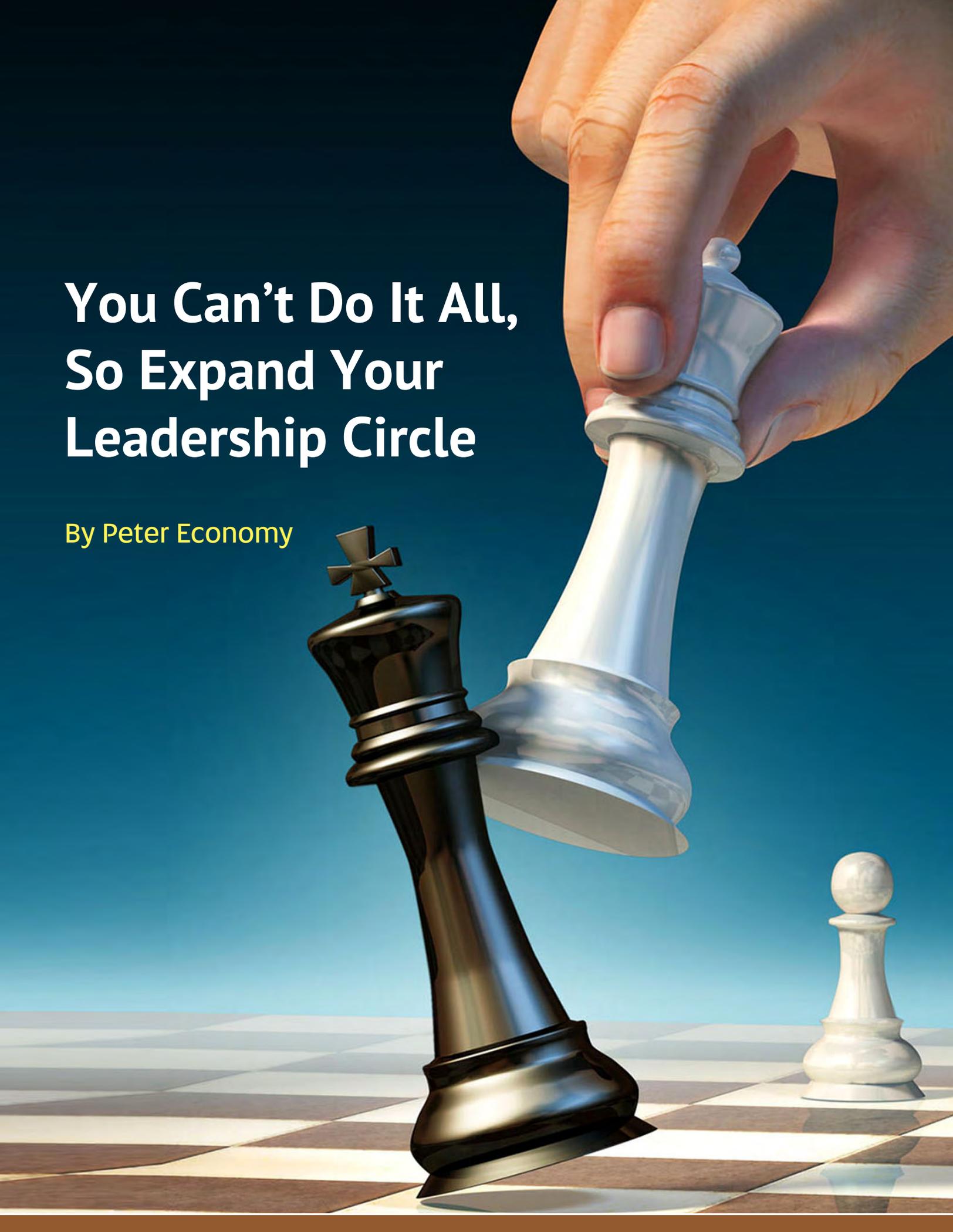


# You Can't Do It All, So Expand Your Leadership Circle

By Peter Economy





It's far too easy to let your organization get stuck in the leader/follower rut, where you end up doing all the leading, and everyone else just follows along. Remember these five words: You can't do it all.

