

Book review: Good to Great By Ling

Are you a CEO? I am not. Neither do I plan to be. CEO is just not my type of Dream Career. But why did I choose to write on this book? It's because someone told me I could apply the theories to my personal life.

So I did. Curious and yet a bit excited, I planted my footprints onto the path from good to great. It's right - I can totally relate those rules to my life. I even found myself improving my inter-personal relationships these days! So don't be put off by the word CEO - even if you dreaded this job!

So in here, I am going to share my feelings and the experience I linked from this inspiring, useful book.

This book has a total of nine chapters. The first one is an introduction and the other eight are points to improve a company.

When I first caught sight of the title of Chapter One, I grinned from ear to ear. The title was, "Good Is the Enemy of Great". Gosh, that's my direction of my life! I'm a very competitive person and I yawned to improve - improve and improve and improve forever. My friends like teasing me because nothing seems to satisfy me but simply pushed me further and further. But I always echoed, "Good is the enemy of better. One can't be easily satisfied, or else one can't improve."

And now, as I got hold of this book, it was as if someone reached into my heart, fully understood me, and thought in the same line as I did. But it has a higher level; it wanted to be "great", not "better" - Or can I say it's a higher level? I don't really think I agreed totally with the author. "Great" is known to everyone by facts and statistics and is a level that can be reached. "Better" isn't; one (or one company) can be great, and yet it can be better. Who knows? If everyone's fully satisfied after reaching "great" level, who knows how much better one can get? Maybe they can get a much higher, better level that's unknown to humans by now. If Newton stopped at his position as a knowledgeable professor and didn't ask for better, who knows what we'll think about apples from trees? In my opinion, if one is to learn continuously all one's life, one should wish for "better", not "great".

Ok. Enough for the introduction. Let's get onto the first point: leadership. In the book, leaders are separated into five levels, in which level fives are the very best

and it always present in successful companies. While level four contains extremely talented, smart, but also equally repressive, dominant leaders. They, like the level fives, always succeeded in huge business boom that make our eyes pop-out; but their companies, unlike level fives', always collapsed after the withdrawal of the powerful leaders. In other words, leader five leaders (unlike level four) don't just think about their own region of time; they hoped to build a strong dynasty in which business increased constantly - they cared not personal greatness, but the company's.

When I read this passage, I was in shock. There is a formula of becoming a level five leader: humility + will = level five. And I was like, what? True that great leaders I knew - I mean really great ones, not clever ones like Hitler - are neither arrogant nor self-centered, but humility! Come on! I really don't expect it. I'd expect something like "respecting others", "put the right person into the right place", etc.

But then almost immediately I recovered from my shock; a picture pierced into my mind - my dad washing the dishes. Yes, my dad is a humble man, and he likes offering help everywhere. Especially washing dishes. He does the dishes after *every single meal*, in spite of my mom's vigorous protest. My brother and I are purely delighted by his help, of course, but I can't help thinking why on earth does he do that. And now as I read through this chapter, the truth stroked me. Of course, my dad didn't mean anything, but I'll be very willing - if you ask me - to help him in any occasion, not simply because he's my dad, but because he's so nice and helpful and all.

So, just like my dad, a level five leader has to have that heart to help, to lower himself to the same level as the employees, to gain the support of the crowd. Level five, indeed - the leaders that make everyone respect them.

In chapter three, a new theory awaits me, bringing me further into a new world.

"It's who you pay, not how you pay them." I slowly read it aloud. Wait - wait a second - what did it say?

I've never thought about this, but, heck, it looks right, doesn't it?

Take me, for one. I'm the sort of person that motivates oneself. If I desire one thing, I lunged for it - in any cost, really. Sometimes my family teased me, because

there's no gifts, or even consequences, of my doings. But I just laugh and bury myself into my job, simply because I wanted to do it.

So, I thought, if a company gets people like *me* (haha), and finds a way to stimulate them, then it can run without any cost. No big cost they'll have to pay me to fire my motivation, but a big cost if they want to stop it! This point is really good.

I want to talk about chapter six here, too; as it's sort of similar to chapter three. Chapter six is of the culture of discipline. The main idea is branched into three parts. Firstly, it is the person that matters. If you've got the right person on the bus, little discipline is needed to add to him. But if you got the wrong person - urch! Tough time you'll have setting rules and making him obey.

Secondly, rules are needed; but some freedom is needed within the framework. How true this thought is! I once had a teacher - a strict, strict teacher - that have tons of rules and forced us into complete obedience. But the more she forced onto me, the more rebellious I felt. Then, at last, volcano occurred - I refused to obey. On the other hand, a teacher that has a few but good rules will be more successful. The students will know that they can't go too far; but, they won't feel "caged" and hence won't fight strongly against rules.

Well, there are numerous fascinating rules and ideas here. Not only do they make you a great CEO, but also a brand new you. It is a definite must-read for every person that wishes/wants to improve.

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