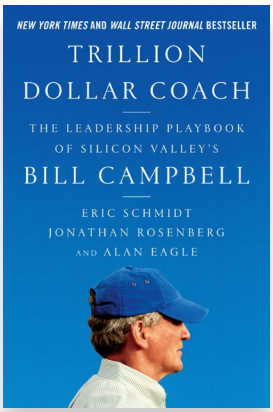

Trillion Dollar Coach

THE SUMMARY

Harper Collins 2019

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Eric Schmidt
Eric Schmidt served as Google CEO and chairman from 2001 until 2011, Google executive chairman from 2011 to 2015, and Alphabet executive chairman from 2015 to 2018.

Jonathan Rosenberg
Jonathan Rosenberg is senior vice president at Alphabet and an adviser to the company's management team.

Alan Eagle
Alan Eagle has been a director at Google since 2007.

Chapter 1: The Caddie and the CEO

Bill Campbell was a trillion-dollar coach. In fact, a trillion dollars understates the value he created. He worked side by side with Steve Jobs to build Apple from near bankruptcy to a market capitalization of several hundred billion dollars. He worked side by side with Larry Page, Sergey Brin, and Eric Schmidt to build Google (now Alphabet) from a startup to a market capitalization that's also several hundred billion dollars. That's well over a trillion dollars and that doesn't include the numerous other companies Bill advised. By that measure, Bill was the greatest executive coach the world has ever seen. Not an executive coach in the traditional mold, working solely to maximize the performance of individuals; Bill coached teams.

In our previous book, *How Google Works*, we argue that there is a new breed of employee, the smart creative. The smart creative is someone who combines technical depth with business savvy and creative flair. These people have always existed, but with the advent of the internet, smart phones, cloud computing, and all their attendant innovations, they can have a much greater impact than ever before. For companies to be successful, they must continually develop great products, and to do that they must attract smart creatives and build an environment where these employees can succeed at scale.

Published by Study Leadership, Inc. 1N010 Prairie Path Lane, Winfield, IL 60190
No part of this document may be reproduced without prior written consent.
© 2020 Study Leadership, Inc. All rights reserved

Trillion Dollar Coach

As we were researching this book and talking to the dozens of people Bill had coached in his career, we realized that this thesis misses an important piece of the business success puzzle. There is another equally critical factor for success in companies: teams that act as communities, integrating interests and putting aside differences to be individually and collectively obsessed with what's good for the company. Research shows that when people feel like they are part of a supportive community at work, they are more engaged with their jobs and more productive. Conversely, a lack of community is a leading factor in job burnout.

Teams of people who subordinate individual performance to that of the group will generally outperform teams that don't. The trick, then, is to corral any such "team of rivals" into a community and get them aligned in marching toward a common goal. A 2013 paper presents a set of "design principles" for doing this, such as developing strong mechanisms for making decisions and resolving conflicts. Adhering to these principles is hard, and it gets even harder when you add in factors such as fast-moving industries, complex business models, technology-driven shifts, smart competitors, sky-high customer expectations, global expansion, and demanding teammates—or in other words, the reality of managing businesses today.

As our colleague Patrick Pichette, Google's former CFO, puts it, when you have all of these factors in play and a team of ambitious, opinionated, competitive, smart people, there is tremendous "tension in the machine." This tension is a good thing because if you don't have it you will fade to irrelevance. But the tension makes it harder to cultivate community, and community is necessary to cultivate success.

To balance the tension and mold a team into a community, you need a coach, someone who works not only with individuals but also with the team as a whole to smooth out the constant tension, continuously nurture the community and make sure it is aligned around a common vision and set of goals. Sometimes this coach may just work with the team leader, the executive in charge. To be most effective—and this was Bill's model—the coach works with the entire team.

Every sports team needs a coach, and the best coaches make good teams great. The same goes in business: any company that wants to succeed in a time where technology has suffused every industry and most aspects of consumer life, and where speed and innovation are paramount, must have team coaching as part of its culture. Coaching is the best way to mold effective people into powerful teams.

