



**JEFF HAVENS**

# **SUPERIOR**

**LEADERSHIP** VIDEO SERIES

**PARTICIPANT WORKBOOK**



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# INTRODUCTION

Welcome, and congratulations on being considered awesome enough to be allowed to read this book. There are millions of people who would love to read this book, but they don't get to. Some of them have attempted to bribe me with private jets and box seats to the Super Bowl and the occasional Mediterranean villa, but I have refused them all. You have to earn the right to read this book, which you have obviously done. So again, congratulations for being as awesome as you are.

Now I'm sure you've read dozens of other books about management and leadership. You've probably got one in your briefcase right now, and you might be using an old one to level out your desk. It's possible that you've read so much about management and leadership that you think there's nothing else to learn. You might even – horror of horrors! – be dreading this course. Maybe you think it's going to be boring. Maybe you're hoping for an earthquake right now just to get you out of having

to do this.

If that's what you're thinking, then I have two things to say to you. First, shame on you. But more importantly, you are in for a delightful surprise. This is going to be the most entertaining leadership training you've ever done in your life, and waaaay more fun than being trapped underneath a mountain of rubble.

You're reading this because you want to become an even better leader than you already are, the kind of person others are excited to follow. Leadership is a skill that needs to be developed, just like 3-point shooting and needlepoint and fire juggling and scuba diving. If you think leadership is a purely natural quality that requires no additional training, you should watch a children's soccer game sometime. I don't know exactly whose idea it is to tell everybody to go for the ball all at the same time, but it's not an example of excellent leadership. And we want you to be better at this than they are.

This training series consists of 11 hilarious videos over 9 sections, which are designed to provide education about leadership in three core areas:

- **Leadership qualities that everyone should strive to develop**
- **Leadership qualities that everyone should strive to avoid**
- **Case studies of other leaders, each of whom would probably have been even better at their jobs if they'd just gone through this training series**

As I've said, the videos are hilarious and may occasionally make you laugh so hard that you embarrass yourself in front of your friends. This workbook includes a summary of each video, space for you to take notes, and questions designed to get you thinking about how to improve your own leadership.

Bottom line – we've tried to make this as fun as possible because we think that learning doesn't have to be boring. If this does end up boring you, then you're probably incapable of experiencing joy. I weep for you and hope that I'm never stuck sitting next to you at a long business dinner.

So what are you waiting for? Turn the page and start having fun already!

# JEFF HAVENS

## SPEAKER & TRAINER

*"The Labradoodle of Leadership"*





# PART ONE





# **BRINGING OUT THE BEST IN YOUR LEADERSHIP**

# EPISODE 1

## THE LITTLE THINGS ARE THE BIG THINGS

So let that be a lesson to you. Don't sit on anyone's lap unless they've expressly asked you to. Otherwise you might end up with a leg full of staples.

More importantly, though, we often think of leadership in terms of grand visions, corporate restructuring, landmark mergers, and other major endeavors. But often it's the small things we do – the decisions and behaviors that don't make the company newsletter or the evening news – that end up having the biggest impact in terms of productivity, loyalty, and overall culture.

That's not to say that you shouldn't focus on major issues or sweeping reforms if they're necessary. But don't overlook the importance of the little things that you do. You might be surprised at how big a deal those seemingly little gestures actually are. And if you don't believe me, stop saying "I love you" to your family and see what happens. It's three simple words, and you've said it plenty of times already, so why should it be such a big deal if you decide to stop doing it? Feel free to give that a shot if you really want to. But don't be surprised if you end up sleeping on the couch a lot.

Bottom line – pay attention to the little things, and you'll see people's opinion of your leadership improve dramatically.



# CLASSROOM DISCUSSION NOTES





# SELF-REFLECTION QUESTIONS

You're pretty good already. Do you have what it takes to become great? Will people someday commission a painting or a statue of you? Let's find out!

## **1.** What is your company's policy regarding lap-sitting?

- a) We encourage our employees to sit on each other, because we think it helps build tight-knit communities. Also we really like getting sued.
- b) The opposite of that.

## **2.** What's one relatively minor element of your leadership you could change that you believe might have a significant impact on your employees?

