



Authentic Leadership: Rediscovering the Secrets to Creating Lasting Value

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In the wake of continuing corporate scandals there have been few, if any, CEOs that have stepped forward as models of "doing things right"--except the former chairman and CEO of Medtronic, Bill George. George has become the unofficial spokesperson for responsible leadership--in business, the media, and academia. In *Authentic Leadership* Bill George makes the case that we do need new leaders, not just new laws, to bring us out of the current corporate crisis. He persuasively demonstrates that authentic leaders of mission-driven companies will create far greater shareholder value than financially oriented companies. During George's twelve-year leadership at Medtronic, the company's market capitalization soared from \$1.1 billion to \$460 billion, averaging 35% per year.

George candidly recounts many of the toughest challenges he encountered -- from ethical dilemmas and battles with the FDA to his own development as a leader. He shows how to develop the five essential dimensions of authentic leaders--purpose, values, heart, relationships, and self-discipline. Authentic Leadership offers inspiring lessons to all who want to lead with heart and with compassion for those they serve.

Bill George helps readers answer vital questions such as: What should I do when my personal values conflict with company business values? How do I make trade-offs between the needs of my customers, my employees, and my company's shareholders? Do I really want to devote my talents to business? *Authentic Leadership* provides a tested guide for character-based leaders and all those who have a stake in the integrity and success of our corporations.

Authentic Leadership: Rediscovering the Secrets to Creating Lasting Value Details

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From Reader Review Authentic Leadership: Rediscovering the Secrets to Creating Lasting Value for online ebook

Brad Newberry says

I enjoyed this book and the perspective Bill George brings to leadership. I especially liked the section of the book where he encourages the readers to be true to their own personalities and not try to emulate other successful leaders. He would be an amazing boss and is a great example for all of us.

Sean Kottke says

There is much good advice on leadership here that starts not just with why (a la Simon Sinek) but also with who. Instead of a menu of behaviors and dispositions that a leader should have, George eschews emulation of other successful leaders in favor of defining - and embracing - one's core identity and values, and consistently leading in accordance with them. Many of the great lessons from Max De Pree's *Leadership is an Art* are reiterated here, with timely, updated examples on successful and unsuccessful leadership. The details of George's leadership maneuvers as head of Medtronic were a bit too inside baseball to hold my interest, but they nevertheless provided warrant for his larger points.

Trinh Bui says

Như bạn đang là một nhà lãnh đạo của một doanh nghiệp hay một tổ chức, dù cho quy mô của doanh nghiệp hay tổ chức đó như thế nào và lĩnh vực bạn đang hoạt động là gì thì bạn cũng cần “Lãnh đạo Ích thực” của Bill George.

Như bạn chưa phải là một nhà lãnh đạo, những bạn đang cố gắng phấn đấu để trở thành một nhà lãnh đạo trong tương lai thì quyển sách này dành cho bạn.

Như bạn đang sở hữu một doanh nghiệp/tổ chức hoặc có ý định thành lập một doanh nghiệp/tổ chức và chưa biết làm thế nào để có thể duy trì và phát triển doanh nghiệp/tổ chức ấy một cách thành công và bền vững thì tôi cho rằng bạn có thể tìm thấy câu trả lời trong quyển sách này.

Và như bạn không phải là những người đứng trên những bạn quan tâm đến việc lãnh đạo hoặc muốn biết những thế nào là một người lãnh đạo Ích thực, hãy đọc quyển sách này.

Tôi sao lại là “Lãnh đạo Ích thực”?

Trong vài năm trở lại đây, nền kinh tế Việt Nam và các thị trường khác đang chứng kiến rất nhiều những doanh nghiệp quy mô lớn đã trở thành công trong nhiều năm những lại phải ngừng hoạt động ngay cả phần lớn và bị biến mất. Một vài ví dụ như Eron một trong những công ty lớn nhất của Mỹ với tổng tài sản kho ứng 66 tỷ USD hay sở hữu của một thị trường hi hữu trên thị trường danh tiếng của Phần Lan với hơn 100 năm lịch sử là Nokia khi bị buộc phải bán cho Microsoft. Và thế là còn rất nhiều những trường hợp tương tự như vậy. Một câu hỏi đặt ra là, đâu là nguyên nhân làm cho những doanh nghiệp đã từng phát triển trở thành công trong một thời gian dài như vậy sụp đổ? Có rất nhiều nguyên nhân tiềm ẩn xung quanh thất bại của những doanh nghiệp này nhưng một trong số đó cũng là nguyên nhân chủ yếu nhất xuất phát từ những nhà lãnh đạo doanh nghiệp. Trong nền kinh tế thế giới ngày càng cạnh tranh hiện nay, việc duy trì một doanh nghiệp và dẫn dắt doanh

