

FIRST, BREAK ALL THE RULES

**WHAT THE WORLD'S GREATEST
MANAGERS DO DIFFERENTLY**

**BASED ON IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS BY THE GALLUP
ORGANIZATION OF OVER 80,000 MANAGERS IN
OVER 400 COMPANIES—THE LARGEST STUDY
OF ITS KIND EVER UNDERTAKEN**

**MARCUS BUCKINGHAM
& CURT COFFMAN**

The greatest managers in the world seem to have little in common. They differ in sex, age, and race. They employ vastly different styles and focus on different goals. Yet despite their differences, great managers share one common trait: They do not hesitate to break virtually every rule held sacred by conventional wisdom. They do not believe that, with enough training, a person can achieve anything he sets his mind to. They do not try to help people overcome their weaknesses. They consistently disregard the golden rule. And, yes, they even play favorites. This amazing book explains why.

Marcus Buckingham and Curt Coffman of the Gallup Organization present the remarkable findings of their massive in-depth study of great managers across a wide variety of situations. Some were in leadership positions. Others were front-line supervisors. Some were in Fortune 500 companies; others were key players in small, entrepreneurial companies. Whatever their situations, the managers who ultimately became the focus of Gallup's research were invariably those who excelled at turning each employee's talent into performance.

In today's tight labor markets, companies compete to find and keep the best employees, using pay, benefits, promotions, and training. But these well-intentioned efforts often miss the mark. The front-line manager is the key to attracting and retaining talented employees. No matter how generous its pay or how renowned its training, the company that lacks great front-line managers will suffer. Buckingham and Coffman explain how the best managers select an employee for talent rather than for skills or experience; how they set expectations for him or her—they define the right outcomes rather than the right steps; how they motivate people—they build on each person's unique strengths rather than trying to fix his weaknesses; and, finally, how great managers develop people—they find the right fit for each person, not the next rung on the ladder. And perhaps most important, this research—which initially generated thousands of

(continued on back flap)

“Out of hundreds of books about improving organizational performance, here is one that is based on extensive empirical evidence and a book that focuses on specific actions managers can take to make their organizations better today! In a world in which managing people provides the differentiating advantage, *First, Break All the Rules* is a must-read.”

—Jeffrey Pfeffer, Professor, Stanford Business School and author of *The Human Equation: Building Profits by Putting People First*

“This book challenges basic beliefs of great management with powerful evidence and a compelling argument. *First, Break All the Rules* is essential reading.”

—Bradbury H. Anderson, President and COO, Best Buy

“This is it! With compelling insight backed by powerful Gallup data, Buckingham and Coffman have built the unshakable foundation of effective management. For the first time, a clear pathway has been identified for creating engaged employees and high-performance work units. It has changed the way I approach developing managers. *First, Break All the Rules* is a critical resource for every front-line supervisor, middle manager, and institutional leader.”

—Michael W. Morrison, Dean, University of Toyota

“*First, Break All the Rules* is nothing short of revolutionary in its concepts and ideas. It explains why so many traditional notions and practices are counterproductive in business today. Equally important, the book presents a simpler, truer model complete with specific actions that have allowed our organization to achieve significant improvements in productivity, employee engagement, customer satisfaction, and profit.”

—Kevin Cuthbert, Vice President, Human Resources, Swissôtel

“Finally, something definitive about what makes for a great workplace.”

—Harriet Johnson Brackey, *Miami Herald*

“Within the last several years, systems and the Internet have assumed a preeminent role in management thinking, to the detriment of the role of *people* in the workplace. Buckingham and Coffman prove just how crucial good people—and specifically great managers—are to the success of any organization.”

—Bernie Marcus, former Chairman and CEO, Home Depot

“The rational, measurement-based approach, for which Gallup has so long been famous, has increased the tangibility of our intangible assets, as well as our ability to manage them. *First, Break All the Rules* shows us how.”

—David P. Norton, President, The Balanced Scorecard Collaborative, Inc.; coauthor of *The Balanced Scorecard*

“As the authors put it, ‘a great deal of the value of a company lies between the ears of its employees.’ The key to success is growing that value by listening to and understanding what lies in their hearts—Mssrs. Buckingham and Coffman have found a direct way to measure and make that critical connection. At Carlson Companies, their skills are helping us become the truly caring company that will succeed in the marketplace of the future.”

—Marilyn Carlson Nelson, President and CEO, Carlson Companies

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*What the World's
Greatest Managers
Do Differently*

Marcus Buckingham
and Curt Coffman

Simon & Schuster



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To Janie, who found what was always there

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