Gene Klann wrote this book: Building Character Strengthening the heart of good leadership, to educate leaders on the depth of their impact, their abilities and their responsibilities.

Gene wrote this book for practicing leaders and manager’s incorporations, non-profit organizations, the government, and the military. It is directed at those leaders who want to develop positive leadership characteristics. He wants leaders to realize the responsibility they have to further develop their company and their leadership character. The leader needs to become an outstanding role model by showing good character and setting a proper example. This book gives leaders the proper information, tools, and processes to further their leadership development. It provides a framework for establishing leadership character development.

The book draws on Gene Klann experiences as a leader. He is not only a trainer of leaders, but a highly rewarded and regarded war veteran, he served as a unit commander. He has written many books about leadership and uses his experiences to convey his message across.
This book has different sections that are used in order to develop stronger characteristics of a good leader. Gene Klann starts his book by talking about what character and leadership mean, and how they are defined. Gene says that to lead is to influence others; however, he makes sure to state that this influence can be good or bad.

Gene Klann defines leadership character as “behaviours that have a positive influence on others” (Klann, 2007). It is the behaviours of a person that reflect who that individual is, and determine whether that person’s influence is positive or negative.

In the first chapter Gene gathered a list of fifteen leader attributes that are acknowledged as positive attributes. This list includes the following: “Communicative, informed, courageously decisive, positive (optimistic) trustworthy, just, dependable, team builder, motivator, encourager, dynamic, intelligent, a win-win problem solver and a planner” (Klann, 2007). He also includes list of negative attributes in a leader, these include: “loner, asocial, irritable, dictatorial, ruthless, non-cooperative, and egocentric” (Klann, 2007).

Think about it: What do you think is missing from leadership character today?
Chapter two discusses five influential attributes. These five attributes are very influential in leaders in all types of situations and circumstance. These five attributes are very important to what Gene calls the five E’s, which is discussed later in the book. Each of these is an important quality for a leader to have.

These five influential attributes include: Courage, Optimism, Self-control, Caring and Communication. These are defined later on as part of the review.

Courage is not only the absence of fear but carrying on in spite of fear.

Klann 2007

The rest of book focuses on the five E’s. These five E’s are example, experience, education, environment and evaluation. Each of these five is important in good leadership and Gene uses them as a framework for aspiring leaders to follow.

The first E is example. This one comes first because “it is the most powerful and has the highest potential for impact” (Klann, 2007). It has the most impact because it is the most powerful for increasing leadership character in others. One can use example to have positive influence on others based on their own behaviour. Each leader who has had success has followed the example of another leader before them.
Chapter 4 - Experience

The second E is that of experience. It is a good way to develop character for the leader. One learns from past successes and mistakes, from past experiences and relationships. It is through this experience that a true leader develops attributes such as caring, courage, self-control, optimism, and communication. Leadership can come from one’s own experience or even the experiences of others.

3 area’s to gain from experiential learning:

1) Dealing with ambiguity and uncertainty
2) Strong work Ethic
3) Managing stress

Chapter 5 - Education

The third E is education. Klann uses the terms education and training interchangeably. A leader needs to be able to understand a variety of information, facts, points of view and even principles. It is also based on real life examples. This education can be a self-education. Some leaders find it hard to be a student in a class. Some examples of these self-educated leaders are Winston Churchill, Benjamin Franklin, and Madam C.J Walker.
Chapter 6 - Environment

The fourth E is environment. This “refers to culture of organization- it’s society, collective personality, attitudes, customs, traditions and outlooks”(Klann, 2007). The organization of an environment can greatly affect those trying to lead. It can affect the development of the leader’s character in an encouraging way, or in an impeding way.

Chapter 7 - Evaluation

The last E is that of evaluation. This determines leader’s values, their worth, the content, or status. This evaluation can be done on the leader himself/herself in order for him/her to know where certain weaknesses lie. The feedback gained from evaluation will help the leader change and grow.

“In the context character development, evaluation involves observing the behavior of members of your cadre, then comparing what they do with the organization’s values and standards” (Klann, 2007).
Chapter 8 - Next Steps

The last chapter in the book discusses the next steps that a leader needs to do. This “frames a general procedure for starting a leadership character development process” (Klann, 2007). This frame provides three basic steps that the leader needs to follow: Assessment, planning and execution, and adjustment.

