, and crisis management. And it will help you teach your entire team to make the right call more often.

No organization can afford to neglect this crucial discipline—and no previous book has ever brought it into such clear focus.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Leadership gurus Tichy (*Control Your Own Destiny or Someone Else Will*) and Bennis (*On Becoming a Leader*) examine the critical role judgment plays in effective leadership. Calling judgment the essence of leadership, they identify three judgment domains that can undermine any leader's success—people, strategy and crisis—and explore such challenges as selecting the top team, CEO succession, and crisis as a leadership development opportunity. The good news: even if one isn't born with good judgment, it can be learned. To sustain it, a leader must have character, courage and clear standards, especially when facing obstacles. For example, Jim McNerney, who became CEO of Boeing when it was amid a Justice Department investigation, developed a story line—or Teachable Point of View—that created and reinforced a theme of high ethical standards, bringing about a new partnership with Boeing's stakeholders. Additional real-world examples from Royal Dutch Shell, Proctor & Gamble and General Electric illustrate critical points of both good and bad judgment. Easy-to-read charts, lists and matrices reinforce key points. Particularly useful is the final Handbook for Leadership Judgment focusing on the practical level. This engaging and thorough work should be mandatory reading for executives and managers at all levels. (Nov. 8)

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Review

This is an instant classic that will be read and consulted by leaders and those who seek to become leaders for years to come.

Richard D. Parsons, chairman and CEO, Time Warner

Great calls deserve a comparable book to explain them, and now we have one. Read, learn, enjoy.

George P. Shultz, former United States secretary of state

The leadership judgment framework is a tool leaders can use to develop the ability in their executive teams. This book can benefit anyone who is in or aspires to be in a leadership role.

Dieter Zetsche, chairman, DaimlerChrysler

Judgment, from two of the most respected thought leaders of our times, is a blueprint, a gift to leaders of the future.

Frances Heselbein, chairman, Leader to Leader Institute, and founding president, Peter F. Drucker Foundation for Nonprofit Management

Tichy and Bennis write with clarity and good sense. You can hang your hat on the authors' understanding of good judgment and its role in effective leadership.

Jeff Kindler, chairman and CEO, Pfizer

Judgment is a singular achievement. It's just the right blend of management wisdom and leadership action.

Howard Schultz, founder and chairman, Starbucks

Judgment is an enjoyable read illuminating key judgments made by some of America's foremost business leaders. David W. Helleniak, vice chairman, Morgan Stanley

This is as close to a definitive book on leadership as one can pray for.

Amitai Etzioni, author of "My Brother's Keeper" I am a raving fan of both Noel Tichy and Warren Bennis. In this important book they give a crash course on judgment, revealing the tools great leaders use to make the right calls at the right time.

Ken Blanchard, coauthor, *The One Minute Manager* and *Leading at a Higher Level*

"Sisdemenore- Edward A. Snyder, dean, University of Chicago Graduate School of Business

If you were to read only one book this year on leadership, this would be it.

Vijay Govindarajan, professor of International Business, Tuck School at Dartmouth

aThis is an instant classic that will be read and consulted by leadersaand those who seek to become leadersafor years to come.a

aRichard D. Parsons, chairman and CEO, Time Warner

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About the Author

Noel M. Tichy is the author of *Control Your Destiny or Someone Else Will*, *The Leadership Engine*, *The Cycle of Leadership*, and many other business bestsellers. He is a professor at the Ross School of Business at the University of Michigan and advises CEOs around the world.

Warren G. Bennis is the author of *On Becoming a Leader*, *Reinventing Leadership*, and many other business bestsellers. He is currently university professor and distinguished professor of business administration at the University of Southern California. He has consulted for many Fortune 500 companies and world leaders.

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