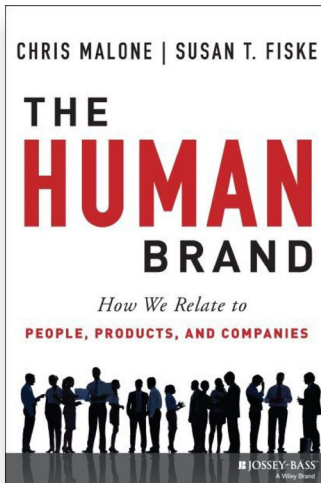


# EXECUTIVE BOOK SUMMARIES

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## The Human Brand

### THE NUTSHELL

Jossey-Bass 2013

### Introduction: Back to the Future

Social psychologists have deduced that primitive humans were forced, in their struggle for existence, to develop a primal, unconscious ability to make two specific kinds of judgments with a high degree of speed and sufficient accuracy. What are the intentions of other people toward me? How capable are they of carrying out those intentions? Today we judge others almost instantly along these same two categories of social perception, which are known as warmth and competence.

A person who demonstrates both warmth and competence inspires feelings of trust and admiration within us, motivating us to seek a continuing relationship with that person. If companies are going to succeed, a new language of loyalty is needed, one built around warmth and competence. People become loyal to what they experience, learn, or infer about the intentions of people behind those companies and brands.

### Chapter 1: Warmth and Competence

Warmth is judged by assessing whether one is kind, friendly, and good natured; whether one appears sincere, honest, moral, and trustworthy; and whether one possesses an accommodating orientation and is perceived as helpful, tolerant, fair, generous, and understanding. Competence is judged by assessing whether one possesses special resources, skills, creativity, or intelligence that grants them an advantage. We use warmth and competence to assess not just people,

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but everything in our lives that acts or seems to act of its own free will. If companies are going to succeed with customers in the Relationship Renaissance, a new language of loyalty is needed, one built around warmth and competence.

## **Chapter 2: The Loyalty Test**

Demonstrating the warmth of communality creates more trust in the long term than the cold calculation of exchange transactions. Price cuts and discounts do not inspire loyalty because they have no effect on our enduring human triggers for warmth.

## **Chapter 3: The Principle of Worthy Intentions**

For loyal customers to trust, commit, and support a business, businesses first have to demonstrate genuine warmth, concern, and commitment to their customers' needs and interests. Customers handsomely reward companies and brands that exercise this simple but powerful application of warmth and competence insights, through something called the principle of worthy intentions. When a company or brand goes above and beyond normal expectations to express worthy intentions, it turns loyal customers into passionate advocates who actively recommend others to them.

## **Chapter 4: The Price of Progress**

There is enormous potential for Facebook and Twitter to help companies and brands establish and maintain the experience of individuality and responsiveness. If companies and brands were to fully recognize and embrace how we purchase and become loyal to them, they would use social networks more effectively as the relationship management systems they are ideally suited to be. They can and should present themselves as human brands that treat us as human beings.

## **Chapter 5: Take Us to Your Leader**

Studies show that generally CEO ads rank above average in their effectiveness when compared with other advertising. The most effective CEO ads deliver messages that are "direct, trust-inspiring," "communicate a no-nonsense style," and show the CEO to be "genuine and authentic." These results are very different from a far more popular advertising tactic: the celebrity endorsement. Billions are spent each year on celebrity endorsements and sponsorships, even though they produce poor results virtually across the board.

There are two kinds of corporate leadership. Transactional leadership is based on an "if-it-ain't-broke-don't-fix-it" approach found most often among the big bureaucratic corporations that Tom Peters famously regarded as "dinosaurs." Transformational leadership occurs when leaders stir their employees to look beyond their own self-interest for the good of the group. Companies led by transformational leaders tend to outperform others due to the tendency of lower-level employees to imitate the characteristics of the leader above them.

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## **Chapter 6: Show Your True Colors**

Ninety three percent of the public believes that recalls offer “an opportunity for a company or brand to show their true colors and demonstrate whether they care more about consumers or their own profits.” The evidence seems to be that every problem we experience in a relationship, no matter how big or small, represents an opportunity to make the relationship stronger if we are able to show worthy intentions that convey both warmth and competence. Companies that are able to come clean about their errors and state their intentions for doing better in the future might actually bring us closer to them than if they had never slipped up in the first place.

## **Chapter 7: The Relationship Renaissance**

The question this book should raise is not whether business people are warm and competent, but whether they’re perceived that way. Ensuring that our warmth and competence, our worthy intentions, are getting through to others reduces to three imperative actions. We first must overcome our natural inability to fully appreciate how we come across to others, by soliciting honest feedback from them. Second, we must embrace that feedback and significantly change our words and actions. Finally, we must fundamentally shift our priorities.

The conclusion is unavoidable: in this age when reputations can be made and broken around the world in a single day, our way to achieve any kind of meaningful success, either personal, professional, or commercial, is to earn the lasting loyalty of others by keeping their best interests at the center of everything we do. Doing so doesn’t require that we recklessly disregard our own interests. Rather, it recognizes that our success as humans has always depended on the cooperation and loyalty of others. In that regard, keeping the best interests of others in balance with our own is simply a form of enlightened self-interest. It’s a mindset that embraces the warmth-and-competence perceptions that drive our choices and shape the human brand in each of us.