Appendix A, B, C, D, E

The last part of the book consists of appendix A, B, C, D, and E. Appendix A is a list of Personal Values, one picks from a list what is important to them as an individual. Appendix B assesses leadership character, by asking questions that the leader needs to answer. Appendix C is a checklist of good behaviours. Appendix D consists of leadership character scenarios. Lastly appendix E is an integrated plan for developing leadership character.

What Now?
How will you apply the five attributes to your teaching character/ style?
## The Five Attributes

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<tr>
<th>Attribute</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Caring</strong></td>
<td>Genuine concern for other people. “If the leaders treat their followers with caring behaviours … the leaders will be rewarded with co-operative and supportive behaviour in return” (Klann, 2007).</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Self-Control</strong></td>
<td>The leader has control over emotions, actions, desires and passions. This also means that the leader behaves in consistent ways.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Courage</strong></td>
<td>Physical or moral. Doing what you believe is right and be willing to accept the consequences. Courage is “not only the absence of fear but carrying on in spite of fear” (Klann, 2007).</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Communication</strong></td>
<td>Communicating meaning to others, but also listening to the needs and wants of other people.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Optimism</strong></td>
<td>The leader will make the most and expect the best outcome in a situation.</td>
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## The Five E’s

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<th>E</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Example</strong></td>
<td>Most powerful, has the highest potential for impact on others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Experience</strong></td>
<td>Helps develop the leader into the individual that they are. Helps develop the five attributes. Learn from past experiences of self or of others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Education</strong></td>
<td>Important for leaders to be able to understand a variety of concepts, information, views, and facts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Environment</strong></td>
<td>It “refers to the culture of organization- its society, collective personality, attitudes, customs, traditions and outlooks” (Klann, 2007).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Evaluation</strong></td>
<td>Allows the leader to see weaknesses and take constructive feedback in order to grow as an individual.</td>
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The book is one that is very easy to relate to one’s own leadership character. The whole purpose of the book was to create a framework for leaders to follow and apply to their leadership character.

The five influential attributes are given in a way which are easy to relate to and are easy to apply to the five E’s. The five influential attributes are attributes that one can find in their own character and then apply that to their leadership character. These critical concepts are outlined in ways which are relatable and applicable.

These five E’s—Example, Experience, Education, Environment, and Environment—outline ways in which one can apply this information and leadership character to different aspects of the leaders life. These 5 E’s can relate to one or all the aspects of the leaders life.

If the five E’s are not relatable to one’s leadership character, Klann provides appendixes at the end of the book.

The first appendix (A) is used for the leader to find out what values important to the leader. By completing the chart the leader will find the aspects that he/she values most in life. The next appendix (B) has questions that one can ask himself/herself that can help clarify and help the leader sort through difficult decisions. Such questions include “Am I looking at the situation correctly? [and] Are emotional inhibitors causing me to read the situation inaccurately?” (Klann, 200&). Appendix (C) has a checklist of good leader behaviors that one can use to see what sort of characteristics they have. This checklist is sectioned into parts that fit under the five influential attributes. Appendix (D) provides scenarios where the reader has to apply their leadership knowledge to solve the problem in the best case scenario. This gives the leader a look into applying what they already know to solve a problem.

These appendixes are very useful to apply what one already knows about leadership and the information that Klann provided previously in the book. It also allows for leaders to do activities to see where they stand as a leader and what sort of values/behaviors they have.
Gene Klann provides a framework for leaders to use in order to further develop their leadership skills and character. This framework is for those who recognize the responsibility of leadership character in their lives and/or their organizations.

Klann explains the role that character has in successful leaders and it outlines how this character can be developed through the key concepts of his book, the five attributes and the Five E’s—Example, Education, Experience, Evaluation, and Environment.

Klann provides a book that is easy to follow and offers a framework that one can apply to their own leadership character in everyday life. This framework is one that is uncomplicated. It is easy to understand and follow and with the examples that are provided becomes easy to apply to one’s own leadership.

The appendixes at the end help provide an even clearer way to apply these ideas to leadership character. The appendixes provide questions that are crucial to ask oneself as well as a way of finding what values are important to the leader.

This book is one that all dedicated leaders should read in order to continue to build on their leadership characteristics. It provides information that helps one grow as a leader by giving the individual a new structure of leadership to apply to his/her character. This book is one that can help the leader organize his/her behaviors, therefore creating a more responsible leader.