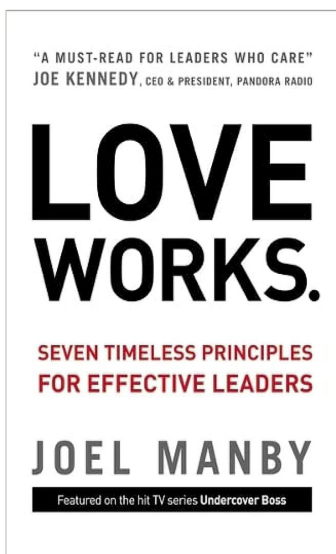


# EXECUTIVE BOOK SUMMARIES

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## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

### Joel Manby

*Joel Manby is proof that leading with love works. He has refined the leadership philosophy over the last 25 years, first as a highly successful corporate executive at Saturn, then as Saab North America's CEO, and currently as president and CEO of Herschend Family Entertainment (HFE), the largest family-owned theme park corporation in the U.S.*

## Love Works

### THE SUMMARY

Zondervan April 2012

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#### Introduction: Undercover Love

After finishing a stint on the reality show *Undercover Boss*, we were inundated with people contacting our company. Our corporate website averages 50 hits per day; in the first 45 minutes after the show, we got 60,000 hits. People were intrigued with what they had seen, and wanted to know more. One man put it this way, "If I didn't already have a job, I would keep applying at your company until I was hired, even just picking up trash. I would be so proud to be part of a company like yours."

Many expressed how they wished that their own workplaces were more like what they had seen on *Undercover Boss*—more respectful, cooperative, joyful—and even loving. They saw an expression of our management philosophy, one we've been nurturing for half a century--*leading with love*.

Leading with love is counterintuitive in our day—it turns many so-called leadership principles upside-down. But the incredible response we got after the show convinced me that we were on to something—something that people were hungry to be part of.

One last example. While participating in a panel discussion, I was asked about the caring culture people saw displayed on the program. I said, "We actually use love to define our leadership culture at HFE. Not love the emotion, but love the verb. We train our leaders to love each other, knowing that if they create enthusiasm with their employees, the employees will in turn create an enthusiastic guest experience. I think most organizations avoid talking about

# Love Works

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it...but why are we afraid to talk about love?" People applauded, and kept applauding. I had struck a chord.

My experience is that leading with love both grows the bottom line *and* respects employees, a way to lead that demands accountability *and* gives second chances. In short, it's a powerful way to transform the way you lead and the culture of your organization.

## Chapter 1: A Hard Day's Night

In June of 2000, I came to a crisis moment. Although very successful, having climbed the corporate ladder rapidly, I was far from happy. I was disconnected from my wife and our four girls, and I had a growing awareness that my life wasn't looking at all like I wanted. But I didn't know what to do, and didn't know what options I had.

Then my phone rang. It was Jack Herschend, CEO of Herschend Family Entertainment (HFE), one of the largest themed entertainment companies in the world. I was on their Board. He asked how I was doing—and I told him. More tears than words poured out as I explained where I was. His response surprised me—he asked me to consider being the next chairman of HFE. I was shocked.

He said, "Joel, I know you're struggling with your family situation, and I think the culture and values of HFE are a perfect fit for you." Culture? Values? Talking about those things in the context of a prospective job was both strange and welcome. And he expressed concern about my personal life! What kind of leader does that? As I would learn, one who leads with love.

During my whole career the focus was on meeting the numbers—financial performance. That's all my leaders seemed to care about. What I longed for was a better way, one that united who I was as a business leader with who I was as a person. I wanted to care about those around me at work. I didn't want to separate concern for profit and people or profit and principles. And I have discovered that it is possible. I believe that leading with love is the best way to run an organization.

