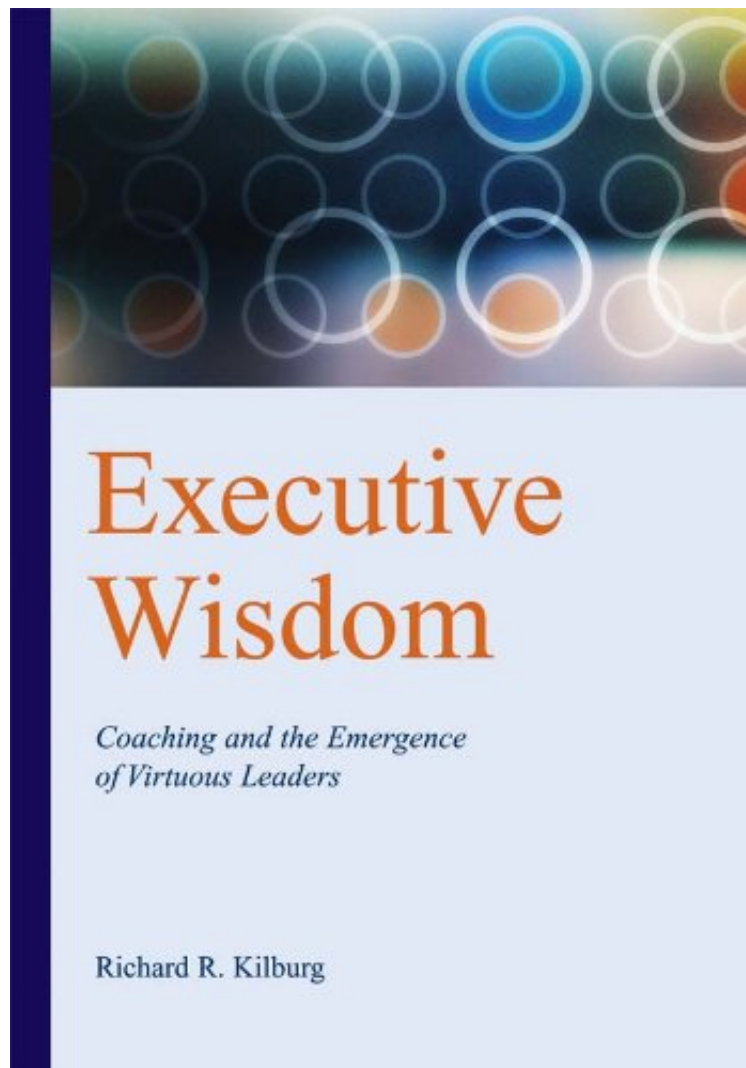


Executive Wisdom: Coaching and the Emergence of Virtuous Leaders

Richard R. Kilburg

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Richard R. Kilburg : Executive Wisdom: Coaching and the Emergence of Virtuous Leaders before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Executive Wisdom: Coaching and the Emergence of Virtuous Leaders:

15 of 16 people found the following review helpful. A real contribution to exec development
By Robert Kaiser
I bought this book after seeing Dick Kilburg present at an annual conference. I was impressed by his intellectual rigor, considerable knowledge, and ability to hold it all together. So I picked up Executive Wisdom for the plane ride home. What a rewarding read! I hadn't thought of the centrality of wisdom in leadership before; but as Kilburg laid it out,

there it was, right before us all along. There is a lot to like about this book, especially for consultants, trainers, and HR professionals responsible for helping managers become better leaders. Academics who study leadership will also find a lot of value in Kilburg's ideas and synthesis of philosophical and psychological perspectives on the intersection of leadership and wisdom. Kilburg deftly blends anecdotes, history, headlines, and case studies from his extensive coaching practice to bring his subject to life. This is a nice complement to the theoretical frameworks and conceptual models he lays out. At times, the reading is heady and complex. But the casual reader is rewarded by persevering through the heavier material: to paraphrase Oliver Wendell Holmes, there is a simplicity on the other side of Kilburg's treatment of this complex topic. In the end, Kilburg renders the intangible--wisdom--tangible. With penetrating insight, impressive scholarship, and extensive experience, he shows how consequential leadership is and how leaders can face the daunting demands before them with courage, character, and principle. And he shows those of us who would help them how to facilitate such maturity. As is painfully evident on the current world stage, we are in dire need of wise leaders. Perhaps Kilburg's greatest contribution is in helping us to understand what it means to be a wise leader and how to become one.

Wisdom is a defining attribute of the successful leader. While many gifted philosophers and leaders—Confucius, Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Augustine, Cicero, St. Thomas Aquinas, and Descartes—have explored the virtue of wisdom in leadership, in its current form, the study of wisdom has been aided by advances in the psychological sciences and management theory. In *Executive Wisdom: Coaching and the Emergence of Virtuous Leaders*, renowned executive consultant Richard R. Kilburg introduces the concept of Executive Wisdom and explores how consultants and coaches can help leaders become wiser in the conduct of their offices, and how these same concepts can be applied to senior leadership teams. What is executive wisdom, and how can it be developed through coaching? Executive wisdom emerges from a complex matrix of factors that affect an individual leader's thoughts, behavior, and emotions, including his or her organization, biopsychosocial systems, behavioral interfaces, internalized human wisdom system, external and internal challenges, and environment. It develops through the discernment, decision making, and executive action that leaders take in their daily lives. Synthesizing a rich array of concepts and processes, such as wisdom mapping, Kilburg deepens the reader's understanding of leadership performance and explains the causes and consequences of executive failure. This book uniquely integrates a large body of historical, philosophical, psychological, and business models and methods as they relate to executive coaching and leadership development, for individuals, dyads, teams, and executive groups. Some of the key elements that make the book successful are carefully constructed case examples and methodological suggestions for improving an individual executive's capacity, plus literature summaries, point-by-point presentations, narrative case analyses, and activities that will appeal to different learning styles and needs for leaders and their coaches.

About the Author Richard Kilburg is based at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, MD. He is the author of *Executive Coaching: Developing Managerial Wisdom in a World of Chaos* (APA, 2000).