



Creating Magic: 10 Common Sense Leadership Strategies from a Life at Disney

By Lee Cockerell

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“It’s not the magic that makes it work; it’s the way we work that makes it magic.”

The secret for creating “magic” in our careers, our organizations, and our lives is simple: outstanding leadership—the kind that inspires employees, delights customers, and achieves extraordinary business results.

No one knows more about this kind of leadership than Lee Cockerell, the man who ran *Walt Disney World*® Resort operations for over a decade. And in *Creating Magic*, he shares the leadership principles that not only guided his own journey from a poor farm boy in Oklahoma to the head of operations for a multibillion dollar enterprise, but that also soon came to form the cultural bedrock of the world’s number one vacation destination. But as Lee demonstrates, great leadership isn’t about mastering impossibly complex management theories. We can all become outstanding leaders by following the ten practical, common sense strategies outlined in this remarkable book. As straightforward as they are profound, these leadership lessons include:

Everyone is important.

Make your people your brand.

Burn the free fuel: appreciation, recognition, and encouragement.

Give people a purpose, not just a job.

Combining surprising business wisdom with insightful and entertaining stories from Lee’s four decades on the front lines of some of the world’s best-run companies, *Creating Magic* shows all of us – from small business owners to managers at every level – how to become better leaders by infusing quality, character, courage, enthusiasm, and integrity into our workplace and into our lives.

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Bibliography

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

On his way up the career ladder to become Executive Vice President of Operations at Walt Disney World Resort, Cockerell freely admits he was such an autocratic young hotel and restaurant manager that he was hit over the head with a beer bottle by an employee he'd treated poorly. This and other incidents (including a bashing with a clipboard) convinced Cockerell to study leadership, which he proceeded to do with gusto throughout his stellar career, ultimately creating the Disney Great Leaders strategies. The author's engaging storytelling brings life and infectious energy to this entertaining and inspiring book, which outlines the processes and rationale behind Disney's employee-driven ethos. Each chapter expounds on the Disney Formula for Success, which Cockerell sums up as "great leadership leads to employee excellence, which leads to customer satisfaction and strong business results." Cockerell's willingness to use his management gaffes as examples not only makes him a likeable narrator but also a credible leader, offering up a mesmerizing view of a career devoted to excellence in customer service, employee empowerment, organizational improvement and responsive leadership.

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Review

"Shows the *magic* in leadership — and the *leadership* in magic! Read this book!"

-Marshall Goldsmith, *New York Times* best-selling author of *What Got You Here Won't Get You There*, winner of the Harold Longman Award for Business Book of the Year.

"In *Creating Magic*, Lee Cockerell delivers his ideas about leadership in a common sense way that can really reach people and help them improve their effectiveness at work, at home, and in their communities. His valuable leadership strategies and remarkable Disney stories will ring true for everyone who reads this book."

—Ken Blanchard, coauthor of *The One Minute Manager*® and *The One Minute Entrepreneur*

"Elegant in its simplicity and practicality, Lee has distilled many powerful leadership strategies into the lessons many of us learned as children. They are no less relevant to our working lives. At its core, *Creating Magic* is a collection of stories that reminds us to demonstrate care and respect for every member of the team and to focus our efforts not on ourselves but on the people we lead."

-George Bodenheimer, President, ESPN, Inc and ABC Sports

"Lee's common sense principles and down to earth storytelling is refreshing. His book will help leaders and managers at all levels become better in all parts of their lives."

—Lee Huebner, Director of the School of Media and Public Affairs, Georgetown University.

"... *Creating Magic* transcends the leadership business-speak so prevalent in modern day motivational tomes and offers a real approach to sensible and practical strategies culled from the experience of a lifetime spent in pursuit of leadership excellence.!"

-Ted J. Kleisner, President and Chief Executive Officer, Hershey Entertainment & Resorts Company

"Disney is one of the world's prime exemplars of service having pioneered and implemented much of what is today seen as best practice in service management. Lee Cockerell has played a major role in this....For those wishing to learn how Disney has achieved its reputation for service, this will be a book to read."

-Chris Voss, Professor of Operations and Technology Management, London Business School

“In the hospitality industry, people are our most important asset. No one understands how to develop this asset better than Lee Cockerell who clearly articulates in Creating Magic how leadership environments that are committed to achieving excellence through lifelong learning, continually honing our professional competence, maintaining personal control, and rewarding behaviors that recognize the personal worth and reinforce the professional accomplishments of our fellow team members will create a culture of shared vision, trust and a “can do” sense of individual empowerment. The result: pure “Magic” ... Lee’s “10 Common Sense Leadership Strategies” will contribute much to the success of any endeavor.”

-Dieter Huckestein, past President - American Hotel & Lodging Association, Chairman of Conrad Hotels and President - Hotel Operations, Hilton Hotels Corporation (retired).

“Lee is a powerhouse when it comes to developing and inspiring leadership in front line employees and managers. During my years working with him at Disney and in all of my senior management positions since, I have used his leadership philosophies to successfully develop effective leaders and cultivate business environments focused on service excellence. Creating Disney Magic will be a must-read for anyone who wants to make a positive organizational difference built on highly engaged employees delivering exceptional service.”

-Karl McDonnell, President & Chief Operating Officer, Strayer Education, Inc

“Lee Cockerell created a distinctly unique service culture at Disney World...Essential to fulfilling this strategy is a complete understanding of the nature of leadership which Lee spells out in his book. Managing is not enough. It takes leadership to create excellence. The formula is not limited to the hospitality industry. It works for healthcare, manufacturing, transportation and education. It applies to the government, military, and not-for-profit ventures, as well as private industry. Those who practice these lessons, and participate in such organizations, live in a better world.”

- Martin K. Starr, Distinguished Professor Emeritus of Operations Management, Crummer Graduate School of Business, Rollins College

About the Author

LEE COCKERELL was the Executive Vice President, Operations, for Walt Disney World for over ten years. He continues to speak and teach in leadership and professional development on behalf of the Disney Institute. A popular keynote speaker, he frequently addresses Fortune 500 corporations, government agencies, educational institutions, and nonprofits across the country. He lives in Orlando, Florida.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Jerry Gavin:

Have you spare time for the day? What do you do when you have far more or little spare time? Yep, you can choose the suitable activity for spend your time. Any person spent their very own spare time to take a stroll, shopping, or went to often the Mall. How about open or perhaps read a book titled Creating Magic: 10 Common Sense Leadership Strategies from a Life at Disney? Maybe it is to get best activity for you. You already know beside you can spend your time with your favorite's book, you can wiser than before. Do you agree with the opinion or you have various other opinion?

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Tammy Mangold:

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