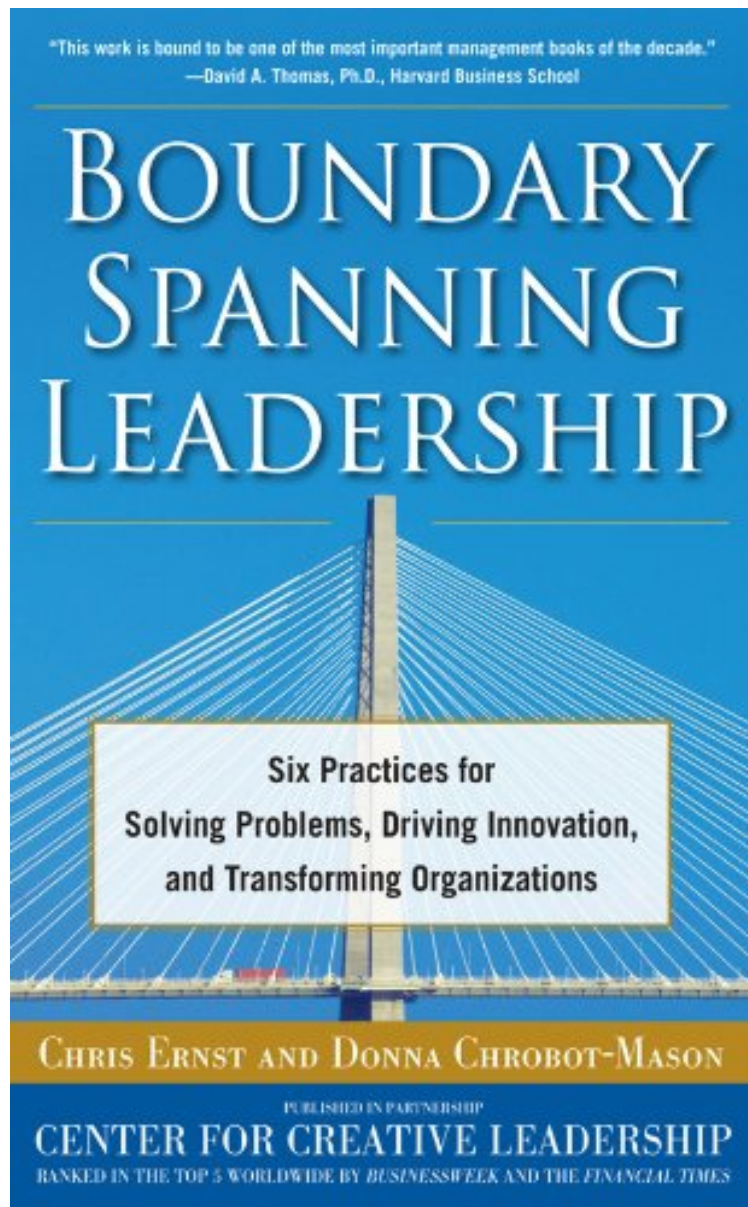


[Read now] *Boundary Spanning Leadership: Six Practices for Solving Problems, Driving Innovation, and Transforming Organizations*

Boundary Spanning Leadership: Six Practices for Solving Problems, Driving Innovation, and Transforming Organizations

Chris Ernst, Donna Chrobot-Mason
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Chris Ernst, Donna Chrobot-Mason : Boundary Spanning Leadership: Six Practices for Solving Problems, Driving Innovation, and Transforming Organizations before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised *Boundary Spanning Leadership: Six Practices for Solving Problems, Driving Innovation, and Transforming Organizations*:

6 of 6 people found the following review helpful. Critical, clear, and implementable

By Elizabeth H. Cottrell

BOOK REVIEW: *Boundary Spanning Leadership: Six Practices for Solving Problems, Driving Innovation, and Transforming Organizations* by Chris Ernst and Donna Chrobot-Mason

How refreshing and empowering to find a book on contemporary leadership that not only frames relevant issues that organization leaders face by identifying boundaries they are likely to encounter, but it also offers practical solutions to spanning these boundaries based on a decade of real-world research by leadership professionals at the Center for Creative Leadership. I'll wager that readers of this book will: 1) either already be dealing with many of the issues presented and find the discussions a veritable lifeline or 2) they will instantly recognize situations they have encountered in the past and understand for the first time why they were so intractable and challenging.