những người phát triển bền vững là một thách thức rất lớn với các nhà lãnh đạo. Các nhà lãnh đạo, quản lý doanh nghiệp và các chuyên gia hàng đầu từ nhiều phía, nhân viên, khách hàng, hội đồng quản trị, cộng đồng... Những người không phải nhà lãnh đạo nào cũng sẽ sống vượt qua những áp lực đó và rất nhiều trong số họ vì những lợi ích và quy định cá nhân mà đã làm những việc sai trái và họ quên mất những gì họ đang thực hiện? Những người này sẽ phải đưa doanh nghiệp và những thành phần có liên quan.

Bill George là một nhà lãnh đạo rất thành công của thế kỷ 21, ông quan sát những nhà lãnh đạo thời nay đang chỉ tập trung chú ý theo những mục tiêu, những lợi ích ngắn hạn mà không hề quan tâm đến việc xây dựng những giá trị cốt lõi của bản thân họ là doanh nghiệp. Vì vậy, quyển sách “Lãnh đạo thực” của ông viết về những kinh nghiệm lãnh đạo của mình với mục đích muốn hình thành nên một cách nhìn nhận về nhà lãnh đạo, để giúp cho mọi doanh nghiệp học tập để duy trì và phát triển một cách bền vững. Quyển sách là một tài liệu chia sẻ chân thành cùng với những ví dụ thực tế từ bản thân tác giả, qua đó người đọc ít nhiều sẽ có những bài học và có thể vận dụng chúng vào công việc của mình.

Greg says

Bill George has written an inviting book, based largely on his own experiences, in which he expounds on the concept of “authentic leadership.” He doesn’t limit himself to business situations alone, as many such books do, but discusses the application of his ideas on authentic leadership in families and community as well. For all of these settings, he offers the distilled wisdom and understanding of a life well-lived, and is open about both personal and professional weaknesses and mistakes, and the lessons he has learned along the way. Some highlights:

1. Leadership is about authenticity, not style. Pay attention to five important dimensions, with their associated developmental qualities required for effectiveness: purpose (passion), values (behavior), heart (compassion), self-discipline (consistency), and relationships (connectedness).
2. “The leader’s first job is to define reality. The last is to say thank you. In between the leader must become a servant and a debtor.”
3. Having a balanced life makes you a better leader, so make the time. “Decomartmentalize” your life – knock down the artificial walls between home, work, community, and church.
4. Build an authentic company. The five dimensions correlate in the firm as: purpose (mission and vision), values (company values), heart (empowering employees to serve customers), relationships (enduring and committed organization), and self-discipline (results for all stakeholders).
5. Missions motivate, dollars don’t.
6. Values don’t lie. Create a culture that is both values-centered and performance-driven. Tell the truth. Inculcate stewardship. Cultivate a culture of inclusiveness. And be consistent in practicing all of your values.
7. Celebrate your customers – they are why you are! Infuse a passion for customer service.
8. Great teams create great companies.
9. When in Rome, don’t follow the Romans. Ethical dilemmas surround most significant decisions that a business leader makes.
10. Shareholders come third. Before them, and necessarily so, the company must meet the needs of its customers and motivate its employees to do so.
11. Look around you. The world is full of needs. Choose one, then step up and lead the way.

A good book, written by a good man.

Jackie Gardner says

I love the concept of this book and it's message, but it was too heavy in politics and business narratives. I understand much of our leadership philosophy develops out of the business sector, but I didn't think it was appropriate for this topic. I think there were valuable nuggets in this book, but I am not sure a vast majority of it was necessary.

David Williams says

In 2016 I had the chance to study strategic leadership at Cranfield University. This was the first time I really considered how business practice might intersect with the military. While the military is a unique enterprise, there are areas within that enterprise where business practice makes sense. One of those areas is leadership.

I received this book at a leadership retreat for Team Red, White & Blue, a non-profit that I have been involved in since 2012. As a military leader and a leader in this non-profit, I very much appreciate George's view that authentic leaders (or as I saw it in the past - "real people") inspire better organizations and better results. In my early years, we were made to fit a mold - a mold I was never very much comfortable with. Overtime, I embraced my own style, favoring authenticity over image even if that meant being pushed from my profession. George's experience show that the question of leadership style applies to both the military profession and the business world.

