

Foreword

If you are on the firing line as a leader in your organization, you don't need any reminders that it's tough. It doesn't matter what kind of organization you are leading. You may be leading a for-profit, not-for-profit, or educational organization, but when it comes to spelling out what needs to be done, nearly everyone points in a different direction.

There is no shortage of experts who can tell leaders what to do. Their answers are clear, but, because the problems are murky, expert advice often fails to pan out. L. Frank Baum got it right when he wrote *The Wizard of Oz*. The characters were all looking to the wizard for answers to their problems. As it turns out, the wizard was not what he was made out to be. But then, he dispensed some good common sense: look inside yourself, rather than seeking outside for answers to life's dilemmas.

Without consciously realizing it, Brubaker and Coble are echoing Baum's timeless secrets of success. Leadership lessons are best forged on the firing line by mining one's personal experience. What to do next is found in the successes and failures of yesterday and today. Power comes from believing in yourself, knowing the right thing to do, and having the courage to push ahead. It's never easy and it's not always rewarding. But that's the enduring challenge of leadership. When the hope of the future is up for grabs, the stakes are very high. Brubaker and Coble provide some sound wisdom that points leaders in the right direction.

—Terrence Deal