It's not possible or practical to hire a coach for every team in the company, nor is it the right answer, because the best coach for any team is the manager who leads that team. Being a good coach is essential to being a good manager and leader. Coaching is no longer a specialty; you cannot be a good manager without being a good coach. You need to, according to a 1994 study, go beyond the "traditional notion of managing that focuses on controlling, supervising, evaluating and rewarding/punishing" to create a climate of communication, respect, feedback, and trust. Many of the other

skills of management can be delegated, but not coaching. This is ultimately what Bill taught us. The path to success in a fast-moving, highly competitive, technology-driven business world is to form high-performing teams and give them the resources and freedom to do great things. An essential component of high-performing teams is a leader who is both a savvy manager and a caring coach. Bill Campbell was the best there ever was.

If you are a manager, executive, or any other kind of leader of teams, in any kind of business or organization, you can be more effective and help your team perform better (and be happier) by becoming the coach of that team. Bill's principles have helped us and many others do that; we believe they can help you, too.

Chapter 2: Your Title Makes You a Manager; Your People Make You a Leader

To Bill, being an executive of a successful company is all about creating operational excellence. As a manager and CEO, Bill was very good at making sure his teams delivered. He brought people together and created a strong team culture, but never lost sight of the fact that results mattered, and that they were a direct result of good management. "You have to think about how you're going to run a meeting," he told a group of Googlers in a management seminar, "how you're going to run an operations review. You've got to be able to look at someone in a one-on-one and know how to help them course correct. People who are successful run their companies well. They have good processes, they make sure their people are accountable, they know how to hire great people, how to evaluate them and give them feedback, and they pay them well."

Silicon Valley people can get off track, chasing other goals beyond running a good operation. Bill was very good at making sure that it's a results-oriented game. We're going to come together to have a team culture, but it's to achieve results. Research backs Bill up on this point. A comprehensive 2017 study on manufacturing plants across the United States found that the ones that adopted performance-oriented management techniques, such as monitoring, targeting, and incentives, performed much better than other plants. Good management practices were as important as R&D and IT investments and worker skill level. Good management matters in creative endeavors as well. A 2012 study showed that in the video game industry, strong middle management accounted for 22 percent of the variance in revenue, while game creative design accounted for only 7 percent.

Bill felt that leadership was something that evolved as a result of management excellence. "How do you bring people around and help them flourish in your environment? It's not by being a dictator. It's not by telling them what the hell to do. It's making sure that they feel valued by being in the room with you. Listen. Pay attention. This is what great managers do."

People are the foundation of any company's success. The primary job of each manager is to help people be more effective in their job and to grow and develop. We have great people who want to do

well, are capable of doing great things, and come to work fired up to do them. Great people flourish in an environment that liberates and amplifies that energy. Managers create this environment through support, respect, and trust.

Support means giving people the tools, information, training, and coaching they need to succeed. It means continuous effort to develop people's skills. Great managers help people excel and grow.

Respect means understanding people's unique career goals and being sensitive to their life choices. It means helping people achieve these career goals in a way that's consistent with the needs of the company.

Trust means freeing people to do their jobs and to make decisions. It means knowing people want to do well and believing that they will.

Bill took great care in preparing for one-on-one meetings. Remember, he believed the most important thing a manager does is to help people be more effective and to grow and develop, and the 1:1 is the best opportunity to accomplish that. Once he became a full-time coach, he varied his approach to suit the person he was coaching. As a CEO he developed a standard format, which is what he always taught others. He always started with the "small talk," but in Bill's case, the talk wasn't really that small. Often times, small talk in a work environment is cursory such as a quick, "how are the kids?" or chatter about the morning commute before moving on to the business stuff.

Conversations with Bill were more meaningful and layered; you sometimes got the feeling that the conversation about life was more the point of the meeting than the business topics. In fact, while his interest in people's lives was quite sincere, it had a powerful benefit. A 2010 study concludes that having these sorts of "substantive" conversations, as opposed to truly small talk, makes people happier.

From the (not so) small talk, Bill moved to performance. What are you working on? How is it going? How could he help? Then, we would always get to peer relationships, which Bill thought were more important than relationships with your manager and other higher-ups.

