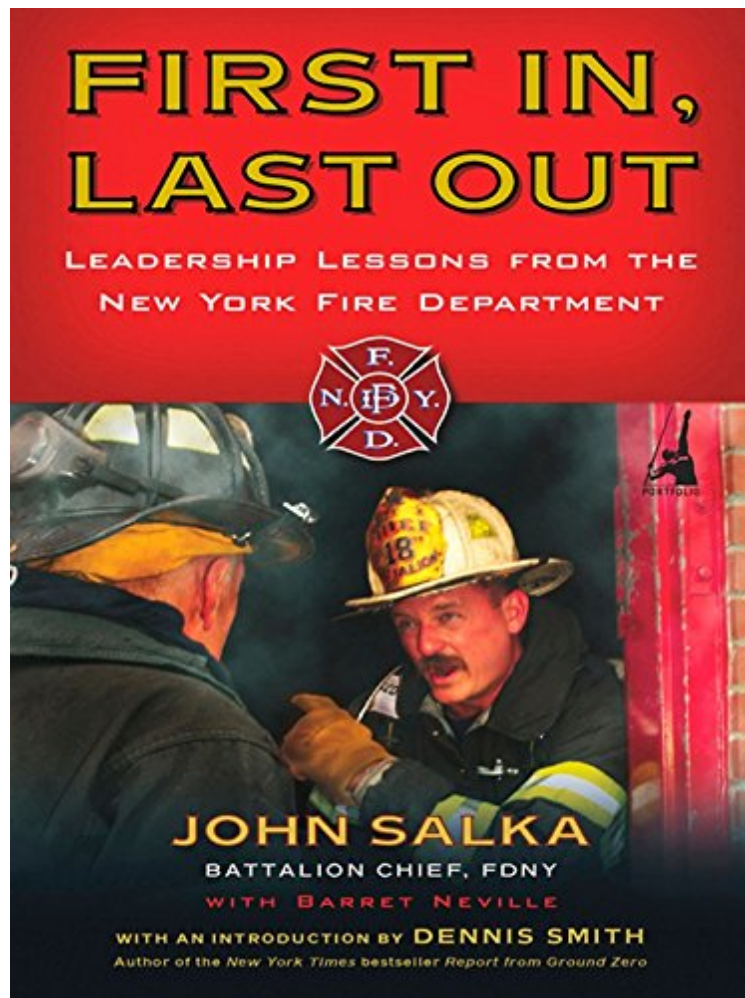


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# First In, Last Out: Leadership Lessons from the New York Fire Department

John Salka

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**John Salka : First In, Last Out: Leadership Lessons from the New York Fire Department** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised First In, Last Out: Leadership Lessons from the New York Fire Department:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. If I could, I'd give Chief Salka's book SIX stars!By FedoradudeIf I had to read only one leadership book in my lifetime, this book would be it. Why? Because it is the best, most concise and most interesting themed book on how to lead, inspire and motivate people into TRUSTING their leadership I've ever read. That having been said, I struggled to finish it. Not because of anything to do with the book. Rather because so much of Corporate America in 2015 seems hellbent to do just the exact opposite of every principle in this book - and then stand around and wonder why they get only the minimum from people and nobody trusts their "leadership."0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. IT and Firefighting go togetherBy LouKAs the son of a retired

battalion chief of a huge fire department, I knew some basics from my dad on how to lead people. When I first got a group to lead in my IT job, I knew I needed a book to reference to help me lead and guide my staff. This book helped me do this. I had a supervisor that laughed at me when I told him I was using this book as guidance to lead. He didn't think firefighting and IT support go together. It does. Oh it does. I felt I was able to compare a couple of firefighting moments Mr. Salka had to IT moments I've had. Working with staff and showing them you don't always sit behind a desk, but rather get up and do troubleshooting as well. They see you go in first and then come out last, staff earn your respect more. In the 4 years of having this book by my side, my turnover rate for staff is extremely low compared to other IT group and moral is higher as well. As I transition into a new role at work, my team is now stronger than ever from the skills I've learned from this book. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Fantastic Instrument of Improvement By Kiowa EMS So much information, you can't read much at a time as there is so much valuable information, the information is powerful, compelling and motivating. It has however made me hate my job and lose all respect for my chief.

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 yours; 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. On the web: <http://www.firstinleadership.com>

.com After twenty five years in the most dangerous of all occupations, John Salka, Battalion Chief of The New York City Fire Department, offers tough and tender lessons in leadership. Salka masterfully leverages examples from fire fighting--"where lack of leadership can kill people"--to create values for leaders in every organization. He alternates vivid summaries of historic and terrifying fires (the 1911 Triangle Shirtwaist factory, the 1993 World Trade Center explosion and ground zero) with metaphors from the firehouse to describe three commitments for decisive leadership. "Follow the smoke," is an imperative to uncover reality in yourself, your organization and your industry. Next, Salka counsels, "know their names before you send them into the flames," and encourages leaders to identify the contributions of each employee. The maxim, "Find your top whip" conveys ideas for developing future leaders and making a job into a classroom. Other standout chapters focus on the nuances of building trust, clear decision-making and execution and tools for aligning individual and organization goals. Those expecting a macho approach to high-stakes leadership will be pleasantly surprised. Salka embraces intuition as "your subconscious trying to offer up a life time of experiences" and he explains how "managing emotional triggers" are ways of gaining competitive advantage. Salka's inspiring and passionate vision of leadership is a combination of reality testing, self-knowledge, and a shared mission when the heat is on. --Barbara Mackoff From Publishers Weekly Salka, an FDNY battalion chief in the Bronx, has spent 25 years with the department, rising from firefighter to his current rank. He shares his insights on managing people, coping with crises, mentoring, decision making, adjusting to change and more. While Salka uses his experiences fighting fires, he clearly shows how his work has applications in almost any corporation: "[O]ur mission is to protect the people and property of New York City.... Since your customers define this value, your customers define your business. Organizations today need to ask themselves, Who is our customer? Only by figuring out exactly who their customer is and what they want can organizations fully grasp their mission." Salka discusses how he works with his firefighters and how managers can use his tactics. For example, he says, "[T]he most effective way to show your people that you trust them is to delegate to them. This is standard operating procedure in the FDNY. By letting them tackle problems on their own, you demonstrate your belief in them." The book covers key aspects to leadership; establishing trust, connecting with employees, decision making, engaging employees, dealing with crises and nurturing new leaders; in a logical fashion. The writing is solid though not inspiring. Readers who expected thrilling tales of firefighting will be disappointed because Salka's real-life anecdotes are toned down. Overall, this is a solid, but not unique, look at leadership. Copyright copy; Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. About the Author John Salka rose through the ranks of the New York City Fire Department from firefighter to lieutenant, captain, and now battalion chief (the second highest command), a position in which he manages more than 150 men. He also teaches leadership to other fire departments across the country.

Barret Neville is a business book editor.