Just to be clear: leading with love isn't an excuse to avoid the hard truths about leading an organization. You still have to hit financial goals and make a profit. Over the last seven years, we have grown operating profit more than 50% and earned a 14% annual return for our owners. Sacrificing values for profits is a flawed choice! At the same time, we have grown in love (and I mean that very practically). Our Share It Forward Foundation helps those in need through employee donations, a match from company profits, and additional donations from the Herschend family. We helped over 700 families last year who were in financial need. Bottom line: we are more profitable than ever and enjoying leading with love more than ever.

## Chapter 2: The Jedi Masters

Often when we think of love, we automatically think about romantic love—the emotional kind. I'm talking about love the verb, not the emotions. I'm talking about actions. I'm referring to a set of behaviors that people use to build a healthy relationship with someone regardless of how they feel. This type of love makes us great spouses, great parents, great friends—and great leaders.

The ancient Greeks had several different words for love. *Agape* refers to unconditional love; it's a decision, an act of the will. It's love as a verb, not an emotion. *Agape* love is about the values we embrace as a way of life, and a commitment

## Love Works

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to a certain kind of behavior. Understanding the difference is key to understanding why agape love can be the motivating force in a successful organization.

The seven principles we will explore in the rest of this book are paraphrases from I Corinthians 13, a famous passage in the Bible. These principles will transform your organization. Love is: patient, kind, trusting, unselfish, truthful, forgiving, and dedicated. How these words get worked out in the context of a successful organization may surprise you. Remember, they are *never* an excuse to ignore poor performance or neglect the bottom line. Agape love is a leadership principle that holds leaders accountable and helps any organization become healthier and more enthusiastic.

### Chapter 3: Patient— Have Self-Control in Difficult Situations

On Easter, 1999, I got a call from my boss requiring me to fly to Sweden to give an account for why my division had missed our numbers in the last quarter. Once there, I got chewed out in front of my counterparts from around the world. No explanation was asked for; I was simply humiliated as my boss seemed to take delight in letting me know what a failure I was. Note: I had missed my numbers one quarter, but that was not indicative of overall performance or trends. Five of the six previous quarters we had set sales records.

In the years since, the details have faded a bit, but one thing hasn't changed: from that moment forward, I determined never to publicly admonish people in a way that would diminish their dignity. We all need to be held accountable, and as leaders we have to hold other's accountable. But reprimands should be given in private, in a way that protects people's dignity. Acting in private and in a patient, respectful manner goes a long way toward ensuring our employees stay motivated and continue to grow.

Leading with love does not mean being "soft." It does mean treating people with respect. That's how we would want to be treated.

Just as we need to be patient in correction, we also need to be patient in our praise. Too often praise is an afterthought, and given in a very general way. But for praise to be effective, it needs to come from a leader who is patient enough to observe what his team did right, and then give the encouragement at the right time. Effective praise is legitimate (people can see that it is based on reality) and specific. It makes a difference if people take the time and trouble to describe exactly the reason or reasons you are praiseworthy.

Finally, try to praise more than you admonish. Try a 3:1 ratio—your people will respond to it.

### Chapter 4: Kind— Show Encouragement and Enthusiasm

When I was in high school, I was very active in sports, and well-known in the school because of it. One evening, at a sports banquet, I was walking with my mother down a hall, and three younger boys (freshmen), all said "Hi Joel" when they saw me. I vaguely nodded to them and kept talking to my mom.

As soon as she could, my mom pulled me aside and admonished me. "You listen to me, young man. Every time you walk past someone, you have an opportunity to make their day better or make their day worse. And I don't think you made their day better. Those boys clearly look up to you, and you have an opportunity—an obligation—to try to make their day better, and certainly not to make it worse." I was stunned, to say the least. But ever since then, I have genuinely tried to acknowledge people, and worked to make deposits into their emotional bank accounts.

