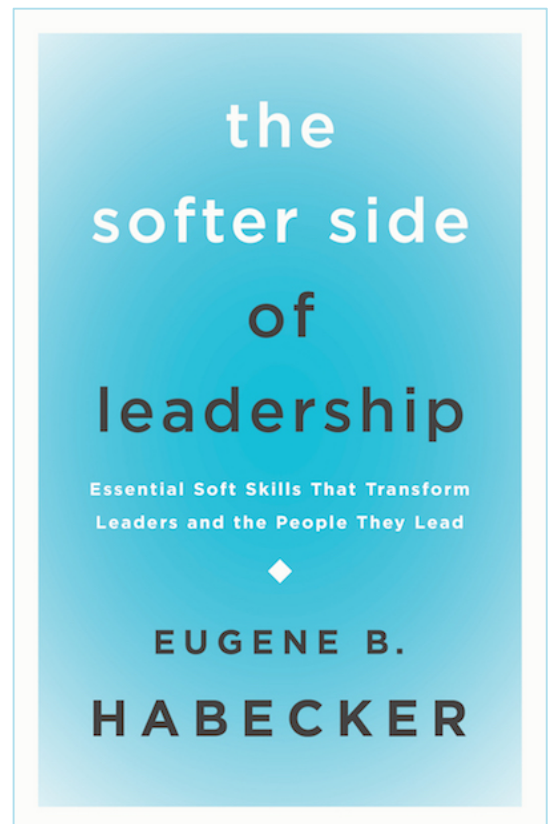


- **Release Date:** May 17, 2018
- **ISBN:** 9781632694683
- **Retail:** \$15.99
- **Pages:** 256
- **Category 1:** BUSINESS & ECONOMICS / Leadership
- **Category 2:** Christian Church / Leadership
- **BISAC:** BUS071000 BUSINESS & ECONOMICS / Leadership
- **Format:** paperback

THE SOFTER SIDE OF LEADERSHIP

ESSENTIAL SOFT SKILLS THAT TRANSFORM LEADERS AND THE PEOPLE THEY LEAD

EUGENE B. HABECKER



Many who aspire to be organizational leaders focus on developing “hard” skills, related to quantitative action and analytical thinking. These are important, but over his many decades of executive leadership, Dr. Eugene B. Habecker has learned to value the “softer” side of leadership. Unfortunately, these “soft” skills and behaviors are often neglected, to the detriment of both leadership and organizational development.

In *The Softer Side of Leadership*, Dr. Habecker, president emeritus of Taylor University, makes a case for these skills and provides practical ways to develop them and put them into action. He draws from his own experience, other leadership experts, and from the Bible.

The Softer Side of Leadership has two main sections. The first section focuses on the soft skills that effective leaders develop in a more personal dimension. These skills help leaders build and maintain a healthy spiritual, mental, and physical foundation that will benefit them both personally and professionally. The second section is a natural extension of the first, focusing on skills that effective leaders foster in the organizations they lead, such as creativity, trust, and forgiveness.

Many of these skills, practices, and attitudes may be difficult for readers whose business education has been driven by numbers and immediate results. But to be effective, they must commit to continuous learning—and that includes understanding the softer side of leadership. These soft skills support what hard skills—on their own—cannot: a culture that better promotes robust mission fulfillment.

Each chapter includes key takeaways and action steps, equipping readers to immediately develop and apply the skills presented. As readers develop the skills and behaviors presented in *The Softer Side of Leadership* and pair them with hard skills, they will become stronger, more well-rounded leaders.

For more info please contact media@deeperiverbooks.com



About the Author **EUGENE B. HABECKER**

Dr. Eugene B. Habecker quite literally possesses a world of knowledge and experience as he has traveled to more than 90 countries in Asia, Africa, the

Americas, Eastern/Western Europe, and the Middle East. He holds degrees from Taylor University (BA), Ball State University (MA), and the University of Michigan (PhD). He earned a law degree (JD) from Temple University and was admitted to the Pennsylvania Bar Association in 1974. He graduated from the Institute for Educational Management (IEM) program at Harvard University and has received nine honorary doctorates. Eugene and his wife Marylou have been blessed with a wonderful family of three children and seven grandchildren.