**3.** What's one thing about your company's policies, procedures, or practices that you think might benefit from a small change? (Think 'desk placement' or 'trash can availability,' not 'we sell insurance but we should probably start selling cars'.)

**4.** Think back on a leader or mentor you especially admire. What are some of the things he or she did to earn your admiration?

**5.** Pick a company you're personally familiar with (either as a customer or a business partner) that you consider to be successful. What are two small things they do that distinguishes them from their competitors?

## **EPISODE 2**

### **TRAINING BEATS EQUIPMENT**

If you think any of the stuff in this video was faked to make a point, you are so totally wrong. You have no idea how many times I got hit in the head with that stupid boom mic before we finally figured out how to use it properly.

And just like we needed time to learn how to use our equipment correctly, it's important to make sure that your employees have opportunities to continually learn more. You can give me all the computer power in the world, but that isn't going to help me unless you also give me the time and resources to learn what it's capable of. Because I'm the kind of moron that tries to solve every computer problem by turning the thing off and then turning it right back on. The point is, the best leaders provide frequent opportunities for continuing education (conferences, classes, reading time, mountaintop conversations with mystic monk people, whatever), because they know that it is the only way any of us ever improve.

That process isn't limited to your employees, by the way; you need to do the same. But that's why you're doing this training, isn't it?



# CLASSROOM DISCUSSION NOTES



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# SELF-REFLECTION QUESTIONS

It took you about a year to learn how to walk, and a depressingly long time to learn how to eat without making a mess. So let's make sure you're giving people enough time to learn what they need to know for their jobs, too. Question time, engage!

## **1.** Which of the following best describes you?

- a) I already know everything. I've never been bad at anything I've ever tried, and I have no patience for people who aren't immediately good at stuff. That's why my children will never ride a bicycle, because they know I'll stop loving them if they try it once and fall off.
- b) There was a time in my life when I couldn't tie my shoes, but I figured it out. I've had some truly atrocious haircuts, but I've finally found one that works for me. I haven't always done everything perfectly, but I've certainly gotten better over time.

## **2.** Pick something new that your company or your particular division has recently adopted – a new technology, a new product line, whatever. Do you think people were given sufficient education on that new thing? If not, how could the educational process have been improved?

**3.** What's the best educational experience you've had in your current job? (I mean other than this training series, obviously.) What made that experience so valuable?

**4.** What educational opportunities have your employees told you they'd be interested in having? (Fun fact – if the answer is 'they've never told me anything like that,' then you need to ask them. Because they're either afraid to ask you, or they're so chronically lazy that they can't imagine ever wanting to learn anything ever again. I'm hoping it's the first one!)

**5.** How much time do you think you spend each day reflecting, analyzing, predicting, ruminating, or doing any kind of productive mental activity other than addressing the immediate needs of your business? Do you think that's enough? If not, what can you do to give yourself more time for reflection and analysis?

# EPISODE 3

## WHY YOU SHOULD ENCOURAGE FAILURE

I'm sure you've heard that failure is a necessary part of becoming better. Thomas Edison said, "I failed my way to success." Given that he invented half the things on the planet – the electric light bulb, the phonograph, motion pictures, the Internet, tacos, cake, and I could go on – his approach is probably a good one for you to emulate. But the vast majority of us still harbor a considerable fear of failing.

As a leader, it's your job to create a culture in which failure is acceptable and even encouraged. If you or your employees only do things that they are certain will work, then they're not taking any risks. That might work for now, but it won't work if conditions ever change. There is no way to learn a new thing without making some mistakes along the way – which means that if nobody's making any mistakes, then nobody's learning anything.

The best leaders celebrate a reasonable amount of failure as the price we pay in order to innovate. I'm not saying you should be excited if someone says, "Oh, by the way, I accidentally burned our entire building down, but I did learn a valuable lesson about matches!" But 99% of the time, the failures you'll be dealing with are less catastrophic than that. And who knows? Some of those failures will end up being enormous successes. Did you know that Post-It notes were the result of a failed experiment? Did you know that WD-40 got its name because it was their 40th attempt at making a decent lubricant? Well now you do.

P.S. Thomas Edison didn't really invent the Internet, tacos, or cake. But he totally could have if he'd really wanted to.