## Love Works

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Years later, I was working for Saturn as we were seeking to launch a different kind of car company. The CEO, Skip LeFauve, gave a speech to all the employees and dealers that I've never forgotten. He said, "Loyalty today comes from passion. You must do things so astonishingly well that customers aren't only loyal, but they become outright apostles. We want to change the poor reputation of the car-buying process. No more wheeling and dealing. I want you all to treat the customer as if it was your *own mother* buying the car." Saturn's employees embraced that vision, and built a different kind of car company.

Ten years later we had a "Saturn Homecoming." Saturn owners from all over the country drove to our plant in Tennessee to celebrate Saturn. More than 25,000 came, simply to share the enthusiasm of owning a Saturn with others who felt the same.

I learned something vital from this experience: the enthusiasm of the guest experience can never rise any higher than the enthusiasm of your own employees. Kindness is a critical component of organizational success. Kindness is about intentionally creating and maintaining the right environment so that the frontline employees can deliver an enthusiastic experience. Management is kind to employees, employees are kind to customers, and customers become loyal and enthusiastic. Everybody wins.

At HFE we specifically focus on creating an enthused workforce that treats the end customer with kindness. All employees, including leaders, are given a kindness rating as part of their annual review, a rating that measures enthusiasm, passion, and encouragement. We do all this because it sets the tone for the entire organization. Kindness isn't an add-on; it's a critical component of any well-run organization.

Here's an example. Back in 2009 I was having a particularly bad day. The recession was in full gear, and park attendance was declining. Several other things were going wrong as well, and I was pretty down. That day I received a note from Jack Herschend, my predecessor, encouraging me with the different things he saw going right. It inspired me and gave me the boost I needed to keep going. Which I needed, as the next season required more time at the office, more travel, and more time away from my family.

Six months later, my wife and kids received a note from Jack, thanking them for sharing me with them, and saying what a great job I was doing. My wife said, "He's amazing. You've been in business 30 years, and I've *never* gotten a letter from one of your bosses." A few months later, I received an attractive offer to run another company that would have paid twice what I was getting at HFE. It wasn't hard to turn that down. Shortly after that, I received another note of encouragement.

That got me thinking—I'd received three notes; why hadn't I sent any to the people around me? Part of that is my Type A personality, which is always focused on taking the next hill rather than on thanking the people who help us get there. Second, I had never before seen it modeled, until I saw Jack.

I eventually called Jack to ask him how he found the time. His answer was enlightening. "I spend the first 20 minutes of each day reflecting on the day before. When I see behavior I think should be encouraged, I write a note to reinforce it and say thanks." What a powerful thought: spend part of every day actively encouraging behavior you want to reinforce! I've noticed now that when I do that it puts me in a positive frame of mind for the rest of the day.

I've now come to believe that CEO should really stand for "chief encouragement officer." It doesn't always have to be a note—words of praise, quality time, a small gift—they all work too. The point is to make it a priority, and if it starts at

## Love Works

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the top, it will filter into the culture of the organization. Being kind starts with you and is a key attribute of leading with love. So...how will you spend the start of your day tomorrow?

### Chapter 5: Trusting— Placing Confidence in Someone

When I was in 7<sup>th</sup> grade, my teacher, Miss Pray, gave me a wake-up call at a parent-teacher meeting. She said, “Joel, you are a gifted leader. I’ve seen a lot of students over the years, and you are at the top in your ability to gain people’s trust, rally those around you, and get things done. However, you are a very poor listener. You often interrupt people and just cut them off. Joel, when you don’t listen to others, it sends a negative message. You are saying they aren’t important, that you are better than they are, etc. You are a natural leader, but you will never be a great leader until you fix your leadership skills.”

I have never forgotten that day! And Miss Pray was right—when we interrupt without taking account of what others have said, it sends a strong negative message. The truth is: *interrupting is a sign of distrust*. Hard-driving leaders who often interrupt will always justify their behavior, but underneath the practice is the belief that others aren’t as smart, competent, or insightful as we are, and we can’t trust them.

