

"Real Love is the single most powerful motivator in a leader's toolbox. Clear and unsentimental, this book is required reading for a profitable workplace."

– KEN BLANCHARD, author of *The One Minute Manager*



Real Love in the Workplace

Eight Principles For Consistently Effective Leadership In Business

by GREG BAER, M.D.

"Dr. Baer has isolated the key to human commitment and contribution. I really enjoyed this courageous book."

– CURT COFFMAN, author of *First Break All the Rules*

❧ Chapter One ❧

The First Principle of Consistently Effective Business Leadership:

What all people need most is to feel loved.

The principles in this book have the capacity to utterly revolutionize your understanding of business management, leadership, and human resource development. You will also learn how to *apply* this knowledge and make changes in your corporate culture that will consistently and significantly increase productivity and profitability.

The titles of the book and first chapter imply that we have an urgent need to address a subject that has been ignored with remarkable diligence by nearly all business leaders and writers. The reasons for a thorough discussion of love in the workplace should be obvious: First, we're all instinctively aware that every human being has a primal need for love; and second, the most critical components of any business—every manager, direct report, CEO, vendor, consultant, board member, co-worker, and customer—are all human beings. Discussing business and business leadership without frequent references to love—this greatest of all human needs—would be like discussing agriculture without references to soil or light or water. One of the most prolific business writers in our time is Ken Blanchard, author of *The One Minute Manager*. In one of his books, his wife and closest associate, Margie, said, “Leadership is not *about* love—it

is love. It's loving your mission, it's loving your customers, it's loving your people."¹

This pivotal subject can no longer be ignored by any serious leader. At this point, a definition is required. A leader is *anyone* who teaches, guides, coordinates, nurtures, plans, innovates, thinks ahead, or makes any contribution toward the function of an organization at a level transcending the simple execution of assigned tasks. Some of the best leaders don't carry a leadership title, and some don't even realize that they function as leaders. Genuine leaders are indispensable at every level in business, from assembly line to board room, and it is for them that this book is intended.

I have personally interviewed thousands of workers in all manner of jobs: CEOs, managers at every level in large and small corporations, professionals (doctors, dentists, lawyers, engineers), small business owners, front-line service workers, sales people, military personnel, and more. In addition, I have surveyed the results of interviews with millions of employees and managers. In the process, I have learned that in the vast majority of businesses, the expression "People are our most important asset" is little more than a plaque on the wall. Those organizations that have actually put that principle to work, however, have clearly demonstrated its abundant economic rewards. Collins and Porras,² Peters and Waterman,³ and other management authors have thoroughly documented that the greatest corporations are not focused primarily on profits. They're focused on the needs of their customers, their employees, their managers, and the communities in which they live, and they have proven beyond doubt that if these needs are filled, the profits *will* follow.

In the Information Age it's understandable that we tend to exalt the importance of data we can quantify: production costs, units produced per employee hour, profits, return on investment, P/E ratios, and so on. In our lust for managing these indicators of business performance, however, we forget all too often from whence they come—or, more properly, from *whom* they come. Business cannot exist without *people*, and every person we encounter in business—every employee, manager, and customer—is a *human being* with uniquely human needs that profoundly affect every decision he or she will make in the workplace.

Until we understand these needs, we can only work dangerously in the dark with highly valuable assets, and with that benighted approach we will fare quite badly in business compared with those

who know what they're doing. In the coming decades, it will be those companies who can attract, develop, and keep good people who will excel in their respective spheres. In the words of Walter Wriston, former chairman of Citicorp/Citibank, "Human capital will go where it is wanted, and it will stay where it is well treated. It cannot be driven; it can only be attracted."⁴ Moreover, extensive research has confirmed that companies may *attract* great talent with compensation, benefits, training, and the like, but how long employees *stay* and how *productive* they are in a given place is determined by how well their *human needs* are satisfied by their *managers*.

Consider some of the following organizations that have acted with at least some understanding of these human needs:

- Toyota and Canon employees contribute 50 or more ideas toward workplace improvement per person per year,^{5, 6} and 80% of their ideas are actually implemented.^{7, 6} In American companies, employees contribute 2.4 ideas per person per year, and about one-third of their suggestions are implemented.⁶ It is no coincidence that Toyota employees require 29.4 hours of labor to manufacture a vehicle, compared to 46 hours (56% more) for General Motors.^{8,9}
- A new corporation purchased Motorola's television division, and in five years they cut the warranty bill from \$22 million to \$3.5 million, defects from 140 to 6 per 100 sets, short-term sales complaints from 70% to 7%, and personnel turnover from 30% to 1% per year.¹⁰
- A study of 1500 companies demonstrated that when certain employee needs were satisfied, each standard deviation in the use of the programs designed to satisfy these needs resulted in an increase in the company's market value of between \$35,000 and \$78,000 per employee.¹¹
- In 1932 McCormick & Company was on the verge of folding after losing money for several consecutive years. But then the company presidency was assumed by a man who believed that "business systems should be built around the fundamental desires and needs of human nature." With implementation of that philosophy—despite the entire country reeling from the effects of the Great Depression—productivity increased dramatically, production costs dropped, sales increased, and the company was in the black within a year.^{12, 13}

- Collins and Porras studied a group of eighteen companies, mostly American, that had paid special attention to the needs of their people over a period of at least fifty years, and they found that the cumulative stock returns of these companies were 15 times greater than the general market over a 50-year period.¹⁴

If I offered you a machine or an instruction manual that would save you 56% of your labor costs per item produced, cut your warranty bill by 82%, decrease your production defects by 96%, cut customer complaints by 90%, reduce employee turnover by 97%, increase your company's market value by \$50,000 per employee, and give you long-term stock returns fifteen times greater than the general market, what would you pay for that machine or manual?

In this book you will find principles that will help you take the steps toward achieving results similar to those I just described. This is not about learning clever techniques or ways to manipulate the people around you. Instead you will learn how to change the way *you* perceive other people, the way you feel about them, and—as a natural result—the way you behave toward them. In the process, you will become a far more powerful manager, leader, or co-worker than you have ever imagined. You will learn

- the real reason so many employees are unhappy at work.
- why employees resist supervision.
- why many managers are disliked by those they supervise.
- the real origin of conflict between employees and between managers and employees.
- the primary source of conflict between customers and company representatives.
- the one ingredient essential to effective communication, without which all communication techniques invariably flounder.
- what you can do to significantly and consistently increase employee satisfaction, cooperation, and production simultaneously.
- how you can simply and dramatically create a healthier corporate culture—regardless of your position in the company.
- how you can eliminate anger from your own life.
- how you can become a leader people will *want* to follow.

- how to eliminate conflict in the workplace.
- how to correct the unproductive behaviors of workers.
- the real reasons you lose customers.
- how to terminate the employment of those who consistently impede productivity.