# CLASSROOM DISCUSSION NOTES







# SELF-REFLECTION QUESTIONS

Are you the kind of person who expects Olympic athletes to always score a perfect 10? Do you have adorably unreasonable ideas about how easy it is to do things well? Your answers to the following will determine that. But be warned – you’d better get these answers perfect, or else we’ll never be friends.

- 1. Pick something from your past that you now look at as a complete and utter failure. What is it? What have you learned from it?**  
(Author’s Note: Mine is that haircut you saw. That was my 9th grade picture. As you might have already guessed, my girlfriend was imaginary.)

**2.** Think of a recent failure you've experienced at work. Was it a catastrophic problem, a serious but survivable inconvenience, or simply a nuisance? What did you learn from that failure?

**3.** What is one thing that one of your employees recently failed at? How did you handle that failure to ensure that your employee learns from the experience and is ultimately better in the future?

**4.** Despite the fact that failure is an important part of business, there is a teensy difference between 'isolated failures that teach us lessons' and 'chronic failures that indicate a systemic problem.' Can you think of any element of your business where you or your employees are consistently failing to meet expectations? If so, what is happening and what ideas do you have to address the issue?

**5.** What is the best failure you've experienced in your professional life?  
By 'best' I mean the failure that taught you the most, turned you on to a completely new product idea, or something along those lines. I don't mean 'so spectacularly bad that it made national news'.

# EPISODE 4

## KNOWING WHEN TO QUIT

You know what? I don't feel like writing a summary for this video. I'm sure you got the point if you watched it. And if you didn't, then why should I waste my time trying to help someone who can't be bothered to watch a three minute video?

And yet, it's hard for me to stop writing, because it's difficult to know when to quit. The more time, energy, or money you put into anything, the more you hate the idea of admitting that things didn't work out the way you were hoping. Because of this, most of us spend a lot more time, energy, and money on things than we should, because we simply can't force ourselves to admit defeat and move on. But recognizing when to keep trying and when to give up is one of the most critical skills of great leadership. It's never an easy decision, but it's one that must occasionally be made.

Whoops. Looks like I ended up writing a summary for it anyway. Sorry.

# CLASSROOM DISCUSSION NOTES



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# SELF-REFLECTION QUESTIONS

Do you know when to hold them, and when to fold them? Do you know when to walk away, and when to run? Do you love Kenny Rogers as much as I do? Let's find out!

## 1. What's your opinion of Kenny Rogers's "The Gambler"?

- a) Like the author of this incredible training series, I too grew up listening to the sweet sounds of Sir Kenny. His words are indelibly linked with the joys of my childhood, and I've always harbored a secret hope that he would adopt me as his own and teach me the ways of his glorious musicmaking.
- b) I've heard this song before, but I didn't realize until just now how amazing it is. And true! So true. Not just about gambling, but about life itself.
- c) I'd heard this song before but don't really care much about it. That's because I have terrible taste in music.
- d) I've never heard this song, and now I really, really don't want to.

## 2. What's something in your personal life that you have completely given up on? Why did you give up on it? Do you think you made the right decision by doing so?

**3.** What criteria do you use to determine whether or not to continue with a struggling strategy, product, or other element of your business?

**4.** Think about the last strategy, product, or other element of your business that you gave up on. Then, answer the following in this **SUPER AWESOME MULTI-PART QUESTION EXPLOSION!!!!**

a) What was it?

b) Why did you give up on it?

c) How did you feel about that decision immediately before making it?

d) How did you feel about that decision immediately after making it?

e) How do you feel about that decision now?

**5.** Are there any current elements of your business that you're thinking about giving up on? If so, what are they, and why are you still uncertain about whether or not to continue with them?

**CONGRATULATIONS!**  
**YOU ARE 33% CLOSER TO THE LEADERSHIP LIGHT!**



# **PART TWO**



# **LEADERSHIP QUALITIES TO AVOID LIKE THE PLAGUE**

## **EPISODE 5**

### **DON'T ABUSE YOUR AUTHORITY!**

Did you notice the pictures sitting on the floor in the back corner? I could lie and pretend that we were going for a 'new office' scene, but the truth is we ran out of picture hanger thing-ies and just decided to leave it alone. Now you know the sordid behind-the-scenes truth to moviemaking. Also the monitor wasn't plugged into anything. But we're so sneaky you probably didn't even notice!