The acid test is this: do your employees and coworkers rate you as a good listener? Not do *you* think you are, but do *they* think you are. Listening well is critical because it demonstrates trust and builds a sense of team. Poor listening is more than rudeness: it’s a breach of trust and not a quality of leading with love.

While not listening communicates a lack of trust, it’s also important to communicate the presence of trust. One of the best ways to do that is to involve people in the decisions that affect them. People understand that participation is a sign of trust. That doesn’t mean that decisions are made by big committees, but those affected by any decision should at least have some input and be able to understand why a decision was made.

That was one of the key distinctions in the early days of Saturn. Decisions were made *with* the union, and not just *for* them. That led to an incredible level of workplace unity and harmony. If we want our organizations to display trust and respect, we need to make sure everyone is involved in making them. The best decisions are made with, not for, and showing that kind of trust is a true attribute of leading with love.

Of course, deciding to let people be involved in decisions that affect them is easier said than done. I use a method known by the acronym RACI. Here’s how it works:

Start by identifying who is *responsible* for the decision. This is the person who actually makes the decision, after all the input and analysis is done.

Next comes those who must *approve* the decision—often those higher up with veto power.

Before the decision becomes final, you need to *consult* the people who will be affected by it.

Finally, you need to decide on the best way to *inform* the rest of the team—people who may not be directly affected, but should be “in the picture.”

Taking the time to think through each of these steps provides a powerful, simple model for including the right people in the right way. And while autocratic decision-making is faster—and therefore more efficient—it is almost always less effective, because it doesn’t draw on all the wisdom available, and because others may not support the decision. And

## Love Works

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really, we want *effective* organizations more than we want *efficient* ones.

As the top leader, I have learned at least two key things about trust-filled decision making from watching top leaders around me:

Let others make the decisions for which they are responsible. A leader must choose very carefully when he or she is going to get involved in decision-making; doing it often shows a lack of trust.

Avoid overruling decisions that have been made. Clearly, if a decision puts the organization at risk, a leader must step in. Trustful leaders let people do their jobs and even make occasional mistakes in order to learn.

Trust is the key to any healthy relationship, whether at home or at work. If we trust others, we will listen well, involve our team in decisions that affect them, and trust them to make the decisions they are paid to make.

### Chapter 6: Unselfish— Think of Yourself Less

Being unselfish doesn't mean thinking less of yourself; it means thinking of yourself less. When you're selfish, you insist on your own way with every decision because you're thinking of yourself. The key, then, is to mature, and grow from having a selfish heart to a serving heart. We become mature when we understand that our organizations, like our lives, are more about what we give than what we get.

Being unselfish starts on a personal level before it ever shows up in our organizations. If we are unable to be selfless in our personal life, we are unlikely to be unselfish as a leader. I believe that giving—in any of its many forms—is critical for a leader. This is because leading effectively requires leaders to:

- Think of others
- Remind themselves that any leadership position is a gift
- Reject the rat race of chasing possessions
- Choose to be unselfish

There are many ways that we as people and leaders can be unselfish. While we can't all give the same things in the same ways, there are some general principles about giving that anyone can implement:

- **Treasure**—Give a percent of your income off the top, before you spend anything, and live on the balance.
- **Talent**—Give your skills to make the world better.
- **Time**—Give whatever you have been blessed with, beyond money and talent. Build into your schedule & calendar time to serve others.

The crazy thing about giving is that it often provides the *giver* with unexpected blessings—as well as making the world a better place. So don't wait—be unselfish with your time, talent, and treasure now, not someday. Learning to give will make you a more complete and caring person, and that will make you a better leader. Too often we think the workplace is not the place for giving, but the truth is the exact opposite.

## Love Works

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So what does a giving organization look like? I've already mentioned the Share It Forward Foundation, which gives financial assistance to employees in need. In the last five years, almost 10% of our seasonal employees have received some kind of financial assistance through it. These kind of initiatives create organization-wide loyalty and passion and an enthusiastic workforce.