The principles herein will also change the way you see yourself as a human being, spouse, parent, child, and participant in any other kind of relationship.

A TYPICAL CONFLICT IN THE WORKPLACE— AND THE COST

As a consultant, I had an opportunity to learn of the following interaction between Mark, a senior technician, and Brian, his immediate supervisor. The numbers indicated were provided by the participants some time after the interaction.

With obvious impatience Brian walked up to Mark's desk and asked, "Are you finished with that report yet?"

"I'm working on it as fast as I can!" Mark snapped, with fire flashing from his eyes. "I'll give it to you when I'm ready."

When Mark turned back to his computer, Brian stomped back to his office.

When we consider the well-being of a corporation, we often examine profits and other quantifiable indicators, but the health of an organization is really composed of all the "little" interactions that happen uncounted times every day between the people who work there—like the one between Mark and Brian. If enough of these interactions are unhealthy, that organization will falter.

By itself this interaction between Mark and Brian might appear to be minor, but let's look at its consequences. Notice that all of these have a significant negative impact on the function and profitability of a company:

- From personal experience we all know that when we feel offended by someone, we don't do our best work for that person—we're far too busy feeling hurt and defending ourselves. Mark was offended that Brian was being demanding and critical, so Mark responded, quite unconsciously, by working on the report even slower than before—65% slower, in fact.
- When Brian subsequently attended the meeting where he needed

Mark's report, Mark didn't have all his figures together, and his lack of preparation was one factor in losing a valuable account.

- Attitudes don't come with nicely defined borders or time limits. Once the report was completed, Mark continued to harbor ill feelings toward Brian, so he worked less than diligently on other projects also. This decreased his overall productivity by 35% compared with former levels, which was 45% less than the output of comparable employees. Of course, he always had elaborate justifications for his lack of performance, but these excuses didn't reduce his waste of company time and money.
- Mark diligently avoided Brian: He never spoke to him unless spoken to first, he was slow to answer Brian's emails, and he often ignored Brian's phone messages entirely. This affected the ability of both men to do their jobs.
- Mark often withheld information that Brian needed to make decisions about marketing and product modification.
- Mark talked negatively about Brian to other employees, wasting company time and infecting company morale like an insidious virus.
- The constant state of tension with Mark created a condition of wariness and defensiveness in Brian that he carried into his interactions with other employees. Gradually, the level of contention in the entire office increased.
- When people feel offended, they almost always acquire a sense of entitlement—a feeling that they deserve to be “repaid” for their injuries. In this way, Mark felt justified in making personal copies, surfing the Internet, and making personal long distance calls on company time and equipment.

Conflicts like this between Mark and Brian are so common that they hardly even stand out. In virtually every company I've investigated I've discovered many

- employees who just can't seem to get along with others.
- employees who resist direction.
- employees who consume a vastly disproportionate amount of their managers' time.
- managers who are at their wits' ends about how to deal with some of their direct reports.
- workers who exude an attitude of simmering discontent.

- managers who are resisted and disliked by most of those they supervise.
- employees who consistently create obstacles in communication and collaboration.

These problems are far more than inconvenient. They result in

- an enormous loss of expensive employee time. Workers who are embroiled in conflict of any kind can't possibly be as productive as they might otherwise be.
- an infectious spread of poisonous morale.
- increased employee turnover, which causes a loss of capital (the high cost of employee replacement), a loss of valuable experience, and a further degradation of morale.
- increased absenteeism. Unhappy employees are far more likely to call in sick or simply not show up.
- work-related injuries. Angry workers are much more likely to become involved in accidents than those who are calm and able to concentrate on their work.
- a loss of vital communication.
- a negative effect on relations with customers.
- a considerable loss of time for managers. Ideally, managers should be occupied with encouraging, uplifting, motivating, coordinating, and training, but their time for these highly productive activities is greatly limited when they are distracted—both physically and emotionally—by dealing with endless crises.

In short, these “little” conflicts have a massive impact on the corporate bottom line, so we cannot afford to allow them to continue. We must become as zealous in solving human problems as we are in attending to the breakdown of necessary equipment, for example, or the interruption of the flow of vital information.

THE REAL CAUSE OF OUR FEELINGS IN THE WORKPLACE

In our quest to understand the real causes of conflict and poor communication, let's turn again to Mark and Brian. I separately interviewed both men, who finally agreed that during their interaction they had been irritated. This is important to recognize, because when

people are angry at us, we tend to defend ourselves rather than listen to them and cooperate with them.

The moment each man felt the anger of the other, any chance of a productive conversation flew out the window. They both agreed with me on this point, but they differed completely regarding the cause of their irritation. Mark was certain that his anger was caused by the accusatory way that Brian asked, “Are you finished with that report yet?” Brian, on the other hand, was adamant that he was annoyed only because Mark consistently obstructed the completion of any task, and because Mark responded with irritation when Brian “only asked” about the report. In other words, each man was certain that the *other* man had caused his anger.

So, who was right? What was the real reason for their conflict? Until we accurately answer that question—not just for Mark and Brian but for all of us who are involved in similar interactions—this kind of conflict in the workplace is guaranteed to continue, causing enormous damage to employee morale and to productivity and profitability. Allow me to illustrate the answer with a brief story involving two scenes.

In the first scene, imagine that you’re enjoying a great day at work. As we pass each other in a corridor, I inadvertently bump into you, at which point you stop walking, turn, and greet me. We enjoy a brief conversation and part company.

In the second scene, imagine that a week later you’re on a beautiful beach, taking a nap in the sun. After sleeping more soundly than you’d intended, you awake hours later to discover that you’re severely sunburned from head to toe. Through the night the pain increases, and by the time you arrive at work the next day, you’re quite uncomfortable. As you’re standing by a filing cabinet, I walk by and again bump into you inadvertently. As pain shoots through your body, you rapidly back away from me and slam into a corner of the cabinet. Now there’s an explosion of pain, and you angrily turn toward me and demand to know how I could be so thoughtless.

At this point, you’re blaming me for both your pain and anger, and that seems to make sense: After all, before I walked by, you were coping well enough, but the moment I bumped you, your pain increased dramatically, followed by an eruption of anger. Obviously, then, I *must* have caused both your pain and anger, right? *No*.

The truth is, in both scenes I was guilty of *bumping* you, but *that's all I did*. In the first scene you actually responded by greeting me pleasantly. In the second scene, the same behavior on my part was followed by pain and anger *only* because of *your choice* to lie in the sun for hours on the day before, and I had nothing to do with that. I did not cause your pain. To be fair, I did *add* somewhat to your pain, but if you had not chosen to lie in the sun, my touching you would have been insignificant.

In the second scenario, you made a *choice* to blame me for your pain. Had you been honest, you would have focused on your own responsibility for the sunburn and dismissed my part in the event. You might even have made yet another mental note not to sleep on the beach again.

