

Impact with Love: Building Business for a Better World

Greg Harmeyer

An Inc. Original

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Businesses should thrive based on their moral commitments according to Impact with Love, a thoughtful leadership guide.

A founder's compendium of practical lessons and business philosophies, *Impact with Love* is TiER1 entrepreneur Greg Harmeyer's guide to conscientious leadership.

With the belief that it is essential to pair one's drive for growth and profits with a broader commitment to service and making a meaningful impact on society, this book seeks to model nurturing positive worldviews within for-profit environments. To do so, it devotes considerable space to exploring heady theoretical subjects including capitalism, love, and performance, generating idiosyncratic definitions and crash-course guides that bridge theory and life experience. For instance, capitalism is divided into three conceptual parts—economic, social, and political—each of which is explored from the perspective of a business owner. By latching onto two opposing figures—Harmeyer's Jesuit priest uncle, who espoused a belief in communal ownership, and his capitalist father, who believed in the fairness of work and personal gain—the book dispels prejudices about the complex subject and models a version of capitalism that is both oriented to the free market and tethered to religious ideas of the communal good.

Indeed, new spins on entrenched economic ideas become the book's trademark. They appear in its explanations of how to measure employee performance, what constitutes leadership, and how to achieve growth without undermining company stability—with each subject, the book realigns traditional notions of financial success toward a hybrid model that matches personal beliefs and principles. Such innovations draw from Harmeyer's personal experience and outlook too; they do not always have the strength of objective, multipurpose tools, but they open possibilities for reinvention in the field of management and business activity. In a sense, they are less rules for how to change a business than sources of inspiration for other business leaders to build on.

For example, in explaining the counterintuitive way in which moral values strengthen businesses, Harmeyer recounts his decision not to lay off employees during the 2008 financial crisis, even in a period of financial precariousness. He notes that this reinforced the company's culture of loyalty and trust. Such qualities are difficult to measure, yet the book makes a strong case for their underappreciated significance. (Following the recession, Harmeyer's company rebounded and tripled its revenue in a matter of years.) It also uses its illustrations to underline the flexibility and capacity for adaptation that is inherent in capitalism.

Further, the book's emphasis on each individual having their own ultimate goal imbues it with an open-ended, accessible quality. Many of the values espoused within are derived from Christianity, but without a sense of pressure that others conform to this set of beliefs. And the book's bulleted summaries and reflection questions after each chapter make it accessible and applicable throughout.

An investigation into management models that do not sacrifice human values in the name of profit, *Impact with Love* is a warm, rewarding leadership handbook.

WILLEM MARX (April 20, 2024)

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