But I'm sure you did notice the heavy-handed, dictatorial way that our manager put his subordinate in her place. It's certainly an easy thing to do – after all, managers and executives tend to have several outward indications of their power and authority – but it's never a good way to motivate or inspire anyone. Whether or not you have an official organization chart in place, everyone knows where everyone else stands. If you're in a position of power, you don't need to tell people. They know.

What they don't know is whether or not you appreciate the value *they* bring to your organization. Everyone you work with is important, from the newest entry-level employee up to the CEO. If that weren't the case, why would you have even hired those people? Great leaders make sure that everyone feels as though his or her job is a vital part of the entire enterprise, and they don't make a big deal out of the fact that they're more senior, more experienced, or more anything else. You know why? Because they know that the less they make an issue out of their position, the more respect they'll earn. It might seem counterintuitive, but it's the truth.

Bottom line – treat everyone like they're a vital member of your team, and your team will repay you with genuine respect and admiration.

# CLASSROOM DISCUSSION NOTES









# SELF-REFLECTION QUESTIONS

These questions are so not hard. A lemur could answer them. A reticulated python could probably do a decent job with these. So I'm eminently confident that you'll do a great job, too!

**1.** I'm sure you've read a bunch of business books and talked with your friends about their own experiences with fellow leaders. Without naming names, who seems to be the most difficult person you can imagine working with? Why is that?

**2.** What can you do to make every one of your direct reports feel special, important, valued, or otherwise noticed?

**3.** Think of a leader or mentor you especially admire. How did he/she handle the issue of his/her authority over others?

**4.** Can you think of an instance when one of the junior members on your team said or did something that was especially impressive or useful? (I hope the answer is yes!) What was it, and what so impressed you about that person's words or actions?

# EPISODE 6

## THE POWER AND PROBLEM OF BODY LANGUAGE

I want you to know that I'm writing this summary right now with folded arms. It's kind of hard.

Anyway, we're now into the portion of this training that covers behaviors to avoid – and there are a lot of nonverbal behaviors that will compromise your ability to lead effectively. We'll get to the things you can say in future lessons, but for now it's important to understand that the majority of the way we communicate with one another happens without saying a single word. The way you stand, the way you look at others, the amount of distance you place between yourself and others, the noises you make while others are talking, the tone and volume of your voice – all of these things contribute to the way other people perceive you. Great leaders are aware of this and pay careful attention to their body language in order to command respect, loyalty, and admiration.

Make no mistake – the way you communicate is an even bigger deal than the words you use. If you're not aware of what you do while you're talking, then you might be making your job more difficult than it should be.

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# CLASSROOM DISCUSSION NOTES

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# SELF-REFLECTION QUESTIONS

Since this lesson focuses on non-verbal qualities, I'm going to keep the words to a minimum.

- 1.** Think about a leader or mentor that you especially admire. What most impresses you about the way he or she carries him or herself? (Think posture, attitude, dress, tone of voice, attitude while listening, and anything else that comes to mind.)

**2.** To the best of your knowledge, is there anything about your body language that could be improved? If so, what?



**3.** Find someone who knows you pretty well, and ask them to answer Question #2 about you. Encourage them to be honest, and promise them that their response won't hurt your feelings. This is about being the best leader you can be, and one of the best ways we can do that is to see how others see us.

**4.** How intimidating did you think I was in that video?

- a) You terrified me, and if I saw you in public I would cower behind something and probably whimper a lot until you went away.
- b) I wouldn't exactly be excited about talking with you, but I wouldn't say I was frightened.
- c) Not only could you not scare a child, but I'm pretty sure children would scare you.

# EPISODE 7

## MICROMANAGEMENT!

Don't you love that sign? I have it hanging behind my desk now. It warms me and my cold, evil heart every time I see it.