Similarly, Mark and Brian reacted badly to each other only because they were already “sunburned.” In that painful condition, the slightest inconvenience or insult became more than they could bear. This condition of chronic pain is quite common among us. After interviewing thousands of people, I can state with confidence that 98-99% of us feel sunburned most of the time, which has a pervasive effect on our relationships in the workplace and everywhere else.

What then is the cause of this sunburn we carry with us wherever we go? Why are we so susceptible to injury, offense, and conflict? Why do we take criticism and anger so personally? What is the wound that has such a profound influence on the way we interact with people in the workplace? That is the all-important topic of our next section.

REAL LOVE: THE ESSENTIAL INGREDIENT FOR HAPPINESS AND SUCCESS IN LIFE AND BUSINESS

It should be no great surprise that the most important wounds we suffer are causally related to whether our greatest needs and desires are met. Our ultimate need and desire is for happiness. No matter what “thing” we may want—more money, a bigger house, more sex, a better job, and so on—the reason we want that thing is that we believe it will make us happy. Happiness is the end and design of our existence.

This focus on our need for happiness naturally begs the question, “What *makes* us happy?” People have been asking this from the beginning of time, and we have come up with quite a variety of

answers. Moreover, we demonstrate our answers to this question less with our words than with our *behavior*. Each of us proves what we believe will make us happy by what we're actually *doing* to achieve happiness. Most of us demonstrate with our behavior that we believe we can achieve happiness by

- accumulating piles of money.
- having sex, fantasizing about sex, and attracting people to us for the purpose of sex.
- wearing expensive and fashionable clothing.
- earning promotions at work.
- driving cool cars and trucks.
- drinking more beer.
- proving our competence and worth through our careers.
- arguing with each other and insisting on being right.
- acquiring power and then protecting it.
- getting the best parking space.
- working for the approval and flattery of others.
- watching television.
- playing video games.

As a human family, however, we have proven individually and collectively—billions of times—that none of the above activities will *ever* provide us with genuine happiness. If sex, for example, resulted in happiness, then sex addicts would be the happiest people on the planet—but they're not.

So what does make us happy? What is the single element that brings energy to everything we do, including our jobs? What is that one “thing” we seek all our lives in a wide variety of ways? These are not rhetorical questions. In order to be happy, what we need most is to feel loved. Intuitively, we all know this is true. We've always felt that love was the answer, which explains why love is the single theme most prevalent in our literature, movies, and music.

Regrettably, though, our actual experiences with love have been less than uniformly positive. We've all had painfully negative experiences with love, where people—parents, siblings, teachers, friends, lovers, or spouses—have professed their love for us and then moments later become angry, critical, or blaming toward us, after which we felt disappointed, betrayed, and anything but loved. We've had similarly disheartening and confusing experiences at work, where we were certain

of the acceptance or approval of a co-worker or boss, but then we were sorely disappointed with the subsequent harsh or uncaring treatment from that person. Because of these negative experiences, many of us have come to doubt the ability of love to make us genuinely happy.

The only reason we have doubts about love, however, is that most of us have rarely if ever seen love in its true form. The most important requirement for our emotional health and happiness is what I call Real Love. *Real Love is caring about the happiness of another person without any thought for what we might get for ourselves.* Real Love is not violins playing and birds singing. It's not Real Love when I do what you want and you like me; frankly, that kind of "love" has questionable value. It's Real Love when I make mistakes, when I'm stupid, and when I'm flawed and inconvenient, but you don't feel disappointed or irritated with me. Real Love is unconditional.

When I use the word *happiness*, I do not mean the brief and superficial pleasure that comes from money, sex, power, and the conditional approval we earn from others when we behave as they want. Nor do I mean the temporary feeling of satisfaction we experience in the absence of immediate conflict or disaster. Real happiness is not the feeling we get from being entertained or making people do what we want. It's a profound and lasting sense of peace and fulfillment that deeply satisfies and enlarges the soul. It doesn't go away when circumstances are difficult. It survives and even grows during hardship and struggle. True happiness is our entire reason to live, and it can be obtained only as we find Real Love and share it with others. *With Real Love, nothing else matters; without it, nothing else is enough.*

Conditional Love: The Primary Wound

Sadly, few of us have sufficiently received or given that kind of love in our entire lives. From the time we were small children, we observed that when we were quiet, clean, obedient, and cooperative—when we were "good"—our parents and others smiled at us, patted our heads, and spoke kindly. With their words and behavior, they told us what good boys and girls we were. And we understood that we were "loved."

But what happened when we fought with our sisters, made too much noise, got bad grades, and dragged mud across the living room carpet? Then did people smile at us or speak gentle, loving words? No,

they frowned, sighed with disappointment, and often spoke in harsh tones. Just as the positive behaviors of other people communicated to us that we were loved, the withdrawal of these behaviors could only mean that we were *not* being loved. Although it was unintentional, with their behavior our parents, teachers, peers, and others taught us this terrible and indelible message: “When you’re good, I love you, but when you’re not, I don’t—or certainly I love you a great deal less.”

This conditional love can give us brief moments of satisfaction, but we’re still left with a huge hole in our souls, because only Real Love can make us genuinely happy. When someone is genuinely concerned about our happiness, we feel connected to that person. We feel included in his or her life, and in that instant we are *no longer alone*. Each moment of unconditional acceptance creates a living thread to the person who accepts us, and these threads weave a powerful bond that fills us with a genuine and lasting happiness. Nothing but Real Love can do that. In addition, when we know that even one person loves us unconditionally, we begin to feel a connection to everyone else. We feel included in the family of all mankind, of which that one person is a part.

Without sufficient Real Love, we feel empty, alone, and afraid. The lack of Real Love is the most common and most painful wound in our lives—and throughout all mankind. *That pain*—the lack of Real Love—is *the sunburn* that most of us carry around constantly. That is the pain that Mark and Brian had been carrying with them for decades before they ever met, long before they had the interaction we’ve been describing.

While we are suffering the pain of insufficient Real Love—a condition most of us experience most of the time—we react poorly to everything else. Without enough of that one ingredient essential to our happiness, the smallest events become threatening, and then we become defensive, resistant, uncooperative, demanding, angry, or withdrawn—or a combination of those traits—and in the workplace these characteristics have a terribly negative impact on productivity and profitability. We saw this in the case of Mark and Brian.

The Effect of Real Love

Before we can really *understand* the potential meaning of Real Love in our lives, we need to actually *feel* it. Without that firsthand experience,

the intellectual understanding can only be shallow—like trying to *understand* a strawberry without *tasting* it. In order to give you a taste of Real Love, allow me to guide you through a brief visualization. Take your time as you read the following paragraphs and, if possible, read them in a place where you won't be distracted.

Imagine that you're having a difficult day at work. Several people have confronted you about mistakes you've made or assignments you've not completed, and you're feeling both inadequate and irritated. The computer is working poorly—again—and your car is in the shop for the third time in the past two months. You want to pound your fists on the wall and scream.