Connect with the Author:
ebh711@yahoo.com

For more info please contact media@deeperiverbooks.com

Deep River
B O O K S

What Others Are Saying About **The Softer Side of Leadership**

“In his [*The*] *Softer Side of Leadership*, noted speaker, author, and university president Dr. Gene Habecker takes readers right into the heart of authentic leadership. ...this work is instructional, timely, and inspiring. Dr. Habecker crafts a different kind of leadership, one that avoids the latest trends, focusing instead upon timeless and powerful values that transform the workplace through a lifestyle that exemplifies Christ.”

Dr. Sandra Gray, PhD, President, Asbury University

“My friend, Dr. Eugene Habecker, captures the heartbeat of Christ-like leadership. In *The Softer Side of Leadership*, Gene teaches leaders how to effectively care for themselves and the people they serve every day. The best part is that he practices what he preaches. **Whether you’re a CEO, pastor, or parent, I urge you to come sit at the feet of this wise, seasoned shepherd.** Not only will you become a more effective leader, you’ll become a happier, holier person as well.”

Roy Peterson, President & CEO, American Bible Society

“Peter Drucker invented management science by making a simple but profound case: managers are needed to make knowledge effective. My friend Gene Habecker makes a similar case for **human flourishing**. In order for organizations, and indeed societies, to thrive, leaders must develop the soft skills of employees to ensure highest and best use of hard skills. This book will show you how.”

Jay Hein, President, Sagamore Institute, and former director, the White House Office of Faith-based and Community Initiatives

“A big title or position will only get you so far. Leaders who truly influence are the ones who rise to the top through these softer skills of leadership. Gene Habecker does a masterful job of explaining these intangibles of leadership that are essential. These skills are the reason that he has been so beloved throughout his career and why he has been able to lead at such high levels. **This book is extremely insightful, and these skills are non-negotiable for anyone who wants to reach their full leadership potential.**”

**Heather Larson, Executive Pastor/Incoming Lead Pastor,
Willow Creek Community Church, South Barrington, Illinois**

For more info please contact media@deeperiverbooks.com



“I needed this book. I needed the vivid reminders, the fresh insights, and the compelling perspectives. Frankly, I don’t ever remember reading a book on leadership that I didn’t want to put down. Until this one. **One chapter after another provided conviction, grace, and hope. They were a magnet to my heart, water to a thirsty soul.** Gene Habecker has been a leader I’ve respected for many years. His insights are tested and true. Honesty, humility, and wisdom mark each page. Prepare to be inspired.”

Dan Wolgemuth, President/CEO, Youth for Christ

“In this groundbreaking book, Gene shares his personal experiences and insights with refreshing and inspiring vulnerability. I look forward to visiting the pages of this book again and again.”

John Guido, MA, President, Verbo Ministries, Cuenca, Ecuador

“When Gene Habecker speaks to the topic of leadership, the wise and prudent person ... listens. Few people in this world have the depth and breadth of experiences in the position of chief executive as does he. In *The Softer Side of Leadership*, he shares lessons that can only come from digging deep into a lifetime of experience and doing so with a servant’s heart.”

Paul Lowell Haines, EdD, JD, President, Taylor University

“Gene Habecker is a both/and leader. He is wired to do the hard skills of leadership well—and this deeply personal book [reveals] how he learned to do the soft skills of leadership effectively. In addition to learning from Habecker’s experiences, you will encounter a treasure trove of wisdom from other top-level leaders in the book. *The Softer Side of Leadership* is personal, practical, and probing. It will challenge any leader to keep growing in ways that matter.”

Jay Barnes, PhD, President, Bethel University

“This is not a theoretical book; most importantly, it is a greatly needed practical and personal one based on real and meaningful experience. As Gene rightly points out, this is a book not *about* leadership but *as* leadership. **Gene shares some unique and powerful insights drawn from his extensive and successful leadership of two universities and an international faith-based organization**, places where he has served together with his very special wife and partner Marylou. For leaders, and those aspiring to be leaders, this is indeed excellent and essential reading.”