You hired great employees for a reason, so put all their skills to work by enlarging your leadership circle. When you encourage your employees to expand their roles in your company, you give each one of them a chance to show their creativity in different ways. The result? Better ideas and a happier, more engaged workforce.

Here are some tried-and-true ways to expand your leadership circle and get the best from your people every day:

1

### CREATE A SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENT

If you want your employees to take initiative at work (and believe me, you do), they have to

know that you support them. Give your people the freedom to take chances and experiment with new ideas, and to make decisions within their areas of responsibility. Shine a spotlight on your employees by letting them take the credit for their own successes. Be sure that all managers understand the importance of sharing leadership--and reward those who delegate well.

2

### PROVIDE ALL YOUR EMPLOYEES WITH LEADERSHIP TRAINING

Most organizations only offer leadership training to supervisors and managers, but in order for all employees to successfully take on leadership roles, they must first be properly trained. Since not all hires have experience in leadership, it's important to offer training to *all* employees. Pair experienced leaders with followers and encourage them to learn from each other and to switch roles when appropriate.

3

### ENCOURAGE EMPLOYEES TO ACT

Every employee has the ability to make a positive impact on your organization and on your customers and clients. Show your employees that you value them and their contributions while actively encouraging them to take initiative to act and to try



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new approaches to old problems. The most successful companies have figured out the importance of making their employees feel important--and they actively take steps to do it.

4

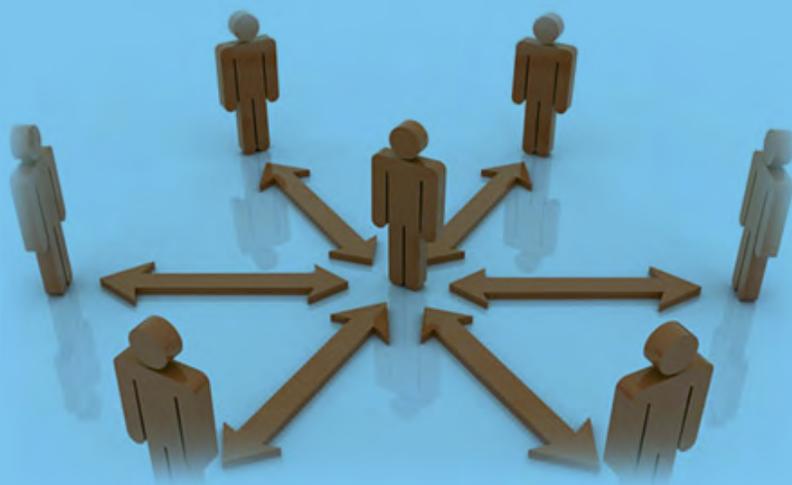
## THROW OUT THE ORG CHART

Okay, while you might not be ready to toss your organization chart into the trash, why not stick it in a drawer and forget about it for a while? Instead of deciding who the leaders in your organization are or who they should be, let them emerge on their own. Leaders tend to lead, and you will soon know who wants to step up. You'll also soon know which employees would prefer to let others lead. That's okay--every organization needs leaders *and* followers.

5

## REWARD LEADERSHIP BEHAVIOR

Taking on a leadership role can be very intimidating for many employees--especially those who have never been in a formal



position of leadership before. Encourage your employees to lead by **rewarding and reinforcing leadership behavior**. Give raises or promotions when your people are willing to take on higher-level roles and responsibilities--or to set the bar even higher--and you will find more employees from all levels of your organization who are willing to lead.

By expanding your leadership circle, you will tap into the full potential of your people and your organization. With the economy still on the mend, you need your employees' contributions now more than ever.

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### About the Author

While **Peter Economy** has spent the better part of two decades of his life slugging it out mano a mano in the management trenches, he is also the best-selling author of *Managing for Dummies*, *The Management Bible*, *Leading Through Uncertainty*, and more than 65 other books, with total sales in excess of two million copies. He has also served as associate editor for *Leader to Leader* for more than 10 years, where he has worked on projects with the likes of Jim Collins, Frances Hesselbein, Marshall Goldsmith, and many other top management and leadership thinkers. Visit him at [petereconomy.com](http://petereconomy.com) and follow him on Twitter: [@bizzwriter](https://twitter.com/bizzwriter).

