



The Crucial 18 Inches

Book by Thomas Spaulding
Reviewed by Joseph Dudek, CRP, GMS-T



About our reviewer:

Joe Dudek, CRP, GMS-T, account manager with Quicken Loans, manages partnerships in the southeastern U.S. Dudek has utilized his mortgage banking, client service, business development, and relocation experience for Quicken Loans and his partners for the last 12½ years. He earned his CRP® designation in 2014 and GMS-T® in May 2015. Dudek lives in Detroit and enjoys spending time with his wife, Cara, his 4-year-old son, Owen, and 1½-year-old daughter, Jillian. He is an avid golfer and Detroit sports enthusiast.

You've heard the author of *The Heart-Led Leader*, Thomas Spaulding, speak. What impressed you about this experience?

The mobility industry provides us the opportunity to interact with people from various companies across multiple industry segments. Earlier this year I was invited to a partner's policy summit where Spaulding was the keynote speaker. He captivated us with the perfect blend of witty humor, powerful motivation, and touching stories of successful leaders. Tommy shared personal stories of how he overcame dyslexia and many other obstacles to become a two-time *New York Times*' best-selling author, motivational speaker, and president of the National Leadership Institute.

Tommy has met thousands of leaders and reached the conclusion that leaders and organizations that lead with their hearts are more successful and drive better results than those who don't. He was truly an inspiration, and I was compelled to read his book in order to find more ways I can utilize his leadership philosophies throughout my professional career.

Spaulding writes, "The journey to heart-led leadership covers only 18 inches, but lasts a lifetime." Explain these crucial 18 inches for us.

The 18 inches he refers to is the average distance from the human head to the heart. There are many different leadership philosophies out there, but Tommy's

approach intrigued me because it starts with an introspective analysis. What kind of a leader do you want to become? What do you want to be known for as a person and as a leader? Spaulding believes “our ability to lead is directly correlated to our ability to connect to the hearts and minds of those we wish to lead.” This philosophy contradicts the old-school methodology of “command and control,” which used to be very prevalent in the professional world. Leaders were often too focused on the bottom line to realize their most important assets are their people. Being a heart-led leader transcends numbers and spreadsheets and provides amazing results through encouragement and inspiration. People gravitate toward leaders who care about them. Leading with compassion and concern for the lives and careers of your team members is an amazing way to bring out the best in them.

How would you respond to those who might view Spaulding’s philosophy of love and caring to be a sign of weakness?

When a strong leader genuinely leads from the heart, it cultivates a culture within the organization that maximizes potential, encourages growth, and creates a strong family atmosphere. Spaulding shares a story in his book about Bill Graebel, SGMS, CEO of Graebel Companies. He describes how impressed he was by Bill’s approach to leadership, not only through his philosophies but also through his relationship-building skills. Tommy once went on an office tour with Bill, and was fascinated with how he knew the names of and, most of the time, something special about every team member he spoke with during the tour. Bill discussed how he “wants people to be able to respect the person they report to, and not just the position.” This mindset has helped establish Bill as a worldwide leader in relocation services for decades.

How do those relationship-building skills apply to the mobility industry?

We live in a technology-driven world where communication happens through text messages, emojis, instant messages, Facebook, and tweets in 140 characters or fewer. Where has the personal interaction

gone? Relationship building is a critical skill within all aspects of the relocation industry. We often focus our relationship-building efforts externally with our partners, but does that same effort always happen internally with our team members? Some of us may spend more time with our team members than we do with our immediate family. It’s important, as leaders, to get to know your team members on more than just the surface level. So much has been said about millennials becoming the dominant generation in the workforce. We have the opportunity now to engage, challenge, and groom them to become the leaders of tomorrow, and do it in a manner through which they feel supported and empowered.

If you were to write a business book, what would the title be, and why?

I would call it *Take the Time*. Navigating through your professional career isn’t always the easiest thing to do on your own. Hopefully you’ve been lucky enough to have a great leader or mentor by your side to help navigate through tough times. I know firsthand how valuable a person like this can be. Now imagine that person wasn’t there to help you develop. Where would you be now? It’s important to realize the impact an influential person can make. Just like you had the influence of others as you grew, it is important to take the time to be influential in another’s professional development. It doesn’t matter whether this person is a senior member on your team or a new intern who just started working—you can make a huge difference! People don’t care how much you know until they know how much you care. If you can show a genuine interest in helping them improve, they will not only appreciate your efforts but also view you as someone they can trust. How rewarding would it be to watch someone reach a level they never thought was attainable! Could it be life-changing? *M*

If you’ve encountered a book that changes the way you work, do business, manage employees, or think about your career, we want to share it with your colleagues in global mobility. Contact Kristin White at kwhite@WorldwideERC.org or +1 703 842 3417.