At its core, micromanagement is the practice of leaders who don't feel they can trust the people who work for them. As a result, micromanagers try to do everything themselves in order to minimize the damage that their (supposedly) lazy, incompetent, thieving, conniving, or mutinous employees would do if they had their way. In the short term, micromanagement can be a very effective tool to get new employees up to speed, or to deal with substandard departments in your company. Over the long term, however, micromanagement creates a culture in which eventually nobody even bothers to try very hard, because they know they're never going to get any approval for anything they do on their own.

If you've ever been micromanaged yourself, you'll know how frustrating it can be. All of us want to feel empowered, to believe that our leaders trust us to do our jobs well and to make intelligent decisions when we have to. If you want to be a great leader, you'll find a way to give that trust and freedom to the people you're leading.

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# CLASSROOM DISCUSSION NOTES

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# SELF-REFLECTION QUESTIONS

I probably should just go ahead and answer these questions for you, since that would be very micromanagery of me. But instead I'll make you do it. See how trusting I am that you'll actually write stuff down? Sometimes I amaze even myself.

- 1.** What's the worst example of micromanagement that you can think of? What made it so bad?

**2.** Think of a time when you micromanaged a situation more than you should have. (Don't feel bad about admitting that you've done it, by the way. All of us have.) How could you have handled that situation differently and/or more effectively?

**3.** Think of a time when you effectively delegated authority, responsibility, or some other word that ends in -ity to your team. What was the situation, and why do you think it worked out well?

**4.** Can you think of a time when micromanagement might be the correct strategy? (The summary gave you a hint as to when that might be the case. Re-read it if you need to, or read it for the first time if you were too lazy to do it the first time! Slacker.)

# **EPISODE 8**

## **THE IMPORTANCE OF TRUST**

Trust people already!  
Summary over.



# CLASSROOM DISCUSSION NOTES



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# SELF-REFLECTION QUESTIONS

We're going to pretty much breeze through this section because I think you probably already get the point. Question blitzkrieg, engage!

## **1.** Do you really believe that I have no friends?

- a) No, you seem awesome and I wish I could be your friend. I want that so badly!
- b) Absolutely. If I saw your car broken down on the side of the road in a blizzard I would keep driving.

## **2.** In your most brutally honest opinion, how many times has your professional trust in another person been betrayed in any way?

**3.** To the best of your ability, estimate how many times your professional trust in others has been more or less validated.

**4.** Divide your answer to Question #2 into your answer for Question #3. That is the percentage of time your trust has historically been misplaced. Is that percentage informative to you in any way? If so, how?

**5.** What are three ways you can demonstrate trust in your colleagues, subordinates, direct reports, and other members of the team you lead?

1.

2.

3.

**YOU'RE SO CLOSE TO BEING AN AMAZING BOSS!  
KEEP GOING!**



# **PART THREE**



# **CASE STUDIES IN LEADERSHIP... SORT OF**

# LEADERSHIP ANALYSIS

This section will utilize the following videos:

**EPISODE 9**  
LYNDON JOHNSON

**EPISODE 10**  
AL DUNLAP

**EPISODE 11**  
HARRY COHN

Three videos at once? I'll bet your eyeballs are simply exploding with joy right now! Just like professional football players analyze game film in order to prepare for their next game, great leaders are constantly analyzing the leadership of others. Usually we try to learn from people that we admire or otherwise display qualities we would like to emulate. But it's often just as instructive (and sometimes moreso) to look at instances of failed leadership.



In these case studies you've seen examples of everything you were encouraged to avoid in the previous section: lack of trust; combative and bombastic behavior; and a relentless focus on personal gain at the expense of others. For each of these men, their approach to leadership led to their eventual undoing. Lyndon Johnson was abandoned by his own party; Al Dunlap was ultimately fired, fined, and barred by the SEC from ever holding a management position at a publicly-traded company; and Harry Cohn died an almost universally reviled man. Given enough time, it seems their similar approaches to leadership all eventually result in unhappy outcomes.

At the same time, all three of these men – and hundreds of other men and women like them – managed to become very successful leaders. Lyndon Johnson passed some of the most important civil rights legislation in our country's history, despite strong opposition from members of his own party; Al Dunlap became CEO of two companies; and Harry Cohn built one of the most successful movie studios of his time. Their abrasive and difficult leadership styles didn't endear them to very many people, and in some cases it ended up causing an ultimate demise; but it also probably contributed to the success they obviously experienced early in their careers.