In the midst of your frustration, a man and a woman walk into the room and address you by name. Even though you've never seen them before, somehow you sense from their peaceful and inviting expressions that you can trust them completely. They ask you to go with them, and without hesitation you get up and follow them out of your place of business and out on to the street.

Side by side, you walk between them for some time, finally turning in to the driveway of a beautiful home. Walking through the entryway, you enter a spacious, well-lighted room, where many people are talking. Several of them walk over and greet you, and you see in their faces and gestures nothing but a sincere and unreserved welcome. Somehow you sense that everyone in this room feels loved and happy, and you know that no matter what mistakes you've ever made or what flaws you might have, these people accept you completely.

Utterly relaxed, you freely tell these new friends the story of your life—including your mistakes, flaws, and fears—and they understand you, accept you, and care about you. As they listen, you realize there is nothing you could do that would disappoint them or irritate them. In this unrestrained atmosphere, you talk and laugh for hours.

Allow yourself to feel what it's like to be completely understood and accepted. Feel the peace and confidence of it. You'd like to be with people like this always. Eventually, however, you have to leave, and as you depart, your friends invite you to return any time you wish.

As you now come back to the real world—however reluctantly—consider this question: While you were with those loving people, did you feel any inclination to be angry at them—or to lie to them

or withdraw from them? The very idea is ridiculous, isn't it? How could you feel angry or otherwise react negatively toward people who unconditionally accepted and loved you? Moreover, while you were with those people, did you feel any inclination to be angry at *anyone else*—at any of the people you know in real life? Were you irritated about the dysfunctional computer or the car in the shop? All those negative feelings were gone, because when we have enough Real Love, we have the one thing that matters most in all the world, and then we lose our need to be angry, to feel hurt, to lie to people, and to withdraw from relationships.

The Real Cause of Conflict

Out here in the real world, however, we experience conflict fairly often. We snap at our spouses, growl at our children, bark at co-workers, and curse at other drivers on the road. Most of us behave in these ways many times a day, and because the people around us do the same or worse, we see our behavior as quite normal. Ironically, we do all this even though our behavior *never* produces a positive result. Think about the last time you vented your anger at someone. Did you feel peaceful and happy? Did your anger bring strength to your relationship with that person? I personally can't think of a single time when my anger ever brought a moment of genuine happiness into my life.

And yet we continue to get angry. Why do we keep engaging in a behavior that is *never* productive? Partly because it's what we've seen other people do all our lives, and partly because we feel justified by the belief that other people *make* us angry. In our visualization, however, you *proved* that other people never make us angry. When you were with those loving people, you didn't feel angry—at anyone—simply because you felt enough *love*. Notice that the people in your real life—the people outside the visualization—had not changed, and yet you lost your anger toward them. So if love eliminates our anger, what is the real reason we get angry?

We become angry—and lie and withdraw from relationships—only because we don't have enough Real Love in our lives. Real Love is that essential to our emotional health. Without enough Real Love, we uniformly feel empty, afraid, and alone. We feel the deepest possible wound, and in that condition we defend ourselves, lash out, and engage in all the behaviors that are guaranteed to cause conflict, as Mark and Brian discovered.

There is much to be learned from the fact that when you were with those loving people, you didn't feel anger at the people outside the visualization. Real Love *from any source* makes us happy, and we feel empty, alone, angry, and so on only because we don't have enough Real Love from *anyone*. When you get angry at a specific person at work, therefore, your anger is a reaction to far more than anything that that specific person did or did not do. Your anger is a reaction to a lack of Real Love from many sources over a long period of time, usually from childhood. Your anger is a response to a lifetime of being sunburned. That's why your reaction is often so far out of proportion to the single event that *seems* to have precipitated it.

Disappointment and Anger

Conditional love is distinguished from Real Love by the presence of *disappointment* or *anger*. Allow me to illustrate by way of a personal example. Imagine that I come into your place of business and point out how you've made several mistakes in carrying out a task I gave you. The mistakes have cost both of us some time and money, but I'm not concerned, because we can fix this with little difficulty. With an easy smile, I thank you for all you've done, and I apologize for not explaining the assignment more clearly. Then we have a great time working together until everything is done correctly. Finally, I show you how I want the task done in the future, outlining an approach that will be easier, more fun, and more cost effective for everyone. Most important, you can hear in my voice and see in my facial expressions and body posture that my concern here is to help you, not to criticize you in any way.

How do you feel? Relieved, of course—even delighted. Despite all your mistakes, you can see that I care about *your* happiness. There's no better feeling in the world. This is just a small taste of the unconditional acceptance—the Real Love—I've been describing.

The next day, however, I come into your business again to follow up on yet another task I assigned to you. Again, you have made several mistakes, but this time when I see what you've done, the expression on my face immediately clouds. Although I don't say anything, I quietly sigh and drop my shoulders in that expression of profound disappointment that no one fails to recognize. Then I turn my back on you and silently repair the damage you've done.

How do you feel now? Quite a different feeling, isn't it? The moment I communicated my disappointment, you knew that my concern was for *myself* and for what *I* didn't get, not for *your* happiness at all. The effect was devastating, even though I didn't say a word to you. I might as well have yelled at you and screamed that you were an idiot, because that's what you heard and felt from my behavior.

Disappointment and anger are different only in degree. Whether I sigh and roll my eyes, or I scream at you and throw things, you get the same essential message. On the whole, then, when I talk in this book about anger or irritation, you can assume that these terms include the condition of disappointment.

Every time I'm irritated at you, what I'm saying is this:

- Look at what you've done to *me!*
- Look at what you should have done for *me!*
- How dare you have forgotten that the true center of the universe is . . . *me!*

The central message of anger is *me-me-me*, and while I'm standing over you screaming *me-me-me*, is there any way you could feel my unconditional concern for *your* happiness? Not a chance. There's a powerful lesson to be learned here, and I cannot emphasize it too strongly. *Every time we get angry at another person*—a husband, wife, child, parent, sibling, friend, co-worker, boss, employee, and so on—*that person hears us say only four words: **I don't love you.*** In the moment we're angry, we're thinking only of ourselves, and we simply can't be unconditionally loving toward anyone. In that state, we have a profoundly negative effect on any attempts we might make at communicating with anyone—in the workplace or anywhere else.

It's Always about Real Love

Real Love isn't *one* of the ingredients we need to achieve happiness. It is *the* central element, without which genuine happiness is quite impossible. We can go so far as to say that in any relationship, "It's always about Real Love." When we understand this concept, we take a giant leap forward in our understanding of every conflict or dysfunctional interaction.

Let's apply what we've learned thus far—about Real Love, conditional love, and the effect of disappointment and anger—to

gain a much deeper understanding of the interaction between Mark and Brian.

