

[PDF] Tough Things First: Leadership Lessons from Silicon Valley's Longest Serving CEO (Business Books)

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Ray Zinn

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Ray Zinn : Tough Things First: Leadership Lessons from Silicon Valley's Longest Serving CEO (Business Books) before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Tough Things First: Leadership Lessons from Silicon Valley's Longest Serving CEO (Business Books):

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. This Book Resonated With Me By Rodney K. Smith As a former college president, law school dean and professor, I read leadership books with some regularity, believing we can

always become a better person, a better leader-servant. Of all the books I have read on the topic of leadership, especially in a world that embraces entrepreneurship, this is the best one I have read. Sometimes the truths in a book resonate on both a personal and a professional level. That was certainly the case with this book. I am getting copies for my children, knowing their lives will be made the better for reading Ray Zinn's, *Tough Things First*. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Great book for anyone who wants to be successful. By Hedayati. *Tough Things First* is a great book for anyone who wants to succeed in starting and running their own company. It is also great for individuals who are in a leadership position and would like to take a company to higher level of growth and profitability while creating a dedicated work force to support it. Ray Zinn shares his own life experiences and makes it easier to learn what it takes to be a successful leader. The fundamental core values needed in a person to achieve greatness. This book is not only educational but inspiring. Ray's life experiences show how he was able to start from nothing and create a very successful semiconductor company in Silicon Valley valued about one billion Dollars. Brian Hedayati 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Excellent win-win review!! By Customer. Outstanding, practical, inspiring, easy read, thought provoking, even at 82 years old can still apply some concepts. Also reflection on the would have, could have, should have!!

Silicon Valley pioneer Ray Zinn, CEO of top microchip company Micrel for 37 years, shows entrepreneurs and executives how to lead and succeed by tackling the *Tough Things First*. In high school, Ray Zinn's track coach told him he was too short to run the hurdles. Ray took this as a challenge and, after months of hard training, became the fastest hurdler on the team. That drive and self-discipline is, to Zinn, the essence of the entrepreneurial spirit. It's what pushed him to achieve the impossible, founding a Silicon Valley microchip company—without venture capital—and turning it into a global empire with an enviable 37-year track record as CEO. *Tough Things First*, the distillation of Ray Zinn's astonishing career as CEO of Micrel, is a comprehensive head-to-toe training program for entrepreneurs and leaders—based on hard-won lessons in business and in life. Zinn's tough-love approach gives you the guidance you need to: **Find your vision, set your goals, and make them happen**; **Build your business like yours—train your body: with heart, soul, mind, and passion**; **Master the psychological disciplines that will sharpen your focus and drive**; **Create a corporate culture that engages employees and inspires confidence**; **Put people first and push them to achieve their personal best**; **Tackle the tough jobs today—and ensure your success tomorrow**. Zinn tells you what it takes to succeed in a world where markets are constantly changing, new technologies are emerging, and small startups are going head to head with industry giants. He shows you how to be a good leader and what you can do to make yourself even better. He reveals why discipline is the first and most important step—for the entrepreneur and the organization—and why people are your single most valuable resource. He offers practical, no-nonsense advice on processes and procedures, finances and growth creation, changing markets and new technology. But that's not all. The key to your success, Zinn explains, lies in your mind, your body, your vision, and your heart. This book shows you how to develop these interconnected skills, how to integrate them into your life and work, and how to handle the tough things first. As the trailblazing founder and CEO of Micrel, Inc., one of the world's leading microchip companies, Ray Zinn bootstrapped his company, achieved consistent profitability, and delivered a total equity value of more than \$800 million at its acquisition. In 37 years of leading this publicly traded microchip empire, he saw it through the dot-com bust and Great Recession—with only one unprofitable year—relying on his discipline as a leader, passion as an inventor, and training as an athlete. In 2015, Zinn stepped down as Micrel's CEO and is in the process of launching a Silicon Valley accelerator that will help business visionaries build profitable, enduring companies.

From the Back Cover "*Tough Things First* is not a typical business book about a market success or effective business methods. It is about the success of one Silicon Valley startup company, Micrel, which has been run profitably by the same CEO/founder for 36 years. It is about how a founder's dedication to basic principles is required to make any startup successful. The precise recipe for success may change for example, my 32-year-old company, Cypress Semiconductor, used venture funding, while Zinn preached and achieved financial independence but Zinn shows how startups must have and truly practice their core values to succeed." -T.J. Rodgers, President CEO, Cypress Semiconductor Corp "Ray Zinn has chronicled the discipline, the cultural foundation blocks and the tough decisions required of a successful start-up. Ray explains how, 'discipline defines success' under his four principles: Focus, Short Time Frames, Frugality and Being the Best." -Michael Shepherd, President and CEO, Bank of the West "Ray Zinn's journey is not only a genuine Silicon Valley success story but also a remarkable life story from which nearly anyone can draw important lessons. In *Tough Things First*, Ray explores not only the 'how-tos' aspects of building a company but also the mindset and character traits discipline, intense focus and attention to detail needed for lasting entrepreneurial success. Most importantly, in an era when success is too often defined by publicity, speedy 'exits' and financial windfalls, Ray reminds us that the fulfillment of building a thriving, enduring enterprise is the reward that a true entrepreneur seeks." -Balu Balakrishnan, CEO, Power Integrations "The disciplined pursuit of what is essential is ten times harder than the undisciplined pursuit of the nonessential but it is a

