



Paul Lester reviews *Leadership in Dangerous Situations, 2nd Edition*. Edited by Patrick J. Sweeney, Michael D. Matthews, Paul B. Lester, Sean T. Hannah, and Brian J. Reed

By Paul Lester

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Just over 10 years since it was first published by the Naval Institute Press, the second edition of *Leadership in Dangerous Situations* will be published on December 15, 2022. This edition is heavily revised and incorporates the significant advances in our understanding of how to lead when lives are on the line, with plenty of lessons coming from America's experiences in Iraq, Afghanistan, and challenges at home. The book is quite the tome, with 28 chapters and over 500 pages, and is divided into three major sections. The first section of the book focuses on preparing the individual for leading in such contexts, with chapters on developing character, courage, managing stress, ethical decision making, and others. The second section transitions to the leadership influence process and how it differs when leading in harm's way. This section includes chapters on establishing trust and building resilient teams, how to foster initiative within a volatile context, leading cross-functional teams, and others. The final section targets preparing one's organization to endure and thrive in dangerous environments, with chapters on recruiting personnel for dangerous work, establishing a high-performance culture within organizations that habitually operate in risky environments, red teaming, incident command, and others. Perhaps two of the book's greatest strengths are its approach to the material and the authorship teams. The book sets out to straddle the academic-practitioner divide and its material speaks to leaders at every level of experience, so there's something in here for everyone. Also, the editors intentionally teamed noted academics in this area with highly successful practitioners from military, fire, police, and first responder communities. The second edition of *Leadership in Dangerous Situations* is especially suited for adoption by first responder leadership development programs at the local, state, and Federal levels, as well as military training and educational institutions.

About the Author

Paul Lester is an Associate Professor of ethical leadership at the Naval Postgraduate School (NPS) in Monterey, CA. A retired U.S. Army officer, Paul received his undergraduate degree from West Point and his doctorate from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. He later served on the West Point faculty and taught leadership. Paul deployed to Iraq to study combat leadership and next mentored faculty at the National Military Academy of Afghanistan. Prior to joining NPS, Paul founded the Research Facilitation Laboratory, Department of the Army's premier people analytics and data science organization. His research interests include leadership, resilience, well-being, mentorship, and courage. He may be reached at paul.lester@nps.edu.

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