



First In, Last Out: Leadership Lessons from the New York Fire Department

John Salka

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What does it take to lead people into a burning building? How do the leaders of the New York City Fire Department develop so much loyalty, trust, and grace under pressure that their subordinates will risk their very lives for them?

As a high-ranking officer of the FDNY, John Salka is an expert at both practicing and teaching high-stakes leadership. In **First In, Last Out**, he explains the department's unique strategies and how they can be adopted by leaders in any field—as

he has taught them to organizations around the country. In a tough-talking, no-nonsense style, Salka uses real-world stories to convey leadership imperatives such as: first in, last out—your people need to see you taking the biggest risk, as the first one to

- enter the danger zone and the last to leave
- manage change—the fire you fought yesterday is not the one you'll be fighting tomorrow
- communicate aggressively—a working radio is worth more than 20,000 gallons of water
- create an execution culture—focus your people on the flames, not the smoke
- commit to reality—never allow the way you would like things to be to color how things are
- develop your people—let them feel a little heat today or they'll get burned tomorrow

Illustrated by harrowing real-life situations, the principles in **First In, Last Out** will help managers become more confident, coherent, and commanding.

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