Does that mean you have to be loud, angry, uncompromising and violent in order to get ahead? Of course not, and there are hundreds of well-respected leaders who've achieved

great heights without resorting to the tactics of these three men. But there are also hundreds of hated leaders who have done the same.

What does this all mean? It means that there are many ways to get to the top. Treating others poorly and refusing to trust your team won't necessarily stop you from gaining ever more power and prestige. How you choose to lead is entirely your decision. You can become the kind of leader others are excited to follow, or you can become the kind of leader people follow because they feel like they don't have a better choice. I just hope you choose the first option.



# CLASSROOM DISCUSSION NOTES

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# SELF-REFLECTION QUESTIONS

I know your brain is kind of a soupy gruel right now, but don't give up on me! We're so close to being finished!

- 1.** Of the approaches to leadership that you saw in these three videos, which action or behavior would you consider to be the worst? Why?

**2.** Looking back on your answer to Question #1, can you think of any instance in which that approach to leadership might be beneficial?

**3.** Let's assume for a second that you want to be a 'good' leader, however you define that. Let's further assume (crazy, I know!) that you're doing everything you know how to do in order to live out that 'good' approach to leadership. And then let's further further assume that you work with someone with a 'bad' approach to leadership but who still seems to be advancing successfully in his/her career. Got all that? I hope so, because now it's time for a **SUPER AWESOME MULTI-PART QUESTION EXPLOSION!!!!**

a) What can you do to not let their approach influence your own behavior?

b) How might you try to convince him/her to try doing things your way?

c) What will you do to stay true to your vision if you see this person advancing at a faster rate than you are?

**4.** Do you think it's better to yell at people before you throw things at them, or should you just throw things first?

- a) Yelling first is better, because it will get their attention, and part of the reason that you throw things at people is so they can see you do it and fear you.
- b) Throwing things first is better, because that way you can surprise them and hopefully score a good hit before they have a chance to dodge.
- c) I don't yell and I don't throw; however, I've contemplated both.
- d) Not applicable. (we needed an HR friendly answer.)

**5.** How would you like to be remembered by the people you lead?  
(Take some time on this one. Legacy questions are hard.)



**6.** Look back at your answer to Question #5. Do you think you're on the right path to getting what you want?

# CONCLUSION

## LEAD ON, LEADER OF PEOPLE.

Congratulations! You have completed our Superior Leadership training series. The world is now your oyster, or ham sandwich or giant bowl of ice cream or whatever delicious food you would like the world to be. More importantly, you've taken some time to actually think about why you do what you do, and how you might do it even better. The people you lead may never know how difficult it is to become a great leader, because you make it look so simple. I'm so proud of you right now that I might start ugly crying any second.

Now I know that knowledge and education and continual improvement are supposed to be their own rewards – but I also know that none of us would turn down a free motorcycle or tropical vacation or winning lottery ticket if someone happened to give us one. Unfortunately for you, I don't have a winning lottery ticket to give you, since apparently the guy at my gas station hates me. But I do have something even better, a gift so incredible that it simply cannot be bought. Turn the page to find out what it is!

I hope you've enjoyed this leadership series, and I hope it helps you become the kind of leader you (and those you lead) want you to be. Thanks for participating! (Or passively being forced into it, whichever actually happened.)

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# SULTAN OF MANAGEMENT!

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This certificate hereby certifies that:

has successfully completed our *Superior Leadership* series and is now so talented that it's almost unfair to everyone else. Someday you'll probably be cited in management books, and I'd bet anything that they're eventually going to erect a statue of you in the office lobby that people are going to touch as they pass by in the hopes that some of your leadership acumen literally rubs off on them. You're not perfect, since nobody is, so don't go getting lazy or anything. But hey, even Olympic gold medalists take a day off from training every so often so they can stare at all their trophies and medals. And you should stare at this thing too from time to time. You've earned it.

*Jeff Havens*

The Labradoodle of Leadership





THE **JEFF HAVENS** COMPANY is a unique corporate training company dedicated to delivering high-content professional development training in an entertaining and modern way. From leadership, communication, and change management to ethics, generational issues and more, we make learning fun. Because improving your business doesn't have to be boring.

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