Bill believed that one of a manager's main jobs is to facilitate decisions, and he had a particular framework for doing so. He didn't encourage democracy. (Before he arrived at Intuit, they took votes in meetings. Bill stopped that practice). Rather, he favored an approach not unlike that used in improv comedy. In improv, the entire cast is at risk and needs to work together to continue a conversation, to put off the finality of a scene until the last possible moment. Bill encouraged ensembles and always strived for a politics-free environment. A place where the top manager makes all decisions leads people spending their time trying to convince the manager that their idea is the best. In that scenario, it's not about the best idea carrying the day, it's about who does the best job of lobbying the top dog. In other words, it's politics.

Bill hated that. He believed in striving for the best idea, not consensus, intuitively understanding what numerous academic studies have shown: that the goal of consensus leads to "group think" and inferior decisions. The way to get the best idea was to get all of the opinions and ideas out in the open, on the table for the group to discuss. Air the problem honestly, and make sure people have the opportunity to provide their authentic opinions, especially if they are dissenting. If the problem or decision at hand is more functional in nature then the discussion should be led by the person with that functional expertise. When it is a broader decision cutting across multiple functional areas, then the team leader owns the discussion. Regardless, it should involve everyone's point of view.

To get those ideas on the table, Bill would often sit down with individuals before the meeting to find out what they were thinking. This enabled Bill to understand the different perspectives, but more important, it gave members of his team the chance to come into the room prepared to talk about their point of view. Discussing it with Bill helped gather their thoughts and ideas before the broader discussion. Maybe they would all be aligned by the time they got there, maybe not, but they had already thought through, and talked through, their own perspective and were ready to present it.

When the best idea doesn't emerge, it's time for the manager to force the decision or make it herself. "A manager's job is to break ties and make their people better," Bill said. "We're going to do it this way. Cut the shit. Done." Bill learned this the hard way. In his days as an exec at Apple he had experienced the exact opposite, a place where decisions festered and the business suffered. "Apple went to its knees, you know, on those things. You had one division doing this, and another division doing that, and somebody else wanted to do this. People would come to my office and ask me to make the call, but I was the sales and marketing guy, I couldn't break ties between different product groups, between the Apple II group and the Mac group. It was ugly, and nothing got done. That sat with me."

Failure to make a decision can be as damaging as a wrong decision. There's indecision in business all the time, because there's no perfect answer. Do something, even if it's wrong. Having a well-run process to get to a decision is just as important as the decision itself, because it gives the team confidence and keeps everyone moving. Then, when you make the call, commit to it, and expect that everyone else do so as well.

How do you make that hard decision? When you are a manager trying to move your team toward making a decision, the room will be rife with opinions. Bill always counseled us to try to cut through those opinions and get to the heart of the matter. In any situation there are certain immutable truths upon which everyone can agree. These are the "first principles," a popular phrase and concept around Silicon Valley. Every company and every situation has its set of them. You can argue opinions, but you generally can't argue principles, since everyone has already agreed upon them. As Bill would point out, it's the leader's job, when faced with a tough decision, to describe and remind everyone of those first principles. As a result, the decision often becomes much easier to make.

Chapter 3: Build an Envelope of Trust

People who want to get the best out of a coaching relationship need to be coachable. Bill's approach to coaching was rooted in his mind-set that almost all people have value, not based on their title or role but on who they are. His job was to make them better, but only if they were coachable.

The traits of coachability Bill sought were honesty and humility, the willingness to persevere and work hard, and a constant openness to learning. Honesty and humility because a successful coaching relationship requires a high degree of vulnerability, more than is typical in a business relationship. Coaches need to learn how self-aware a coachee is; they need to not only understand the coachee's strengths and weaknesses, but also understand how well the coachee understands his or her own strengths and weaknesses. Where are they honest with themselves, and where are their blind spots? Then it is the coach's job to raise that self-awareness further and to help them see the flaws they don't see for themselves. People don't like to talk about these flaws, which is why honesty and humility are so important. If people can't be honest with themselves and their coach, and if they aren't humble enough to recognize how they aren't perfect, they won't get far in that relationship.