Neither Mark nor Brian had ever received a consistent pattern of Real Love—either as children or as adults. That’s true for the vast majority of us, and in saying so I make no accusation of our parents, because if they failed to love us unconditionally, it was only because they weren’t unconditionally loved themselves. We can’t give what we didn’t get.

Mark and Brian both spent their lives, therefore, living with the wound of not feeling unconditionally loved, and I cannot overstate the negative effect this wound has on every human being who suffers with it. It is the ever-present sunburn I spoke of on pages 8-9, and when people are in that pain, the slightest additional annoyance can seem overwhelming.

When Brian impatiently demanded the report from Mark, his irritation clearly communicated *I don’t care about you*, or *I don’t love you*. Because Mark’s chronic primary need was for Real Love—as is the case for all of us, *even in the workplace*—hearing *I don’t love you* was like a knife to the chest. After that message is communicated, it is virtually impossible for any two people to continue a productive conversation. After hearing *I don’t love you*, people respond to *that* message instead of focusing on the intended content of the conversation: a report, a suggestion, a criticism, or whatever.

In the case of Mark and Brian, for example, when Brian was irritated, Mark heard only *I don’t love you*, so he didn’t even bother to respond properly to the actual question about the report. Had he felt loved and happy, he would have responded with something like, “I have all the figures together, but I still have probably 25% of the report to write. If you want me to make that a first priority, I could complete that in the next three hours.”

That is a proper answer to the content of the question, but instead Mark responded to the *I don’t love you* with anger and the words, “I’m working on it as fast as I can,” and “I’ll give it to you when I’m ready.” That’s not a real answer. It’s a way of getting back at Brian and saying in his own way, “I don’t love you either. So there.”

Now you understand the primary reason conflicts go unresolved, why they repeat themselves, and why they’re so frustrating. All this occurs because both parties in a conflict *believe* they’re talking about a given subject—a report or a personnel evaluation or whatever—when

the real issue is Real Love. One or both parties are not caring about the happiness of the other, and in that situation meaningful progress on the work-related issue—the report or evaluation, for example—is virtually impossible.

The Need for Real Love

When people have sufficient Real Love—when they're happy—*everything else* goes better. Happy people communicate more effectively, collaborate more freely, and create more abundantly. They're simply more productive. Unhappy people communicate poorly, instigate conflicts, and experience more mistakes and accidents. They're far less productive.

Surely you can recall occasions when you've been a little ray of sunshine all day. For some of us, that may have been years ago, but even so, most of us can recall at least one day like that. And what is such a day like? When we're happy, everything in the world somehow seems to acquire a positive glow. Criticism rolls off our backs. Angry people don't bother us. Waiting in long lines becomes a negligible inconvenience. Nothing can rain on our parade. In addition, we're far more productive at work. A sense of happiness—satisfaction, contentment, peace—energizes us from head to toe.

On the other hand, when we're miserable—when it seems like we just woke up on the wrong side of the bed—everything seems to go badly. We respond poorly to criticism. We get impatient and irritated in traffic. At work we're distracted, slow, and prone to make mistakes. In many cases, when we're not happy, we'd be better off to go home and stay in bed, because we're not just useless, we're counter-productive everywhere we go. Our baseline sense of contentment is that important.

When employees are not happy, their attitudes and behaviors affect the work environment in a multitude of ways, including—but not limited to—the following:

- Many managers spend a great deal of their time with these employees who are designated “difficult”—who are angry, uncooperative, resistant, hard to communicate with, and who require a great deal of attention. The cost in managerial time and energy is enormous. Worse, managers are then unable to

spend their time developing employees who would benefit most from their leadership.

- Disgruntled employees waste their own time, at great expense to their employers. An unhappy worker can be as much as 90% less productive than a happy one. In your own experience, consider how much more slowly you move to comply with directions when you're irritated with the person giving the directions.
- Unhappy employees spread their discontent to the workers around them, causing a general loss of morale and productivity.
- Productive and innovative employees don't like to be around unhappy employees, so many of them leave the company and find employment elsewhere.
- Difficult employees obstruct communication between employees, between customers and managers, and between departments.
- Unhappy employees are more likely to steal from the company, miss work, quit their jobs, and become injured at work—all at considerable inconvenience and expense to the company.
- Eventually, if the needs of employees are not filled, their mental health can be affected. The World Health Organization predicts that by 2020 depression will be the second leading cause of disability.¹⁵

In short, unhappy people make lousy employees, both personally and economically.

When managers encounter such “problem” employees, they commonly clamp down on them with increased rules and controls, but these serve only to irritate, alienate, and even drive away the self-motivated, productive workers. Or the managers try to “motivate” them with programs, speakers, and seminars, but these approaches are rarely effective. It's far more effective to address their core needs for Real Love, because when these are filled, the secondary symptoms and problems tend to disappear.

When we understand the pivotal role of Real Love in people's lives, we gain an enormous power in the workplace. To be specific, suppose you are a salesman, for example. With an understanding of Real Love you realize that your success does not depend primarily on the quality of your product nor on the management style of your

company. Your success depends on how thoroughly your customers feel cared for by you. More and more teachers of salesmanship are recognizing this principle. Some, in fact, are talking more about revolutionizing the entire sales approach from one of *selling* to the customer to one where the customer feels so valued and cared for that he wants to *buy* from us. The latter approach has proven to be faster, to retain clients longer, and to be more profitable.

Joe Girard has long been held up as a model of salesmanship, perhaps the greatest salesman ever. He sold cars, the same product sold by tens of thousands of other salesmen in the United States, but for many years he sold more cars than any other man or woman, in some cases as many as the next several men and women in the rankings. His approach? He lavished so much attention, follow-up, service, and caring on people that they couldn't wait to buy their next car from him.

Yahoo senior executive Tim Sanders said, "The most powerful force in business isn't greed, fear, or even the raw energy of unbridled competition. The most powerful force in business is love. It's what will help your company grow and become stronger. It's what will propel your career forward. It's what will give you a sense of meaning and satisfaction in your work, which will help you do your best work."¹⁶ Fortunately, we now know a great deal about the core needs we all have for Real Love, and throughout the remainder of the book I'll be discussing how we can fill them.

Evidence from the Real World of the Effect of Real Love

For many years evidence that love is essential has been available to us, but on the whole we haven't recognized it or implemented it. From 1924 through 1927, for example, Elton Mayo conducted experiments at Western Electric's Hawthorne plant to see what effect lighting would have on productivity. When he turned up the level of the lighting, productivity went up—which surprised no one—but when he turned the lights back down, productivity went up again. It seemed that the employees weren't motivated by the change in physical conditions but by the attention—the care—paid to them by management.¹⁷ These impressions were upheld by subsequent experiments in the same place, in which other factors were manipulated.¹⁸ Without realizing it, these researchers were confirming the positive effects of Real Love.

