Denver Executive Coach Earns National Recognition for Book Tackling the 'Difficult High Performer' Problem

Award-winning Hard to Handle explores what organizations can do when high performers get results—but their behavior is hurting the people around them.

DENVER, CO, UNITED STATES, September 24, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- What should an organization do when one of its most valuable employees gets results—but people no longer want to work with them?

> Some of the hardest leadership problems aren't caused by people who lack talent. They're caused by talented people whose behaviors are getting in the way of their impact."
>
> *Diana Lowe, CEO, Blue Light Leadership*

Denver executive coach and Blue Light Leadership CEO Diana Lowe tackles that increasingly familiar leadership challenge in Hard to Handle: A High Performer Paradox, recently named a Distinguished Favorite in the Business–Motivational category of the NYC Big Book Award®.

The recognition adds to the success of the Amazon bestselling book, which examines a dilemma faced by organizations across industries: what happens when a highly capable employee delivers strong results, but their behavior, communication style or lack of self-awareness begins to negatively affect the people around them?

For Lowe, whose Denver-based company works with organizations facing leadership, engagement and behavior-change challenges, the award brings national recognition to a message at the center of her professional work: organizations do not necessarily have to choose between retaining talented people and protecting workplace culture.

“Some of the hardest leadership problems aren't caused by people who lack talent. They're caused by talented people whose behaviors are getting in the way of their impact,” said Lowe. “I wrote Hard to Handle because I believe people are capable of change. With greater self-awareness, accountability and the right support, high performers can learn to lead differently.”

Written as an accessible business fable and co-authored with Michael Ashley, Hard to Handle: A High Performer Paradox explores the difficult-high-performer dilemma from multiple perspectives while inviting readers to consider another possibility: sometimes the “hard to handle” person may be closer than they think.



Denver executive coach and Blue Light Leadership CEO Diana Lowe with Hard to Handle: A High Performer Paradox, named a Distinguished Favorite in the Business–Motivational category of the NYC Big Book Award®.

Rather than simply labeling employees or leaders as difficult, the book encourages curiosity about what may be driving behavior while maintaining the importance of accountability and intentional change. Its central premise is that high performance does not automatically translate into effective leadership.
The book is accompanied by the Hard to Handle Action Workbook: Practical Tools for Leaders Who Want to Communicate Better, Increase Self-Awareness, and Avoid Becoming the Boss Everyone Talks About, which translates concepts from the story into practical exercises focused on communication, self-awareness and leadership behavior.

The NYC Big Book Award attracts entries from independent authors, established authors and publishing houses in the United States and internationally. Entries are evaluated by publishing-industry professionals, with Winners and Distinguished Favorites selected for overall excellence.

For Lowe, the recognition creates an opportunity to bring greater attention to a question she believes more employers need to address:
How do organizations help valuable technical experts and high performers develop the human skills required to become effective people leaders?
“Performance tells us what someone can accomplish,” Lowe said. “Leadership also asks us to consider what happens to the people around them while they accomplish it. That's the conversation I want this book to create.”

About Diana Lowe
Diana Lowe is a Denver-based executive coach, leadership development expert, speaker and

CEO of Blue Light Leadership. Drawing on Positive Psychology, Coaching Psychology, emotional intelligence and behavior-change principles, she works with organizations to help valuable leaders change behaviors that may be undermining their leadership effectiveness, employee engagement and team performance. She is co-author of the Amazon bestselling Hard to Handle: A High Performer Paradox.

About Blue Light Leadership
Blue Light Leadership is a Denver-based executive coaching and leadership development company that helps organizations address the people side of leadership performance. Through evidence-based executive coaching, speaking, workshops and leadership development, Blue Light Leadership helps organizations strengthen leadership behavior, emotional intelligence, communication and employee engagement.

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