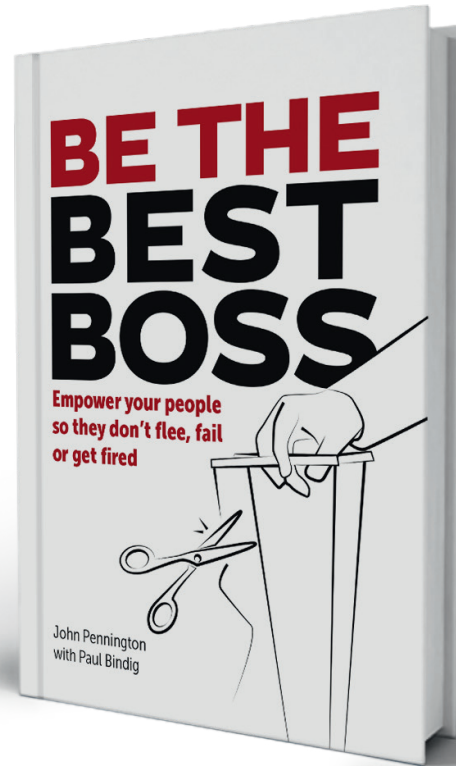# KIRKUS REVIEW

BE THE BEST BOSS

Empower your people so they don't flee, fail or get fired

by John Pennington and Paul Bindig

A guidebook for implementing more effective leadership skills.

In their debut nonfiction collaboration, Australian author Pennington and Australian management consultant Bindig start by addressing what they see as four key failures of business leadership: not considering the context of workers' skills ("Some offices might prefer phone to email, so teaching a strict communication method that preferences email won't be helpful"); inaccurately judging workers' levels of proficiency; not paying proper attention to what the authors call "motivational drivers"; and failing to offer enough management support. In a series of short, fast-paced chapters, with each broken into multiple, numbered segments, Pennington and Bindig go on to outline a wide variety of basic managerial concepts, including dealing with workplace conflicts and building one's own networking skills. Throughout, they stress the importance of looking inward; great leaders, they assert, must know themselves as well as they know their business: When leaders unlock their own potential, they will be able to see clearly where others are under- or overused. Readers who've dealt with unpleasant managers may have little patience with the authors' notion of management enlightenment; however, even skeptical readers will find valuable ideas in these pages. The authors address at length numerous aspects of leadership and training for it, and they resolutely keep the language simple throughout. About new managers, for example, they point out that "Taking on their new responsibilities often means letting go of old ones." There's also plenty of all-purpose advice on such topics as recognizing and overcoming communication barriers. Such general counsel is hardly original, but it's useful to have it all laid out in one place, in clear, straightforward language.

An often familiar but comprehensive leadership handbook for managers new and old.