Humility, because Bill believed that leadership is about service to something that is bigger than you: your company, your team. Today the concept of "servant leadership" is in vogue and has been directly linked to stronger company performance. Bill believed and practiced it well before it became popular. The coachable people are the ones who can see that they are part of something bigger than themselves. You can have a considerable ego and still be part of an even bigger cause. This is one reason Bill threw himself into coaching people at Google. He foresaw that the company had the potential to have a big impact in the world, to be far bigger in every way than any of its individual execs.

In a coaching session with Bill, you could expect that he would listen intently. No checking his phone for texts or email, no glancing at his watch or out the window while his mind wandered. He was always right there. Today it is popular to talk about "being present" or "in the moment." We're pretty sure those words never passed the coach's lips, yet he was one of their great practitioners. Al Gore says he learned from Bill how "important it is to pay careful attention to the person you are dealing with…give them your full, undivided attention, really listening carefully. Only then do you go into the issue. There's an order to it."

Bill's listening was usually accompanied by lot of questions, a Socratic approach. A 2016 Harvard Business Review article notes that this approach of asking questions is essential to being a great listener. "People perceive the best listeners to be those who periodically ask questions that promote discovery and insight."

When you listen to people, they feel valued. A 2003 study from Lund University in Sweden finds that "mundane, almost trivial" things like listening and chatting with employees are important aspects

of successful leadership, because "people feel more respected, visible and less anonymous, and included in teamwork." A 2016 paper finds that this form of "respectful inquiry," where the leader asks open questions and listens attentively to the response, is effective because it heightens the "follower's" feelings of competence (feeling challenged and experiencing mastery), relatedness (feeling of belonging), and autonomy (feeling in control and having options). Those three factors are sort of the holy trinity of the self-determination theory of human motivation, originally developed by Edward L. Deci and Richard M. Ryan."

As Salar Kamangar, an early Google executive, puts it, "Bill was uplifting. No matter what we discussed, I felt heard, understood, and supported."

Bill was always 100 percent honest (he told the truth) and candid (he wasn't afraid to offer a harsh opinion). A straightshooter if there ever was one. Google board member and former Amazon executive Ram Shriram: "Bill was always transparent; there was no hidden agenda. There was no gap between his statements and fact. They were always the same." Intuit cofounder Scott Cook: "He really taught me about honesty and authenticity in giving feedback. You can keep someone's respect and loyalty while delivering tough news about their performance." Bill's candor worked because we always knew it was coming from a place of caring. Former Googler Kim Scott, author of the excellent book *Radical Candor*, says that being a great boss means "saying what you really think in a way that still lets people know you care."

An important component of providing candid feedback is not to wait. "A coach coaches in the moment," Scott Cook says. "It's more real and more authentic, but so many leaders shy away from that." Many managers wait until performance reviews to provide feedback, which is often too little, too late. Bill's feedback was in the moment (or very close to it), task specific, and always followed by a grin and hug, all of which helped remove the sting.

He'd also make sure that if the feedback was critical, to deliver it in private. Diane Greene, the head of Google Cloud and former VMware CEO who worked with Bill when they were on the board at Intuit, learned from Bill to never embarrass someone publicly. "When I'm really annoyed or frustrated with what someone is doing," she says, "I step back and force myself to think about what they are doing well and what their value is. You can always find something. If we're in public, I'll praise them on that. I'll give constructive feedback as soon as I can, but only when the person is feeling safe. Once they are feeling safe and supported, then I'll say 'by the way' and provide the feedback. I got this from Bill. He would always do this in a supportive way."

The interesting thing is that his candor, no matter how brutal, made you feel better. This seems counterintuitive; after all, having someone tell you how badly you screwed up should feel pretty crummy. But coming from Bill it didn't; the formula of candor plus caring works well! We trusted that Bill was kicking our butts to help make us better. As Vinod Khosla says, "Lots of people won't actually state their mind. Bill always stated what he was thinking. But he did it in a way that even if people were disappointed, they were charged up about it! That's an unusual talent."

