

INTRODUCTION

If there is any one secret of success, it lies in the ability to get the other person's point of view and see things from that person's angle as well as from your own.

—Henry Ford

It's hard to know what's real these days.

If you read different news media outlets, you probably notice distinctly different views of the same occurrence—especially if it's political. Bias has become so obvious I've made a pastime out of flipping between various news sites to marvel at the masterful spin.

When my wife and I describe an incident to friends, I tend to start the story just before the climax; she backs way up to include details and color I can never remember anyway. Was my version inaccurate? Nope, just incomplete.

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Verbal communication is by nature subjective and misleading. This is because spoken words aren't as complete as our thoughts. Our brains filter everything we say and hear to accommodate our thought patterns. We may reveal part of what we're thinking, or someone may process what we say with meanings we never intended.

This sort of nuanced communication contrasts the black-and-white world of truth and lies. It's the shades of gray that trip us up the most in our own conversations.

Have you ever heard these words?

"That's not what I meant!"

"You never listen to me."

"You always read into what I say!"

"I just don't get you."

In these situations, it's not that someone necessarily lies. You approach the discussion from your angle while they come from theirs.

If our boss tells us both we did a good job, you might thank him and feel motivated to do even better; I might pick apart his choice of words or evaluate his tone and conclude he really wants to fire me.

It's like we all have blinders on. Or perhaps more accurately, it's like we're wearing colored glasses. Our points of view are shaded by our personalities, ambitions, fears, and experiences.

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Whatever your hue is, I believe Henry Ford was spot on. The secret of success lies in seeing through other people's eyes—putting on their glasses. To lead successfully, we must see the entire spectrum reflecting all around us, which means taking off our own spectacles first.

This book is about a leader who learns this truth the hard way. Leo Perkins, a confident CEO, is blind to anyone's view but his own. He casts a turnaround vision for his company and invites people to buy in, but their reactions shock him. His team's doubts and fears manifest in strange ways. Ultimately, he must make a dramatic decision about his—and his company's—future.

Philo's famous admonition to “be kind, for everyone you meet is fighting a great battle” succinctly summarizes the message of *Through Colored Glasses*. Leo falls victim to a dozen internal battles he never realizes are being waged. They come to a head even as he makes his do-or-die presentation in the climax of the book.

How do leaders deal with these unspoken tensions?

The Bible says, “The purposes of a person's heart are deep waters, but one who has insight draws them out” (Prov. 20:5).

Jesus had this insight. He saw into people's hearts as the Holy Spirit revealed their thoughts and attitudes to him. He understood their battles.

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At the end of the book, we'll look at some biblical wisdom and exciting scriptural truths that open up people's hearts to us in the same way.

I promise your leadership—and your life—will be transformed.

Now on to the battle.