Giving time and talent to develop internal leaders is another important reflection of being unselfish in an organization. Here the recipients of selflessness are the next generation of company leaders. We have put several programs in place for both potential leaders and for senior leaders to help them maximize their potential, as well as encouraging informal mentoring of younger leaders.

Knowing we should be giving isn't rocket science for either an individual or an organization, but executing it can be challenging. Even unselfish leaders are crunched for time and treasure, especially in these challenging times. And we can't help everyone, so the temptation is to become cold and distant from the needs of our employees. The answer is to not give up. My pastor says it this way: "Do for one what you wish you could do for everyone." In other words, don't let the size of the problem stop you from doing what you *can* do. Could you adopt that approach? What *one* person in your organization could you mentor, or help with a financial hardship? Don't focus on what you can't do—do what you can.

Learning about being unselfish as a leader has impacted me in other ways. I've learned that the fewer decisions I make, the better. I know that confuses people when they hear it, but it's true. Making fewer decisions myself means that I have to draw out the best thinking of those around me. I focus more on asking questions and facilitating discussions, and attempt to build and maintain team unity. This approach—one that is more Socratic than autocratic—actually attracts and keeps stronger talent than other approaches.

Talented people—the kind any leader should want to be surrounded by—don't like to be told what to do. They want to figure things out. I could tell them what to do, but that would hinder their development, and ultimately risk losing them when they decide to move somewhere they are more trusted and loved.

Another thing I've learned is that as CEO, it's not my job to insert myself in areas of my organization where I am most comfortable making decisions. Instead, my role is to be where the greatest need is for the organization—and that is often outside my comfort zone. And when I'm there—outside my comfort zone—the value of a Socratic approach that draws on other's strengths is validated again.

### Chapter 7: Truthful— Define Reality Corporately and Individually

I was sitting in a meeting that was getting a bit tense. We were facing some serious, challenging issues, and as we discussed the situation the debate grew rancorous as nerves frayed. We needed to get at the truth, but that was proving to be slippery. We needed some ground rules to gain control of the discussion and ensure it was constructive and truthful. I wrote these rules on a flip chart:

1. **Don't shoot the messenger**—we need to hear what people have to say and not attack or blame.
2. **Don't confuse disagreement with conflict**—disagreement is necessary to come to good decisions; conflict happens when people take disagreement personally.

## Love Works

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- 3. Don't assume people see it**—we all have different perspectives, and all are needed to get the whole picture. But don't assume people see what you see.
- 4. Speak now or forever hold your peace**—once a decision is made, you have to support it. If you have a different opinion, say it upfront, advocate for it, but then get behind whatever decision is made.

Getting the truth on the table *corporately* requires all voices being heard. Leading with love also means doing the best thing for the organization to protect or add as many jobs as possible for those we care about. Making the best decisions comes from all voices being heard and considered.

Getting at the truth applies to individuals as well. Frank was a superstar—one of the most intuitive leaders I had ever worked with. He knew how to get things done and worked tirelessly. But his hard-driving style could alienate or discourage those who worked for him. In order to communicate with Frank, I pulled out an old tool I had used over the years.

I divided a paper into three sections: same as, more of, and less of. In the “same as” section, I listed the things I appreciated about Frank. In the “more of” section, I put the areas I wanted him to grow in. And in the “less of” section, I recorded things that were negative and Frank needed to eliminate or reduce. By putting it in writing, I assured I would communicate clearly. There are people like Frank in every organization, and they need truthful, direct feedback and follow-up to help them refine their performance and attitude and become fantastic—not just good—leaders.

Leading with love means caring enough about an individual or a team to give and solicit truthful feedback. When leaders provide their teams with the truth about their performance as well as the tools to be successful, *regardless of personal feelings*, this is a sure sign of leading with love.