There is much to learn for the young leader in these pages. I recommend this book - a very quick read - for anyone in a leadership position regardless of industry.

Jim King says

To much detail of situations in business. Good on being yourself as a leader.

Matt says

Pretty good book, goes over the principles required to be a successful leader in business and in life. Ethics, morals, business practices and honing ones abilities in these areas and more because it is not something we are born with. Bill George is a pretty impressive person, worth reading/listening to.

V says

Love this book and really appreciate Mr. George's stories of successes and failures. One gets the sense that it's written from a very authentic place - as one expects from the title. I really resonated with this model he introduced: <http://ajcc.aacnjournals.org/content/...> and will study and apply it in my work.

Pamela Hawley says

What is unique about Bill George is the fact he shares personal stories and he is frank on where he fell down as a leader in ways one may consider as embarrassing. Does a leader such as Bill George really face such challenges? It's amazing he is honest about courage or the lack of it, pride or too much of it, and the emotional changes he had to go through. How I wish all of us leaders could bare our hearts so we can learn from each other. Our day-to-day is practical and we are all growing. Perfection is not an option as a human being; but learning and striving for excellence is. Thank you Bill George for not only sharing strong lessons learned but how you learned in your own life from falling down to rising up to higher heights. That's the story of an authentic leader. I keep this by my desk.

Carol says

Great business insight. I wish the leadership of some of my former employers had taken lessons from Bill George's work.

Razvan Deaconescu says

I loved reading Authentic Leadership. Bill George makes a great book by highlighting important qualities of a leaders through his personal experience.

While mostly focused on large companies, driven from Bill George's experience as CEO at Medtronic, I found numerous hints on how to successfully lead an organization and make the best out of the people around you.

Be sure to pick this up. I can't wait to start reading "True North", another book on a similar topic by Bill George.

Rhonda Sue says

You hear about authenticity quite a lot these days, particularly as it relates to one's character in business and politics. This book talks about being true and honest as it relates to the author's role as CEO of Medtronic, a medical tech company and inventor of the wearable pacemaker and the defibrillator. To become an authentic leader, values, purpose, passion, self-discipline, and relationship matter. You need passion for your purpose. Be true to your values. Develop compassion. Connect with people and share your life stories. Practice self-discipline. Values don't lie. Truth, integrity, and transparency matter.

The author goes on to discuss the seven deadly sins and pitfalls to growing your company. He also discusses how he kept his company mission focused and made sure the employees were on board.

I'm surprised that the proofreaders missed the proper spellings of Clayton Christensen, the innovative

disruption guru and former US Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia. Please, fix those typos-it's embarrassing.

Omar Halabieh says

As best summarized by Bill: "Its (the book) message is simple to state but challenging to realize: we need authentic leaders to run our organizations, leaders committed to stewardship of their assets and to making a difference in the lives of the people they serve." The book is structured as follows: "First, I will describe authentic leaders and how they develop. Next, I will look at how authentic leaders build authentic companies, because that is the crux of leading. Third, I will show how authentic companies compete more effectively in the market, and, finally, how authentic leaders look beyond the bottom line."

What sets this book apart is its call for authenticity in leadership ("discover and cultivate that authentic self") - as opposed to being prescriptive, as is the case with most books in its category. Bill brings corporate America back to its root - authentic, genuine, worthy of trust, reliance, and belief. A highly recommended read that stresses the need for new leadership - authentic leadership!

Below are excerpts from the book that I found particularly insightful:

1- "We need authentic leaders, people of the highest integrity, committed to building enduring organizations. We need leaders who have a deep sense of purpose and are true to their companies to meet the needs of all their stakeholders, and who recognize the importance of their service to society."

2- "I believe that leadership begins and ends with authenticity. It's being yourself; being the person you were created to be. This is not what most of the literature on leadership says, nor is it what the experts in corporate America teach...They describe the styles of leaders and suggest that you adopt them. This is the opposite of authenticity. It is about developing the image or persona of a leader."

3- "There is no doubt that CEOs have tremendous influence on the results of corporations. However, if we examine more closely the great success stories of the past twenty-five years...we see that each was built by a team at the top, not by a single person."

4- "The key is having people around you who complement your weaknesses and make up for your lack of experience."

5- "To become authentic, each of us has to develop our own leadership style, consistent with our personality and character. Unfortunately the pressures of an organization push us to adhere to its normative style. But if you conform to a style that is not consistent with who we are, we will never become authentic leaders."