The field of sports provides us another example of the effects of Real Love. Years ago a sports commentator interviewed a group of several legendary professional coaches, among them Joe Gibbs—NFL Hall of Fame coach—and Red Auerbach. Auerbach's Boston Celtics won more consecutive championships than any professional sports team in history, and Red has been named by many as the greatest basketball coach of all time.

During the interview, the commentator asked all the coaches why they had been so much more successful in their careers than other coaches. Each of them stumbled around, looking for an answer, and for a time it appeared that nobody would come up with one. Finally, Auerbach, chomping on his ever-present cigar, blurted out, "Oh hell, I just loved the ba__ds!" At that, the other coaches nodded in agreement, and the discussion was over.

Earl Lloyd was the NBA's first African-American player, and it's no coincidence that he played for Auerbach, who was noted for the indifference he felt toward the color of his players. Earl said, "Red Auerbach convinced his players that he loved them, so all they wanted to do was please him."¹⁹ Another player said that he never knew a man who played for Red who didn't love him.

There's an important lesson here for all of us. Numerous surveys of workers have demonstrated that employees of all categories—management, laborers, professionals, artists, technicians, and others—have needs that are remarkably similar. The needs of basketball players are little different from those of any other employee, and the Celtics demonstrated that with the love of a leader they were willing to do whatever it took to perform at the level of champions.

As you become a genuinely loving human being—not just with your words but with your whole being, as we will demonstrate in the pages to come—you *will* become an effective leader, because you'll be giving people what they want most. Then they will *want* to follow you and will be motivated to do their best, and *that* is the greatest single key of leadership. Without it, we can only manipulate people in superficial and temporary ways.

What Real Love Looks Like

I have presented the principles of Real Love to thousands of managers and employees, and at first many of them are understandably skeptical

that love can be discussed in a work environment, but their doubts come only from long-ingrained cultural misconceptions of love. Allow me to share with you a single example of what Real Love can do in a practical situation.

On pages 5-6, I described the consequences of the interaction between Mark and Brian. For a moment, let's imagine we can turn back the clock and change things. This time we'll assume that Brian has attended a Real Love in the Workplace training and has learned how to apply these principles to his direct reports.

In this new scenario, the first part of the interaction remains the same:

With obvious impatience Brian walked up to Mark's desk and asked, "Are you finished with that report yet?"

"I'm working on it as fast as I can!" Mark snapped, with fire flashing from his eyes. "I'll give it to you when I'm ready."

When Mark turned back to his computer, Brian stomped back to his office.

At this point the new scenario departs from the old: After Brian returned to his desk, he reviewed in his mind the interaction he'd just experienced with Mark, and he didn't like how it had affected either of them. So he decided to do something about it.

Returning to Mark's desk, he found Mark with a deep scowl on his face, doing nothing productive. When Mark looked up and saw Brian, the scowl deepened.

"When I spoke to you a few moments ago," said Brian, "I was impatient and critical. There was no justification for that. I was wrong."

Mark was dumbfounded. At first he could hardly think of anything to say. He couldn't remember the last time anyone had freely admitted to him that he or she was wrong. "Well," Mark stammered, "thanks for saying something." Then he pulled some papers out of a pile and added, "This is the report you asked for. It's not quite finished, but if you want it immediately, I could probably have it done by the end of the day. Would that be all right?"

"I'd appreciate that," said Brian. "Could you call me when you're finished?"

This is not a fairy tale. I have seen this kind of interaction happen many times. Now consider the consequences of this new scenario, as compared to the first:

First Scenario

Second Scenario

Mark was offended.

Mark was grateful for Brian's honesty and obvious concern for him.

Mark worked more slowly and failed to have the report ready for an important meeting.

Grateful to Brian, Mark worked much faster and had the report ready in time to help the company win an important account.

Mark's overall productivity continued to drop.

Mark enjoyed working for Brian and naturally worked harder and more effectively on subsequent projects.

Mark avoided Brian.

They became much closer and collaborated on projects.

Mark withheld information from Brian.

Mark gladly communicated with Brian, and with that information Brian was able to make decisions that brought greater profits to the company.

Mark gossiped about Brian.

No gossip. Instead they cooperated, and the company experienced an increase in morale and productivity.

This is just one example of the many ways Real Love can look in the workplace—in both application and in consequences. Real Love involves

- freely sharing information with everyone around us.
- seeking first the welfare of the customer before an interest in our own gain.
- an attitude of constant cooperation rather than competition or resistance.

- a willingness to entertain new ideas, no matter where they come from.
- developing the talents of others.
- doing the best we can, regardless of the recognition or status bestowed on us as a result of our labors.
- a willingness—an eagerness, really—to support others as they make mistakes in the process of exercising their creativity.
- a sense of deep personal responsibility, rather than an attitude of criticizing and blaming others.
- genuinely trusting the people around us and demonstrating that trust by giving them ownership of their jobs, rather than tightly managing or controlling them.

As we believe and behave in the above ways, the enjoyment we experience in our work is exponentially increased, and additionally the following professional and financial gains flow to us naturally and virtually without effort:

- Our ability to network increases dramatically. Rather than always working to reach out to people, we discover that people *want* to connect with us. We human beings *want* to be around people who genuinely care about us. It's a feeling we crave, and it's a feeling other people can't fake for long.
- Many of the obstacles we had previously encountered in the workplace simply disappear. I can't count, for example, the communications I have received from people who have described supervisors they once thought utterly impossible—who got in their way at every opportunity and made their lives miserable at work—who subsequently melted under the influence of Real Love.
- Our customers love us. People just *know* when we're trying to sell them something for *our* benefit, as opposed to genuinely caring about *their* welfare, which is the definition of Real Love. When the latter feeling prevails, we find that people are eager to *buy* from us, which is a delightful experience, rather than our struggling to *sell* them something, which can be exhausting and miserable for everyone involved.
- Those we supervise work much harder and more productively. We all work harder for someone who loves us than for someone who does not. Much harder.

- Creativity in the workplace explodes. Without Real Love, the dominant feeling in any organization is fear, and in that environment creativity is greatly restricted. Why would anyone be willing to offer new ideas in an atmosphere other than unconditional acceptance?
- We become, quite simply, an unforgettable experience in the minds of our peers, supervisors, customers, and direct reports. Truly loving people are so remarkable, so nearly iconic, that we remember them fondly for years, often for the rest of our lives. This explains our cherished memories for certain people in our past: a favorite uncle or aunt, a particular grandparent, that one unforgettable teacher, and so on. Being loving will serve us well in the workplace.

SELF-DECEPTION

One of the greatest obstacles most of us presently face in addressing people's needs is our belief that we're *already meeting those needs*. We continue to provide our employees and managers with motivational seminars, management systems, communication workshops, anger management consultants, and conflict resolution techniques, because we believe we're providing people with what they need—mostly because we're using the only tools we know. With these systems and techniques, we often do see some improvement in performance, but we fail to identify that (A) the effects are almost uniformly temporary, and (B) the improvement is often a result not of the technique or management system but a result of the increased attention we give to those we supervise—the “Hawthorne effect” we described on page 20.