What happens when you are the one who needs to hear the truth? Leadership is a lonely business. When we rely only on our own perspective, we miss our blind spots. We can do our best, but if we have nobody telling us the real truth, we will not improve over time. The unfortunate reality is that the more senior you are in your organization, the more difficult it is to get the truth about how you're performing. Finding someone you can trust to give you honest feedback is a rare gift that all leaders need but few receive.

I've been fortunate to have a group of friends since college who have been committed to each other and have the depth of relationship that allows us to speak completely honestly with each other about everything. We have helped each other through sorrow and loneliness, success and failure. I would die for them. And that's why we can speak the truth to one another. Character is the root of a leader's success, and only our very closest friends can hold us accountable to the character we strive for.

Whether you are finding the truth or communicating it to others, being a “truth teller” is an absolute requirement for leading with love.

### Chapter 8: Forgiving— Release the Grip of the Grudge

How does a leader know when to forgive someone? When do you rehire an employee who was released but wants another chance? We don't have a set formula at HFE, but we encourage our leaders to use a set of questions to help them make the right decision:



## Love Works

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- Is this a one-time offense or a recurring theme?
- What is the person's self-awareness of his or her shortcoming?
- How does the person's direct manager feel?
- Give the offender the benefit of the doubt if you're not sure.

I know that some of you are thinking your situation is unique, and I probably don't understand it. Maybe not, but I have lived through enough difficult second-chance scenarios to know they don't always end well. That doesn't mean we shouldn't give them. Forgiveness is sometimes agonizing, and it doesn't always end well. I am not suggesting that we toss out our organizational standards and goals—simply that we keep our hearts soft enough to be open to forgiveness. It may not always be the easiest thing to do, but it's always the right thing.

Let's face it: as leaders we will have many opportunities either to hold a grudge or forgive. The choice is ours. I'm not pretending forgiveness is easy. The opposite is true, just as leading with love is not easy. But when we choose to forgive others, however, it releases our anger and allows a deep wound to heal. Bearing a grudge keeps the wound open, and keeps us stuck in the past. Letting go of those grudges allows us to move forward.

### **Chapter 9: Dedicated— Stick to Your Values in all Circumstances**

2000 years ago, on the night before he was executed, Jesus ate a last meal with his followers. He had to summarize his teachings so that his followers could carry on his message. He had a lot of options; the one he chose was so unexpected that it has echoed through the ages. Jesus got up and took a slave's role—he washed their feet. The fact that he demonstrated his leadership by washing his employee's feet sets a compelling example for every leader who has followed him.

If you lead anyone or anything, you are in a position of power, and if you lead with love, you will surprise people, just like Jesus did. People in leadership often focus on power—how to get it, wield it, and hold on to it. Power is a necessary element in getting things done, so every leader needs to know how to exercise it. Great leaders, however, exercise power and also understand how to lead with and incorporate love simultaneously. Martin Luther King, Jr. said it this way: "Power without love is reckless and abusive, and love without power is sentimental and anemic."

Most leaders have a bias towards one side or the other, and tend to revert to the side they are most comfortable with and ignore the other. Given the triumph of power over love in most organizations, leaders have to be *dedicated* to leading with love. Leading with love puts leaders in profoundly different roles than they're used to—sometimes uncomfortable roles, and others around you may not "get" what you're doing. Do it anyway. Choosing to lead with love is the single most difficult decision a leader can make, but a wise leader dedicates himself or herself to it because it is also the single best way to lead an organization.

If you are dedicated to leading with love, it is critical to integrate love into your operating model so your teams see it in action and witness its successes. One way to think about this is to look at *be* goals versus *do* goals. Most people have *do* goals—things they want to accomplish. But *do* goals don't define *how* we will do things—what values we will live by. Those values are our *be* goals. What kind of person do we want to *be*? What values will we live by? Unfortunately, most people, and most organizations, don't focus on *be* goals.