The rapidly shifting landscape of corporate and nonprofit leadership creates unique pitfalls as well as opportunities. Research surveys of over 125 senior level executives revealed an appallingly low number who felt they were very effective at knowing how to collaborate effectively across boundaries in their current leadership roles. Five primary boundary types were identified for discussion purposes, though the authors recognized that often they are closely linked:

1. Vertical boundaries between hierarchical levels of the organization
2. Horizontal boundaries between functions
3. Stakeholder boundaries with customers and vendors
4. Demographic boundaries in working with people from diverse groups
5. Geographic boundaries of distance and region

Concluding that boundary spanning practices can turn boundaries into frontiers ripe with untapped potential, the authors explore what these practices might be, providing compelling actual stories/examples to illustrate them, and offering exercises and strategies to implement them in your own situation.

The authors first discuss the boundary management practices of Buffering (Creating Safety) and Reflecting (Fostering Respect). Then they move into practices that forge common ground: Connection (Building Trust) and Mobilizing (Developing Community). Next in the evolution of boundary-spanning are the practices that develop new frontiers: Weaving (Advancing interdependence) and Transforming (Enabling Reinvention).

"Together, these practices combine to create what authors Chris Ernst and Donna Chrobot-Mason call the Nexus Effect. The Nexus Effect allows groups to be more agile in response to changing markets; be more flexible in devising and deploying cross-functional learning and problem-solving capabilities; work with partners in deeper, more open relationships; empower virtual teams; and create a welcoming, diverse, and inclusive organization that brings out everybody's best." (From the Editorial Review in)

While the challenges described here will be familiar to those who follow leadership trends and practices, I believe the authors have developed and presented what many will find to be an original, useful and implementable approach to thinking about and managing them.

To share boundary-spanning practices YOUR organization has used please visit the book review at AvoLead's blog: [...]

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. A Book That is Right on Time!

By Albert Soto

Boundary Spanning Leadership: Six Practices for Solving Problems, Driving Innovation, and Transforming Organizations

Since Thomas Friedman's bestseller, *The World is Flat*, was published in 2005, the world of business has felt anything but flat - the global financial crisis, climate change, energy crisis, and political and religious unrest. Why do things feel bumpier than ever? In their preface this is the opening statement and question that the authors present progressing to the reality that in a world in which a flat world perspective can no longer keep up with the necessary relational connections that are necessary to help groups and organizations succeed in bridging boundaries. Matter of fact the author's present that the most important challenges we face today are interdependent - they only can be solved by groups working collaboratively together. They continue on to state, "For businesses, governments, organizations, and communities to solve current problems and realize new opportunities, leaders must think and act beyond group boundaries and identities."

In their thinking boundaries are not limits to constrain us but are in fact new frontiers where the most advanced, breakthrough thinking resides. Therefore, the authors present a model that they call the "Boundary Spanning Leadership Model" which has six practices that inspire what is termed as the "Nexus Effect." The Nexus effect is defined as the limitless possibilities and inspiring results that groups can realize together above and beyond what they can achieve on their own. It is in this context that the forces that are pressing us today are challenging leaders to have the courage to see the world other than flat. This student will attempt to summarize three overarching core concepts that are keys to successfully implementing this model:

- * First, leaders must completely surrender their "flat world thinking" as it relates to organizational transformation. Flat world thinking with all of its organizational charts based on hierarchical systems do not bridge the gaps that are necessary to have a greater breadth of implementing mission. To mix these two models is to only frustrate those in the organization as well as to continue to divide people and groups. Flat world thinking is so focused on the leader or leaders that it does not create an environment that would allow people from their own strong sense of personal identity are collaborative with others to implement solutions or strategy. The author's list five boundaries that must be bridged which unlike viewing the world as flat that offers only "one-dimensional" expertise to come to the table to generate new organizational solutions. Instead, they offer to seek to harness "multi-dimensional" expertise at the juncture between groups.
- * Second, leaders cannot minimize the human element in inspiring people to a common goal. That which often times resists productive transformation of organizations is the focus on the technological elements of organizational systems and not enough focus or importance given to the connection of groups and people that within the atmosphere of safety are empowered to keep their own unique identity. This new skill set demands that leaders must "lead from the middle" rather than the