Roberto Laver, SJD, Founder/Director, FIDES, former World Bank Senior Counsel, and Harvard Law School Visiting Fellow

For more info please contact media@deeperiverbooks.com



“While there are religious examples in the book, it has invaluable information for anyone who reads it regardless of their religious background. This book is good for potential leaders as well as for those who want to be more successful in their leadership positions.”

**Dr. Rhonda Jeter, PhD, Professor, and Dean,
College of Education, Bowie State University**

“This book will go with me when I travel and stay on my desk when I am at home. It will be a resource to me and one to share with others working to combine the soft and hard skills required for effective leadership. In my 45 years in academic medicine, I have worked with many bright people and almost none of them have failed because they lacked the *hard* skills. **Almost all leadership failures I have observed, and there have been many over the years, have resulted from the lack of the soft skills Gene unpacks.** While others have sprinkled biblical quotes throughout their work to achieve some measure of spiritual credibility, Gene not only has integrated biblical truth with leadership wisdom, he has demonstrated that biblical truth is the basis for such wisdom. This is not a casual read. It will require reflection, and this will require time, or as Gene writes, some sacred space. A commitment to finding such space is important and reading this book will make this worth the effort.”

**R. Dale Lefever, PhD, Organizational Consultant and Emeritus Faculty, University of
Michigan Medical School**

“The author demonstrates true soft skills of leadership in his life. We saw this as his colleagues on the Global Board of the United Bible Societies (UBS) and some of us, also under his leadership as the President of the UBS Executive Board. We all could not believe how humble he was, and yet, at the same time, he was President of the American Bible Society. He made us feel important and appreciated. To me, this is the summary of true soft skills, so ably explained in this book. **This book is enjoyable to read and provides helpful, practical lived-life experiences.** I could not put down this book once I started reading it. Many will gain from reading it.”

**Ambassador Dr. Mary M. Khimulu, MBS; Former Kenya Ambassador/
Permanent Delegate of Kenya to UNESCO, Paris**

“I am grateful to Gene Habecker for writing a book like this. I found that it pulled me in. I had simply wanted to read it from cover to cover but couldn’t do that. It touched me deeply and I needed to meditate on each chapter. ... **This book was a great check-up and an encouragement for me to do better.** I have a small group of books, among the many I read, that I buy to share with others. This one will be among them.”

Morgan Jackson, Director, Faith Comes by Hearing

For more info please contact media@deeperiverbooks.com

DeepRiver
B O O K S

Suggested Interview Questions

For Eugene B. Habecker, author of
The Softer Side of Leadership

Essential Soft Skills That Transform Leaders and the People They Lead

Q: What is your definition of leadership?

A: It's rather simple. A leader is someone who has a follower; not a subordinate, but someone who willingly wants to, not has to, go in the direction desired by the leader. If you have no followers, you are not a leader. Rather, you hold a position of authority and have subordinates. The leadership challenge is to lead in such a way so that those subordinates become followers. *The Softer Side of Leadership* proposes a variety of ideas about how would-be leaders can do that.

Q: There are thousands of leadership books out there. Why should I read another one?

A: The book focuses on the importance of both hard **and** soft skills in leadership, not just one type of skill or the other. Both are needed to be successful in leadership. This book is not *about* leadership but *as* leadership. What do I mean? There are many leadership books out there written by those who primarily study leadership but have never led an organization. These are books *about* leadership. Those books can be excellent, and one can learn much about leadership from them. I have benefited from many such books. But many in positions of leadership have the desire to know what it's like being in the trenches, and they want to know the stories about the successes and the failures in leadership, or *as* a leader. This book provides those kinds of experiences, that kind of vulnerability, and I hope that kind of authenticity.

For more info please contact media@deeperiverbooks.com



Q: So what is the difference between hard and soft skills?