The essence of self-deception is that we are genuinely convinced—self-convinced—that something is true when it's not, or that we are doing or accomplishing something when we are not. In that condition of self-deception—acting on false information that we genuinely believe to be true—we are *guaranteed* to act incorrectly and, even worse, to act with confidence. I saw the hazards of self-deception clearly illustrated during my twenty years as a surgeon. If a patient was misdiagnosed, the subsequent course of mistreatment was often much more harmful than if a diagnosis had never been made.

Self-deception is the root of virtually all the troubles we repeatedly experience personally and in the workplace. It's not the problems we

accept responsibility for that cause us the greatest difficulty. Our greatest predicaments are created when we blame other people for problems that are really caused by our own choices. Most of us, in fact, are ruled by these problems, and until we can identify our responsibility for them, they will continue to interfere disastrously with our lives—personally and in the workplace.

Again recall the interaction between Mark and Brian in the first scenario on pages 5-6. Mark was *certain* that Brian was making him angry, and he accumulated piles of evidence to convince himself of this. Brian was just as certain that Mark was the cause of their conflict, and *precisely because* each man was convinced that someone else was the cause of his problem, the problem became *impossible* to resolve. When we blame other people for our anger, for example, *we* become the real problem.

Clearly there is an element of self deception affecting the way we are filling the needs of people in the workplace generally. Nearly 100% of people are enthusiastic about their jobs when they're first employed, and yet after six months approximately 90% of employees express a significant loss of enthusiasm. If management provided a sufficiently nurturing environment—supplying what employees genuinely needed—this waning of job satisfaction simply would not occur.

We see a wide variety of examples of self-deception repeated in businesses around the world every day:

- Employees who blame each other for their unhappiness at work
- Managers who blame employees for their resistant and otherwise negative attitudes
- Customers who blame company representatives for their discontent
- Unions who blame management for their difficulties

In the presence of self deception, these problems are guaranteed to continue and exert their negative effect on workplaces everywhere. It is the purpose of this book to identify these and other problems, to pinpoint the real causes, and then to propose simple and effective solutions for them. These leadership and management skills are not mystical. They can be *learned*.

THE DANCE OF THE “L” WORD

Despite the monumental advantages of Real Love in the workplace, the literature on business management avoids use of the word *love* like a disease. I examined the indexes of 112 of the most popular business books available, and I found the word *love* in *one* index. I read a majority of these books and found a discussion of love in one other book that had no index.

Although business leaders do carefully avoid the use of the word “love,” they still perform a delicate dance around the *subject* of love, and occasionally they come quite close to it. They use phrases and sentences like the following in their mission statements, or in their statements of values, beliefs, or principles:

- “We believe that our first responsibility is to our customers.”
- Our goal: “To establish a workplace where engineers can feel the joy of technological innovation, be aware of their mission to society, and be satisfied with their work.”
- “Our second responsibility is to our employees.”
- One of our values: “Tolerance for honest mistakes”
- A value: “Heroic customer service”
- A motto: “People as the source of our strength”
- “Give full consideration to the individual employee.”
- “Spend a lot of time making customers happy.”
- “Make people away from home feel that they’re among friends and really wanted.”
- “We are in the business of preserving and improving human life.”
- “Treat each employee with dignity, as an individual.”
- “Respect and concern for the individual”
- “To bring happiness to millions”
- “Leading at a higher level is the process of achieving worthwhile results while acting with respect, care, and fairness for the well-being of all involved.”
- “Freely sharing information”
- “Open communication”
- “Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.”
- “Sharing power and decision making”
- “High level of collaboration”
- “Recognition and appreciation for employees”

- “High degree of collaboration among employees”
- “A concern for employee morale”
- “A respect for the intrinsic worth of all human beings”
- “Caring about employees as people”

A careful reading of all the above phrases easily reveals that each of them is a variation on expressing a concern for the happiness of another person, which is the definition of Real Love.

Buckingham and Coffman carefully analyzed surveys from a million employees and 80,000 managers, and from that mountain of data they distilled twelve questions that, when asked of employees, revealed the health of a workplace.²⁰ One of these questions, for example, was, “Is there someone at work who encourages my development?” and their discussion of all twelve questions is well worth the reading.

The responses of a million employees certainly deserve—even demand—our attention, and it’s difficult not to notice that of the twelve questions, *ten* can be distilled into a single question: “Do the people at work—especially my supervisor—demonstrate a genuine concern for my happiness?” In short, the health of a workplace is inextricably related to how much *love* is felt by the people who work there. And for those who are more oriented toward the profit and loss side of business, feeling loved has been proven to have an enormous impact on the bottom line. Buckingham and Coffman analyzed 2500 business units and 24 companies and discovered—hardly a surprise—that the “happy” employees who tended to answer *yes* to the twelve questions demonstrated a consistent superiority over other employees in the all-important business outcomes of productivity, profitability, employee retention, and customer satisfaction.

Happy employees are simply more productive and profitable. They tend to stay in their jobs longer and give better service to customers. Considering these overwhelming business advantages, you might think that every business would take whatever steps were necessary to encourage the development of happy employees, and you might also think that the word *love* would be on the tongue of every manager in the world. But such is not the case. As I indicated above, we dance around the word in every possible permutation, but we diligently avoid using the actual “L” word.

One reason for this avoidance is that business people have accepted many of our general cultural misconceptions about what love is. Allow me a moment to refute some of these misconceptions. Real Love in the workplace is *not*

- soft and weak. Certainly that would be intolerable in the corporate world, where dogs eat dogs and where any display of feelings is considered a sign of weakness comparable to blood in the water. But look at the remarkable courage required for Brian to return to Mark's desk (pages 22-23) and admit that he'd made a mistake. That piece of courage—far from soft and weak—changed attitudes in ways that nothing else could have, and as a result the company profited dramatically.
- a license for people to walk all over you. Just because Brian was more loving doesn't mean that he allowed Mark not to fulfill his responsibilities. In fact, the more loving Brian was, the more productive Mark became.
- unnecessary. In this one situation—between Mark and Brian—Real Love created a localized change in the corporate environment and thereby a natural increase in morale and productivity, which are essential to the health of any business.
- touchy-feely, a characteristic that is particularly frightening to most men. It seems feminine and alien. I have spoken to many men who have been decorated for heroic behavior in battle, as well as men who have been heroic as firemen and policemen, and these men have acknowledged that unconditionally loving others on a regular basis takes more courage than running into battle or into a burning building.
- romantic. There was nothing romantic about the interaction between Mark and Brian.
- permissive or coddling. No one ever accused Red Auerbach (page 21) of either characteristic.