hundred times more valuable. This is brilliantly illustrated in Tough Things First."-Greg McKeown, Author of the New York Times bestseller Essentialism: The Disciplined Pursuit of Less."If you stitch Ray Zinn's life together and look at what he's achieved, despite the odds or the skepticism or the impediments that have been presented — doing a start-up business [without venture capital], his sudden vision impairment, the ups and downs of our industry. It's a very uplifting story about what a determined spirit can achieve in the world, particularly in Silicon Valley and in the United States."-Rick Crowley, CFO, Intersil"When you have a successful executive like Ray Zinn, whose's done things in his specific way, people will be interested in learning what was it that he did that made him successful and enabled him to create this successful company. Ray's personal views on things, why he did things differently and how that worked out for him."-Mohan Maheswaran, CEO, Semtech"At a time when a rush to riches attitude prevails in Silicon Valley, it's refreshing to get a dose of perspective from the 'veteran's. Ray Zinn reminds us all that conviction, discipline and perspective are still keys to success not lucky timing with an app. Tough Things First is Ray Zinn's manifesto for entrepreneurs. It is a must read for anyone interested in a successful career."-Richard A. Moran, Ph.D., President of Menlo College and author of Sins and CEOs"Unlike many management books I've read, Tough Things First is entertaining, enlightening, humorous as well as truly practical. Tough Things First is not just for high tech types. Executives and entrepreneurs from every industry, as well as those in business school, will find it relevant and insightful.I have known many Micrel employees and they were there because of Ray and his approach to leadership. This book shares what made Micrel a special place and how you can live life on your terms, to make your business, your vision and your dreams a reality and success.After reading this book, you may not be able to do a one-armed push up like Ray can, but you will learn a philosophy, the importance of discipline and practical advice to do the tough things first and become a leader, build a lasting culture and master your industry profession."-Mike Noonan, Chairman, Silicon Catalyst"Ray Zinn's Tough Things First is terrific! It tells the truth!Many business self-help books are by experts who study and talk to the people who actually do it, but have not lived it themselves. It's not in their blood.This is very different. I have not seen a better, more practical, more realistic, more helpful, or more engaging invitation to entrepreneurship. The highest compliment I can give is that I am giving this book to both of my sons and inviting them to read and outline it in addition to what they're doing for their other classes at university.Tough Things First far exceeded my expectations!"-Reed N. Wilcox, President, Southern Virginia University"Covering Micrel as a sell-side analyst was a real pleasure for me personally. It wasn't so much because the company represented one of the hot stocks, it certainly did, but rather it was because the man at the helm was Ray Zinn.His's this very dynamic, very unique individual who, at the time was still running the company that he had founded 20 years prior. Impressively Ray would go on to run Micrel nearly another 20 more years and that's no small feat when you consider how highly competitive and notoriously cyclical the chip industry is.Outside of tremendous stamina, I think the first thing that jumps to mind when I think about Ray is his great integrity as a manager and as a person. Honesty, fairness, the way he treats everyone around him and expects to be treated. Ray is also one of the more effective communicators I've known. He is very much a straight shooter, very transparent in his dealings with people, and very direct. With reason, there are no hidden agendas. What you see is what you get.Ray is also extremely generous with his time. I think that comes from a genuine respect he has for people. If you're going to spend a good part of your day focused on issues important to him or his company, then he's going to reciprocate by giving his undivided attention to you. If you are lucky enough to spend some time with Ray and you keep your ears open, you will pick up pearls of wisdom along the way.At his core, I believe Ray Zinn's a teacher and for me that has definitely been a good thing."-Douglas Lee, CEO, Marinwood Capital Management"Wow! Ray Zinn's book Tough Things First is a read that you'll not want to miss. From beginning to end this book shares tough lessons every entrepreneur needs to know.Along with his incredible personal drive which helped propel him to success, Mr. Zinn points out the tough lessons he learned early and how you can use those same lessons.Executives and entrepreneurs will find this book compelling. Ray Zinn is not the kind of man that you want to tell something can't be done. He shows it can and how he did it. He learned the tough things first and now his book is sharing those tough things with us. What a philosophy!"-Dr. Richard G. Whitehead, University Ambassador, Southern Virginia University"Ray believes that an enduring company should have a simple, but strong culture. The four pillars that Ray fostered in Micrel are honesty, integrity, dignity of every individual and doing whatever it takes. This corporate culture is the guiding principal that we've followed for Micrel's daily work.Culture is passed along by communication and imitation from one generation to the next. However, company consists of people from different backgrounds. Communicating culture could be a challenge.Ray took every possible opportunity to give talks or ask the staff to speak of their culture every Friday. He believed that good employees make good companies because they remind his staff that he won't make us rich but make us a better person."-Wiren Perera, Vice President, LAN Solutions Corporate Strategic Marketing, Micrel"The one thing that always struck me about Ray Zinn was his sincere belief that a company's most significant valuable asset was its people and his unrelenting focus in trying to make each and every one of us a better person.Whether it was to make you more patient, more tolerant, more temperate, et cetera. If you consider the fact that Micrel was in fact started with a fairly limited amount of financing, this is probably one of the keys to the value that he built at Micrel. Essentially, Ray increased the

value of the company through increasing the value of its employees."-Jung-Chen Lin, VP LAN Solutions, Micrel
About the Author Ray Zinn is the founder of Micrel, Inc., one of the world's leading microchip companies, and served as its CEO for 37 years. Still innovating, he is the founder of a Silicon Valley accelerator that helps business visionaries build profitable, enduring companies.