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Leadership encompasses many things, and the “work” of a leader at any level in an organization demands a certain kind of self-awareness and focused attention. It is important that the leader understands—probably more than anything else—what needs to happen to move an issue forward. Yet many of the leaders I have encountered do not get the very basics—that the “interruptions” of their day, both planned and unplanned, give them an opportunity to get in there and really lead. Doug Conant and Mette Norgaard *do* get this, and they have distilled a tested approach that makes the most of these moments. They direct the leader in three key steps: first, to listen closely to understand an issue; second, having gained that understanding, to help frame the actual situation; and third, to advance the conversation in order to advance the issue. This “listen, frame, advance” TouchPoints triad

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they share here is something that anyone can put into practice and see results from.

I have worked with leaders of all stripes, and what I like most about the TouchPoints approach is that it works—it is not some esoteric academic theory. Doug has been modeling this approach since he began at Campbell, and it has reaped deep results—and helped create a world-class company that knows how to grow its own leaders from the inside. This bench strength is without a doubt the most important thing a CEO can develop; this pool of leaders models the behavior for others, and it becomes a very part of the company fabric. If embedded right, it has the potential to turn what might be a mediocre organization into something extraordinary. But as anyone knows who has tried it, it is not simply a switch you turn on—it demands that a leader step up and put it to use. There are likely to be many stumbles along the way, but that is where this book will come in handy and become invaluable.

I have known Doug and Mette for many years. I have had the good fortune of seeing them work up close, and what they have accomplished together is unusual. They are a true intellectual team: each one's strengths complement the other's, and they are to be commended for their work on developing these ideas over the last five years into something that a wide audience can benefit from. Many (many!) years ago, I had the good fortune of being Doug's teacher in graduate school. He was, and

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continues to be, an eager and thoughtful student of what works and has real impact. I find myself the student now—learning from a practitioner who has been up and down quite a few mountains. It is clear to me that his and Mette’s contribution with this book will do more than help others simply “do better.” *TouchPoints* advances the leadership conversation greatly. And for that, we should all be grateful.

Ram Charan
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