## Love Works

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Most organizations, including HFE, clearly define their *do* goals. What makes HFE different from others is that we also clearly define our *be* goals through leading with love. *Do* goals will constantly change over time, while *be* goals should be timeless and rarely, if ever, change. *Be* goals represent the heart and soul of an organization, its culture. And at HFE our leaders are evaluated on both types of goals. This isn't just words for us; it's who we are.

Being dedicated to leading with love is especially important in hard times. The Great Recession of 2008 caused almost every organization in the country to make very difficult decisions regarding budgets, staff, and ongoing obligations. HFE was no different. Our challenge was how to navigate those trials in a way that was consistent with our values.

We pulled our park leaders together and made some hard decisions very quickly. We cut 50% of our capital spending. We still were looking at layoffs, which we wanted to avoid. We calculated that if we froze wages for a year, and all the senior leaders took a pay cut, we could save 350 jobs and minimize layoffs. We decided to sleep on it before making a final decision.

The next day the head of Dollywood called and said the entire Dollywood management team volunteered to take a pay cut. They had figured it would save another 15 jobs. I was stunned, to say the least! *That* is leading with love!

We still had to make some layoffs. We committed valuable resources to helping our workers find new jobs. Every person had a job within 45 days of leaving HFE. That makes me proud, to be honest. When you lead with love, your definition of success expands, and you will experience more fulfillment at work than you ever dreamed possible—especially when times are tough.

You see, it's one thing to *talk* about values like leading with love, but it's another thing to *deliver* on those values. That is what dedication is all about.

### Chapter 10: A Choice You Make

Fewer than 10% of companies today have a clearly defined set of core values and behaviors they expect employees to follow. In other words, only 10% have *be* goals effectively integrated into their daily practices. Many organizations write about their mission, vision, and values in their annual report, but that doesn't mean anything unless those goals are integrated into the life of the company.

The surprising thing is that it's been proven that companies with *be* goals do better financially over time than those without them. So why do so few organizations have an unchanging set of core values and behaviors? First, it's *hard* to lead with love. It's a lot easier to just focus on hitting the numbers than think through how a decision might impact the organization's culture.

Second, most leaders mistakenly think profit is an end in and of itself. Consequently, such leaders make profit the focus of all decisions. The problem is that profit doesn't motivate most of the frontline people (who are essential to an organization's day-to-day success). Jim Collins, author of *Good to Great*, says, "Profitability is a necessary condition for existence and a means to more important ends, but it is not the end in itself for visionary companies. Profit is like oxygen, food, and water for the body; they aren't the point of life, but without them, there is no life."

Finally, leading with love is rare because many leaders just don't care about the long term. They focus on results today, without regard to the future. Anyone can quickly improve the bottom line by slashing costs, but moves that boost profits in the short term can destroy trust, relationships, and the long-term culture and profitability of an organization.

## Love Works

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But two essential activities take time: developing an organization and developing a brand. That kind of leadership and brand building, in addition to time, require consistency and constancy—all of which come with thinking long-term.

Let me close with this thought. Taking the position at HFE was the best career decision I ever made. For the first time I began to also set personal *be* goals. *Be* goals are about defining the kind of people we want to be instead of what we want to accomplish (which I had always been focused on in an unbalanced way). The great thing about *be* goals is that they are within our control. When we live in a manner that is consistent with our goals, we discover contentment and peace such as we have never known before.

That also brings my home life and work life in alignment, and gives me an answer to the “why” question—why do I get up every day and go to work?

Why am I on earth in the first place? These are all big questions. As I pondered them, I realized that my *be* goals and my *do* goals needed to have the same roots. For me, that root is my faith in Jesus. Jesus gave his followers the ultimate command and challenge: *love others as I have loved you*. I want to love my wife and kids, and lead with love at work.

So what matters to you? Think carefully about the answer to that question. For me, what matters are the seven principles of agape love that assure, when I am practicing them at home and work, that I am pursuing what really matters. Leading with love is too important to be left to chance. It takes effort—but it is worth it. Love works!