Despite our aversion for the “L” word, however, if we want to optimize our profitability, we must begin to use the word *love*, because *love*—or Real Love—*is* the word that most accurately describes the single element or ingredient most important in the development of a whole and happy human being, a human being who is most productive in the workplace. Allow me at this point to illustrate in yet another way why it's so important that we not avoid this word.

AIDS in Sub-Saharan Africa

As of 2005 about 40 million people in the world were living with the HIV/AIDS virus—70% of that total in the southern half of Africa alone. There are entire *countries* in Africa where as many as 35% of the adults are infected. Families, neighborhoods, and entire villages have been—and are being—decimated, even eliminated, by this monstrous disease. Unbelievably, however, in many villages, and in many entire regions, they're hardly even *talking* about the ravenous destruction, because AIDS is primarily transmitted sexually, and in their culture sexuality is not a subject that decent people talk about.

These people *have* sex, of course—the rapid spread of AIDS would not be possible without extensive sexual activity—but they're not *talking* about it. When people die, AIDS often is not even recorded on the death certificates. Instead, they write tuberculosis, or diarrhea, or pneumonia—whatever infection finally killed them because of their AIDS-impaired immune system. Most people don't even know they have the virus until they're at death's door.

This disease is killing people on the scale of a world war, and a great number of its victims are standing idly by, allowing it to mow them down. Relief agencies come into villages and try to talk to the men, but they refuse to listen to their manhood be insulted in that way. The native women try to talk to their husbands, who react by beating them and throwing them into the street. Volunteers are frustrated by a culture that values, in the words of one Time magazine article, “its dignity over saving lives.”

Fortunately, this avoidance of discussing AIDS is slowly changing, so some of what I am describing here applies to circumstances as they existed a few years ago.

For many years the tragedy of AIDS has continued to grow precisely because those afflicted with it have refused to accurately *name* it. Without receiving the precise diagnosis of AIDS, many people have been treated only for the secondary diseases and symptoms: tuberculosis, Kaposi's sarcoma, diarrhea, pneumonia, and so on. Treating these conditions, however, is like repeatedly mopping the excess water off the floor when what we really need to do is unclog the kitchen drain and turn off the faucet. We have to get to the root problem, not treat the consequences of it.

And so it is with Real Love in the workplace. Management studies have left no doubt that the most valuable asset in the workplace today is people, and these people require diligent care if they are to be happy and optimally productive. We can dance all around an accurate identification of their needs—talking about caring, respect, communication, collaboration, and the like—but we will not fully address these needs until we correctly name what they need most: Real Love.

Happy people are more productive and profitable. They complain less. They resist the implementation of new policies and procedures less. They're far more creative and self-directed. They're more focused on their jobs and less distracted by gossip and office politics. We must, therefore, talk about what is required to help our employees be happy, and we simply cannot talk about the requirements for genuine happiness without Real Love being central to that discussion.

Since 1995 the principles of Real Love have been thoroughly field tested and found to consistently exert a profound influence on the lives of hundreds of thousands of individuals all over the world. They have also made dramatic contributions to the healing of uncounted marriages and parent-child relationships, and with these principles people are finding levels of satisfaction and productivity in the workplace they have previously never known.

Stress

Dozens of books and countless clinics and seminars have been devoted to stress management. Every month, magazine articles proclaim another “Ten Ways To Manage Stress In Your Life.” It's understandable that stress receives all this attention, since it's destroying our happiness and health. It costs U.S. industry at more than \$300 billion yearly²¹ and accounts for 20% of the direct cost associated with job turnover, strikes and work stoppages, and absenteeism.²² An average of one million workers in this country are absent on any given day, largely due to stress disorders.

Despite the pressing need for solutions, however, our present stress management techniques fail to produce long term results, because they don't address the real problem. We can't manage stress with tricks or techniques. We have to address the essential emotional needs of human beings. When people are filled with Real Love, they

have what matters most. They're strong, unafraid, and easily able to tolerate the inconveniences and injustices that always accompany interaction with other human beings. But people without Real Love are starving and sick. For them, every experience is "stressful," a potential source of pain and fear. Most of us are in that position, and until we directly address our need for Real Love, stress will continue to be a plague in our personal and business lives, with effects akin to those that I just described for AIDS.

OUR RESPONSIBILITIES AS LEADERS

For the remainder of the book, I'll be outlining how we can fill the needs of those around us in the workplace. This is a powerful process. We will find it easier to engage more fully in this process if we remember that as leaders we have seven primary responsibilities:

- To love people—fellow employees, direct reports, fellow managers, vendors, and customers—unconditionally
- To give people the information, training, materials, manpower, and other resources that will enable them to complete their assignments
- To teach people how to unconditionally love those around them
- To encourage people to find an innate sense of meaning in their jobs, especially as they experiment with creativity and innovation. This naturally includes supporting people as they make the inevitable mistakes that accompany experimentation
- To give people a sense that they own their jobs and are responsible for them
- To put people in the jobs best suited for their talents and desires
- To hold people accountable—in a loving not controlling way—for their responsibilities

As leaders we succeed only as we fulfill these responsibilities. Notice that in describing the roles of a leader, I didn't say a word about profits. There is no need. As I said earlier, management literature has thoroughly documented that the greatest corporations are not focused primarily on profits. They are focused on the needs of their

customers, their employees, their managers, and the communities in which they live, and they have proven beyond doubt that if they fill those needs, the profits *will* follow. This is a profound wisdom that many other companies have not adopted, to their detriment.

MANAGERS VS. LEADERS

A word here about the difference between managers and leaders. Although the term business *management* is widely accepted, in some circles there seems to be, paradoxically, an attitude of some condescension toward the term *manager*. In the words of Peter Drucker and Warren Bennis, for example, “Management is doing things right. Leadership is doing the right things.” Another expert suggests that managers look inward, helping individuals, while leaders look outward, at competition, the future, alternative routes forward, broad patterns, and so on. Yet another distinction between the two roles suggests that “Managers prefer working with people; leaders stir emotion.”

I suggest that more harm than good is done by separating these roles. It may seem clever to say that managers do things right and leaders do the right things, but I wonder how a manager could be considered truly effective without a grasp of the “right things.” And how can we separate working with people and working with emotion, since one without the other makes no sense at all?

Consider too the definitions of management and leadership. Management has been defined as follows:

- Getting things done through others
- Planning, organizing, coordinating, and coaching
- Making people capable of joint performance through common goals, common values, the right structure, and the training and development they need to perform and to respond to change

Leadership has been defined as the capacity to influence others by unleashing their power and potential to impact the greater good.

It may be that we can distinguish between the functions of a poor manager and a great leader, but a great manager would necessarily have most—if not all—the qualities of a leader. I find the manager-leader distinction elitist and not helpful, and I will not differentiate the two in this book. Rather, I will use the terms interchangeably.

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