6- "Dimensions of Authentic Leaders: 1) Understanding their purpose 2) Practicing solid values 3) Leading with heart 4) Establishing connected relationship 5) Demonstrating self-discipline"

7- "The medium for developing into an authentic leader is not the destination but the journey itself - a journey to find your true self and the purpose of your life's work."

8- "...For each of the dimensions, a developmental quality is required for leaders to be effective: 1) Purpose: Passion 2) Values: Behavior 3) Heart: Compassion 4) Relationships: Connectedness 5) Self-Discipline:

Consistency"

9- "Balanced leaders develop healthier organizations. By appropriately delegating their work, balanced leaders are able to make more thoughtful decisions and lead more effectively. Their employees make higher levels of commitment to the organization. In the end they achieve better results on the bottom line."

10- "These five characteristics of the authentic company parallel closely the five dimensions of the authentic leader: 1) Purpose: Mission and vision 2) Values: Company values 3) Heart: Empowering employees to serve customers 4) Relationships: Enduring and committed organization 5) Self-Discipline: Results for all stakeholders"

11- "Articulating an organization's value is straightforward, but gaining alignment of all employees throughout the company is much more difficult...Inculcating values throughout an organization starts with the leader, who sets the standard of behavior for everyone in the organization. The leader has to work hard every day to gain alignment with the company's values, reinforcing positive actions and swiftly taking action with employees who do not emulate these values."

12- "Companies that devote themselves to maximizing shareholder value will ultimately fail to do so. It is true that a sharp eye to cutting costs can result in significant improvements in a company's short-term position, but unless the cost cuts are followed by much larger long-term investments, the company is bound to lose its way. Shareholder value will stagnate and eventually decline."

13- "Some executives mistakenly believe serving all stakeholders results in trade-offs and compromises shareholder value...In serving all the company's stakeholders, the company's sustained success makes shareholders the ultimate beneficiaries."

14- "Pitfalls to Sustainable Growth: 1) Working without a clear mission 2) Underestimating the core business 3) Depending on a single product line 4) Failing to spot technology and market changes 5) Changing strategy without changing culture 6) Going outside core competencies 7) Counting on acquisitions for growth"

15- "(On Acquisitions)...The key is the integration process. Acquired companies can bring great creative and technical capabilities with them and challenge the existing organization to sharpen its innovative skills. They can also strengthen the management team with new talent and new approaches to serving customers. As the result of an effective process of integrating acquired companies, companies develop more enduring organizations."

Jessica Lu says

Book review – “Authentic Leadership – rediscovering the secrets to creating lasting value” by Bill George

As recently I am involved in a leadership training course design, I was recommended to this book. It was said that this book should be required reading for all MBA students and those who hire them. I think this book is like a roadmap or a valuable guidebook for the top management, CEOs, or the to-be-CEOs.

Bill George, who has been named “Executive of the Year” in 2001 and “Director of the Year” in 2002, used to be the CEO and Chairman of the board for Medtronic (the leading medical technology company) from

1991 – 2002. This book was written in 2003 as his contribution to the management schools sharing his perspectives, advices and examples about what a business leader should be like and do to create share values through an enduring organization.

Although this book is more than 10 years old, I still find the ideas he shared meaningful in today's corporate world. He invented the terms of "Authentic Leader" and "Authentic Organization" and talked about the 5 characters as a leader: passionate to purpose; practicing values; showing compassion to lead; connecting sincerely in relationships; and demonstrating self-discipline; and as the focuses for managing organizations.

I really appreciate his advices regarding the leadership in personal level:

- Be genuine and true to yourself in all aspects of your life
- Accept your shortcomings and develop your own leadership style that is consistent with your character rather than learning to have a persona
- Use your heart as well rather than only use your head and hands at work
- Not get attached to the prestige and financial rewards of the position, and be aware of the temptation of power and your own ego
- Establish clear ground rules for keeping a balance between work and home lives
- Prepare your succession and have something to move on to
- Continue to grow intellectually, a bigger heart and physical stamina

And there are many good operational examples in terms of mission inspiration, value compliance, customer-focus practices and people management principles. I personally learned a lot in the areas I am not so familiar, such as innovative in R&D, internal growth vs. acquisition decision, dealing with stock analysts and medias, and separation between governance and management.

Although the book is full of wisdom, I did detect the "showing off" American cooperate culture as well as a flavor of religious belief. Several times I got annoyed and noticed myself frowning. Also, I don't think this book has the best structure in organizing the thoughts and the language is more a boring lecture rather than an interesting storytelling.

Overall, an interesting read and lots of learning in leading business!