A: Think about it this way. Hard skills deal with what can be measured. They have a **quantitative** dimension to them. “Hard” skill concepts often involve metrics, numbers, analysis, and tools of analysis. The focus is on what leaders *do*. For example, leaders buy, sell, raise money, develop strategies, monitor a financial bottom line, and they organize. “Soft” skills concentrate on matters of the heart, attitudes, and behaviors. “Soft” skills concentrate on inner **qualities** like caring, loving, creating, trusting, forgiving, and thinking or reflecting. They focus on *how* leaders lead.

Q: How is your book different from other leadership books?

A: There are about 40 people from all walks of life, men, women, leaders of color, and from multiple continents—that in itself is a difference—who have written wonderful endorsements for the book. One of their themes is that **this book is different** from other leadership books. How so?

For starters, the book lays out a kind of **behind-the-scenes interior space, a foundational structure**, that leaders need to have in place in order to lead confidently in the *public space*. Several endorsers reported that they wanted to read the book in one sitting, but they simply could not. Why? Because they had to wrestle with and think through the kinds of issues the book discusses and presents. Another reported that he began to use it as a type of devotional, something he had never done with a leadership book. Still another noted its distinctiveness in how Scripture is used—not as a proof text to support a leadership principle but rather presenting Scripture as the foundation for leadership wisdom. Again, not all leadership books do that.

Q: How does the book address globalization and the complexity of issues leaders face in the world?

A: Key leaders from Latin America, Africa, Europe, and Asia have already endorsed the book and each notes that the book’s focus fits their context, and [that they] want to use these concepts in their countries. This suggests that the topics of the book, such as the chapter on forgiveness and others,

For more info please contact media@deeperiverbooks.com

have relevance globally in any situation marked by strife and conflict, including the North American context.

Q: Who are your intended audiences?

A: There are multiple audiences. Obviously one of those audiences is **people who are involved in organizational leadership**, at multiple levels. That includes **pastoral leadership**. I believe this book will actually help transform leadership at all levels, and that will likely result in transformed organizations. **University faculty** have also reported that the book will likely be used as both a supplemental **undergraduate- and graduate-level textbook**. As several endorsers noted, this book could be **a leadership handbook** that requires repeated study and reflection. It is not just a read-it-once-and-done leadership book. Finally, someone who has a desire to understand leadership better will find this book to be helpful.

Q: What qualifies you to write a book on leadership?

A: I'm learning every day about leadership as God gives me new opportunities. I do have a strong desire to share what I have been learning about leadership, after serving for 35 consecutive years in the president/CEO role at three wonderful places: Huntington University (10 years), American Bible Society (14 years), and Taylor University (11 years). Educationally, I hold a law degree and a PhD, so I've studied about leadership formally. I now teach leadership at the PhD level at Capital Seminary and Graduate School as an Adjunct Professor.

Q: Share some qualities that you believe are essential to soft skill leadership.

A: Humility, trust, integrity, competence, followership, forgiveness, learning, and courage are all key words that need to be part of effective leadership.

Q: How long have you been working on this project?

A: I started this effort more than 10 years ago, when I was at the ABS. I began to see and understand the importance of soft skills in leadership and began incorporating them into my leadership roles, including during our Taylor

For more info please contact media@deeperiverbooks.com

presidency. I believe learning needs to be a hallmark of effective leadership, so reading books and writing about leadership—while observing these types of skills and trying to live them—became a passion and calling.

Q: Why might this book be most timely now?

A: There is probably more money spent now on leadership development all over the world than ever before. So one would think organizations, and culture, and the world situation would all be improving. But are they? My observation is that significant leadership development efforts focus on what leaders **do** but not enough leadership development focuses on **how** leaders lead. For instance, it is important for leaders to understand the role followership plays in the life of organizational leadership. But who has ever attended a conference on the importance of followership? Yet that focus is foundational for all leaders. Leaders need to lead for the right reasons and do so with courage, while modeling humility and loving the people being served.

For more info please contact media@deeperiverbooks.com