"flat world" understanding of leading groups and people to a common goal. The necessary element is "inter-group trust" which the authors define as: a state of mutual confidence and integrity that develops when boundaries are suspended and new relationships are built. All of this impacts the connectedness of people as well as empowers them to attain the common goal in the context of mutual respect.* Third, effective leaders who are practicing "Boundary Spanning Leadership" are able to glean from a combination of ideas from the fields of social psychology and organizational development in which the practice of transforming seeks to bring together different people (the who) using different approaches (the how) to cross-cut boundaries of identity and enable inter-group reinvention. Because of the dual-disciplined nature of this model transformation is more about creating an environment where existing identities and perspectives are open to inquiry, discovery and change rather than implementation of tactics. This book was a fabulous read and I enjoyed the vocabulary that the authors introduced that assisted me in contextualizing the nature of this model. I enjoyed this book so much that I have introduced to several of my friends who are now reading this book with some of their key staff members. 3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Advanced Leadership Skills Await! By Darren S. This book provided me with some very solid ideas regarding the bridging of groups and painted leadership in a different light. The real world examples made the concepts easy to understand. I am applying some of these concepts with one of the plants I work with and I do believe that the ideas set forth in the book will assist in bringing the group together and making the whole greater than the sum of the parts. I would recommend this book to any senior leader looking for an enlightened view of leadership.

PRAISE FOR BOUNDARY SPANNING LEADERSHIP "Fostering a culture of teamwork among business units and partners is crucial for bottom-line success. This groundbreaking book, packed with practical examples and based on solid research, shows us how to get started." -- Marc Noel, Chairman, Noeuml;l Group LLC "In this deeply insightful look at the demands on 21st-century leaders, Ernst and Chrobot-Mason outline six boundary spanning leadership practices derived from case studies and research with thousands of participating managers. This work is bound to be one of the most important management books of the decade." -- David A. Thomas, Ph.D., H. Naylor Fitzhugh Professor of Business Administration at Harvard Business School "Few books capture the needs and narrative of today's business and so elegantly lay out a plan to address its challenges. Boundary Spanning Leadership nails this . . . Consume it and play your role!" -- Andy Stefanovich, Chief Curator and Provocateur, Prophet "Boundary Spanning Leadership draws on rigorous global research and real-world experience to help leaders move into new frontiers where they can find answers and practices for creating success." -- Jack Stahl, former CEO, Revlon, and President /COO, Coca-Cola "The future will be punctuated by new spans across old boundaries. This book shows you how to improve your span ability." -- Bob Johansen, Ph.D., Distinguished Fellow, Institute for the Future, and bestselling author of Get There Early and Leaders Make the Future Catalyze collaboration, drive innovation, transform your organization--with Boundary Spanning Leadership you can put it ALL together! We live in a world of vast collaborative potential. Yet all too often, powerful boundaries create barriers that can splinter groups. And this can lead to uninspiring results. To transform borders into frontiers in today's global, multistakeholder organizations, you need Boundary Spanning Leadership. Powered by a decade of global research and practice by the top-ranked Center for Creative Leadership (CCL), this book takes you from rural towns in the United States to Hong Kong's skyline and from a modernizing South Africa to the bustling streets of India, showing you how to build bridges across boundaries. Through compelling stories and practical tools and tactics, yoursquo;l learn how to apply the six boundary spanning practices that occur at the nexus where groups collide, intersect, and link: Buffering defines boundaries to create safety Reflecting creates understanding of boundaries to foster respect Connecting suspends boundaries to build trust Mobilizing reframes boundaries to develop community Weaving interlaces boundaries to advance interdependence Transforming cross-cuts boundaries to enable reinvention Together, these practices combine to create what authors Chris Ernst and Donna Chrobot-Mason call the Nexus Effect. The Nexus Effect allows groups to be more agile in response to changing markets; be more flexible in devising and deploying cross-functional learning and problem-solving capabilities; work with partners in deeper, more open relationships; empower virtual teams; and create a welcoming, diverse, and inclusive organization that brings out everybody's best. Boundaries exist. What matters most is how you work to bridge these divides and transform your organization's wide-ranging talents and knowledge to deliver value. With Boundary Spanning Leadership, the possibilities are limitless. For more about the book and free resources, visit www.spanboundaries.com.

About the Author Chris Ernst is a Senior Enterprise faculty member for the Center for Creative Leadership, the leading global nonprofit institution dedicated exclusively to leadership. He is a coauthor of *Success for the New Global Manager: How to Work across Distances, Countries, and Cultures*. He lives in Raleigh, NC. Donna Chrobot-Mason is an associate professor in the psychology department at the University of Cincinnati and director of the Center for Organizational Leadership. She has presented at nearly 50 conferences and has published numerous journal articles on diversity and leadership topics. She lives near Cincinnati, OH. Today's world spans boundaries. So, too, must

leadership. Read the book, then join the conversation at www.spanboundaries.com.