



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

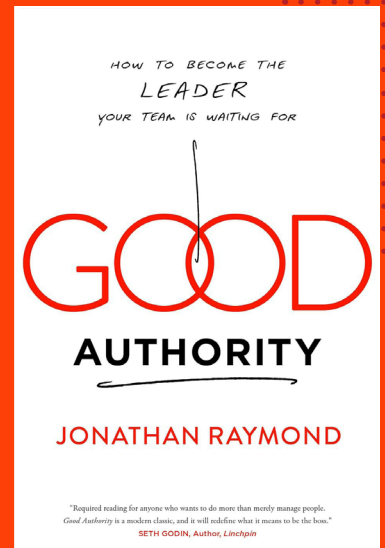
S E R I E S

THE NUTSHELL OF GOOD AUTHORITY

By Jonathan P. Raymond
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At age eleven, I accompanied my mother, a psychology professor, to her college class. That day, she asked, "Why is it that, even when they're lost, men won't ask for directions?" The class gave many answers, and I chimed in, "The reason men don't ask for directions is so that way, when they figure it out, they get to be the hero." Looking back, this moment signaled a belief that has shaped my life's work: real leadership isn't about swooping in to fix problems, but about creating a space where people find solutions themselves. That's "Good Authority." It rests on three core principles: (1) The deepest purpose of a business is to change the lives of the people who work there, (2) The role of leaders and managers is to show people how professional and personal growth are inseparable, and (3) The way to get people to be engaged is to be more engaged with them.

Too often, we treat work as "for the boss," focusing on business goals first and people's needs second. Employees have more options now, demanding genuine personal growth, not carrots and sticks. By using our authority to help them discover theirs, we speak a new language of self-authority where people own their



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Jonathan P. Raymond is a leadership coach, author, and former CEO who helps business leaders become better humans—and better bosses. After two decades toggling between business development and personal growth, he gave up trying to pick a side and founded Re-found, where he now works with executives, managers, and teams to build the kind of professional relationships that actually work.

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work. This calls for reimagining accountability: “liquid gold” lies in small behaviors—unanswered emails, missed deadlines—that we address early. Instead of micromanaging tasks from fear, we foster relationships that help people grow. We must resist the “Superman” impulse and practice “More Yoda,” letting others step up while we mentor from the side. Though nerve-wracking—“If they do it without me, what’s my value?”—it frees people to take creative risks and learn.

We also inherit leadership “superhero” archetypes: the Friend who struggles with holding a firm line, the Fighter who overflows with ideas but creates overwhelm, and the Fixer who micromanages and disempowers. Each must pull back to let others own their work. Meanwhile, employees themselves often reflect five archetypes: the Pragmatist (steady but quiet), the Provocateur (innovative yet disorganized),

the Protector (empathic but easily overburdened), the Peacemaker (conflict-averse), and the Performer (highly skilled yet resistant to change). By recognizing these patterns and keeping feedback about the work, we guide people to reconcile their personal goals with the team’s needs.

Ultimately, change is not where we’re going, it’s who we are. We cling to certainty, but real creativity and innovation appear the moment we admit we don’t have all the answers. Whether you lead a small team, run a global organization, or parent a child, authentic leadership is a gift in both directions: we become more of who we are by helping others do the same. We meet each person where they are, push them a bit further, and let them discover they had it in themselves all along. When that moment passes, take a walk down the hall—and begin again.

