

“In a sea of drab and monotonous leadership books, Markwardt’s story is one that will not only catapult your leadership skills to the next level but entertain you at the same time.”

—Justin Volrath, SVP of Sales at Beyond Payments

“Markwardt’s leadership resembles a coach who can push an elite athlete to the peak of their game. He details all of his insights through this guidebook to grow leaders. His concepts told through the Leadership Wheel provide a road map to success for everyone at any level of their career.”

—Bill Schuffenhauer, 2002 Olympic Silver Medalist,
Motivational Speaker, Small Business Owner

“Markwardt provides concrete strategies on how to create a vision and associated tactics on engaging and enrolling a team, all the while cleverly wrapped in an on-the-road travelogue. This is a must-read for all managers.”

—Pat Helmers, Host of the Sales Babble Podcast

“This is not your average business book. Markwardt teaches leadership concepts while taking you on a travel adventure. The end result is not only entertaining but the ultimate playbook to develop leaders to the highest level.”

—Ryan Thorne, Senior Sales Leader, Fortune 1000 Company

Grow into an Elite Leader

The Grass Is Browner on the Other Side

▶ LEADERSHIP EDITION ◀

JON MARKWARDT

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THE GRASS IS BROWNER ON THE OTHER SIDE® LEADERSHIP EDITION

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To Steven Junor

You've taught me more about attitude in the battle of your glioblastoma than anyone could ever learn from a book, mentor or elite leader. Ultimately, everyone's attitude is a choice. Thank you for having the strength to stay positive and inspire those around you. Your encouragement for me to continue my career as an author led to the adventures in this book. You provide an important leadership lesson prior to Chapter 1. Stay positive, and love your life. Love you, buddy!

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The Quest for Leadership

My first book was written for sales professionals looking to grow their careers. Equally important are the people managing those individuals. This book was written for those looking to take on leadership roles, active managers and respected leaders striving to grow to an elite level. While the concepts in this book are catered to the sales profession, elite leadership principles are applicable across all platforms.

There are many managers in the workforce, but there are not enough leaders who provide learning and growth for each person on their team. The *Grass Is Browner* concept is especially powerful for leaders able to create this environment. This is produced by providing a culture of not wanting to go anywhere else, which equates to the greenest grass on the block. These employees will learn, grow and better their careers exactly where they are at.

Grass Is Browner is a philosophy you are able to embrace for your career and personal life. This philosophy encourages

you to believe you are in the best position. There is not greener grass on the other side, because you only have the moment you are in. This mantra encourages you to love the position you are in and grow your green grass. Your yard and life can and will be an example of success for everyone to admire.

Too often managers become overly concerned with day-to-day tasks and forget to concentrate on creating this environment for their team. They stop caring about each person individually and only care about reports, activity levels, and their own quota. When a manager's only concern is themselves, the atmosphere on the team shifts to a *Grass Is Greener* effect as their team searches for new opportunities.

A team determined to water their own grass will provide a leader with one requirement for securing an elite team. Tenure. But how is this practice created? And how does a leader truly effect the culture of a team? These questions will help us focus on the differences between a boss and a leader as we navigate through this book together.

Most often, the first leaders we have in our lives are our parents. From there, we have other family members and friends inserted as we start to expand our leadership network. Eventually, we grow older and the number of leaders and influencers in our lives stretch far beyond the initial bubble of our parents and immediate family.

My own quest for leadership is a personal journey to know the leaders I came from. My great-grandfather immigrated to the United States from an unknown town in East Germany at the beginning of the twentieth century, but the details of our family history are foggy at best. The specifics are incomplete due to language barriers and not knowing where to search. With my grandfather, Ken Markwardt, approaching his ninetieth birthday, I

felt an urgency to find and visit the town his father came from. My goal is to bring more of this history to life for him and my family.

In an age of instant knowledge on our phones, tablets and personal computers; it is growing seemingly rare to not be able to find factual answers to our questions. While it is common to not know where your family came from, this answer could not be found on the internet. To find answers to the mystery of where my surname originated, I would need to do far more than a Google search.

Authenticity and unusual analogies are an important part of my writing. And this expedition met these criteria to articulate leadership concepts. Consequently, the search for my family history is the premise of my travels and writing for the entire book.

I believe in order to be successful, we must be in a constant state of learning. While I have spent my entire career in sales and leadership positions, I am continually looking to learn and grow my own knowledge on this subject. This story is not about finding a town, my great-grandfather's birth certificate or tracking down a distant relative. The narrative is a tale of adjusting my life and schedule quickly for the greater good of the book. This allows me to tackle the subject matter like an elite leader who continually shifts focus for the benefit of their team.

I believe a lot can be learned from visiting new places and people. Therefore, I will allow my travels to take me outside of my desired destinations for the purpose of collecting leadership concepts along the way. I plan to interview three recognizable leaders on my travels as they share their top leadership characteristics and describe examples of how these traits have impacted their careers.

Markwardt's Wheel of Leadership is a chart designed to outline the necessary components for an elite sales leader to

build and operate their team. I will detail each section of this Wheel throughout our journey. Retaining your employees and completing the entire Wheel is no easy task. Elite leadership requires a commitment to the long-term as the Wheel will never be achieved by an overnight sprint.

We are in a society constantly searching for the next best thing. Careers once operating in a format of hire to retire are no longer the norm. In order to retain your best individuals, it is imperative learning and growth occur. This will be a theme in the book and the center of the Leadership Wheel.

My ultimate mission is to provide you with entertaining stories for established leadership concepts to illustrate the social and business proof for each chapter. You may find yourself reading an unusual story that you believe has nothing to do with growing into an elite leader. When this occurs, please know you will find a point to the story later on. The key is to keep reading as the adventures herein will allow each leadership concept to be better understood and remembered.

Furthermore, I don't like to travel alone. Growing into an elite leader is a journey in itself, so this book will allow us to travel on a leadership quest together. Now as my travel partner, it's time for us to go adventure!

1



Midnight Sun

Markwardt's Wheel of Leadership was created for you to recognize your own needs as a leader, achieve them and coach your people to progress their career in a similar fashion. Whether your needs are being met or you are striving for growth in the company to achieve your needs, this Leadership Wheel will be your greatest measurement of success. Building the entire Wheel will result in growing your career to be among a small group of leaders considered elite.

The outer circle of the Leadership Wheel defines the requirements for elite leadership to occur. And the center places the greatest need of a leader as their ability to create an environment where employees can learn and grow. But learning and growth will not properly occur with a manager in place. Therefore, it is important to establish the six attributes necessary for leadership. Care, trust, attitude, preparation, communication and urgency are the characteristics necessary for an individual to grow into an elite leader.