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Introduction

Toys have always been a representation of life. The first toys many of us played with as children were likely little cars, baby dolls, or small workbenches—all models of real life. We copied our parents by doing the things we saw them do, like hammering away at a plastic workbench, driving a Matchbox car down an imaginary freeway, or rocking a baby doll to sleep.

In each case, we utilized actions we would likely use when we grew up and held a real baby, drove a real car, or worked at a real workbench. As children, we played with toys just for fun, but behind the fun we learned how to deal with the reality that was to follow those formative years. The interesting thing about these valuable lessons is that they were all unintentionally learned from toys.

As children, we played with things just for fun, but behind the fun we learned how to deal with the reality that followed those formative years. While people recognize the value of

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many skills being learned through play, the area of early learning gained through playing with toys that is often the most overlooked is the area of leadership.

As adults, we complicate the principles of leadership with the latest trends or popular theories when in actuality some of the most important lessons we have learned were from the simplest sources and at a very early age. In other words, without consciously knowing it, our childhood toys have already taught us some of the most important leadership lessons we need to succeed.

Toy Box Leadership will take you back to some of the fun and playful benchmarks of your childhood. You will recall the leadership qualities you had as a child that may have been lost along the way. This book is about clearing away the clutter that weighs leaders down and returning to the basic nature of quality leadership by unlocking the lessons from your childhood toys.