When he was finished asking questions and listening, and busting your butt, he usually would not tell you what to do. He believed that managers should not walk in with an idea and "stick it in their ear." Don't tell people what to do, tell them stories about why they are doing it. "I used to describe success and prescribe to everyone how we were going to do it," says Dan Rosensweig. "Bill coached me to tell stories. When people understand the story they can connect to it and figure out what to do. You need to get people to buy in. It's like a running back in football. You don't tell him exactly what route to run. You tell him where the hole is and what the blocking scheme is and let him figure it out."

Scholars would describe Bill's approach—listening, providing honest feedback, demanding candor—as "relational transparency," which is a core characteristic of "authentic leadership." Wharton professor Adam Grant has another term for it: "disagreeable givers." He notes in an email to us that "We often feel torn between supporting and challenging others. Social scientists reach the same conclusion for leadership as they do for parenting: it's a false dichotomy. You want to be supportive and demanding, holding high standards and expectations but giving the encouragement necessary to reach them. Basically, it's tough love. Disagreeable givers are gruff and tough on the surface, but underneath they have others' best interests at heart. They give the critical feedback no one wants to hear but everyone needs to hear." Research on organizations shows what Bill seemed to know instinctively. These leadership traits lead to better team performance.

Chapter 4: Team First

Bill Campbell was a coach of teams. He built them, shaped them, put the right players in the right positions (and removed the wrong players from the wrong positions), cheered them on, and kicked them in their collective butt when they were underperforming. He knew, as he often said, that "you can't get anything done without a team." This is an obvious point in the realm of sports, but it's often underappreciated in business. "You can only really succeed and accomplish things through the collective, the common purpose," Lee C. Bollinger says. "There are so many ways in which people don't understand this, and even when they do understand it, they don't know how to do it. That's where Bill's genius was."

Bill's guiding principle was that the team is paramount, and the most important thing he looked for and expected in people was a "team-first" attitude. Teams are not successful unless every member is loyal and will, when necessary, subjugate their personal agenda to that of the team. That the team wins has to be the most important thing. Perhaps Charles Darwin said it best in his book *The Descent of Man*: "A tribe including many members who, from possessing in a high degree the spirit of patriotism, fidelity, obedience, courage, and sympathy, were always ready to aid one another, and to sacrifice themselves for the common good, would be victorious over most other tribes; and this would be natural selection."

At a Google meeting a few years ago, the group was discussing an issue related to costs in some of the developing businesses. Ram Shriram raised concerns: the numbers were getting big! Shouldn't

we get more details on how we are working on this? There was some back-and-forth before Bill spoke up. "Don't worry," he said, "we have the right team in place. They are working the problem."

"I learned something from that," Ram says. "Bill didn't work the problem first, he worked the team. We didn't talk about the problem analytically. We talked about the people on the team and if they could get it done."

As managers, we tend to focus on the problem at hand. What is the situation? What are the issues? What are the options? These are valid questions, but the coach's instinct is to lead with a more fundamental one. Who was working on the problem? Was the right team in place? Did they have what they needed to succeed? "When I became CEO of Google," Sundar Pichai says, "Bill advised me that at that level, more than ever before, you need to bet on people. Choose your team. Think much harder about that."

"If you're running a company, you have to surround yourself with really, really good people," Bill said. It is a tired business mantra to always hire people smarter than yourself. "Everybody that is managing a function on behalf of the CEO ought to be better at that function than the CEO. Some of the time, they are going to be wearing their HR hat or their IT hat, but most of the time you want them to be wearing their company hat. These are all smart people that have great capabilities, and what you want to get is the best idea that comes from that group."

Bill looked for four characteristics in people. The person has to be smart, not necessarily academically but more from the standpoint of being able to get up to speed quickly in different areas and then make connections. Bill called this the ability to make "far analogies." The person has to work hard, and has to have high integrity. Finally, the person should have that hard-to-define characteristic: grit which is the ability to get knocked down and have the passion and perseverance to get up and go at it again.

He would tolerate a lot of other faults if he thought a person had those four characteristics. When he interviewed job candidates to assess these points, he wouldn't just ask about what a person did, he would ask how they did it. If the person said they "led a project that led to revenue growth," asking how they achieved that growth will tell you a lot about how they were involved in the project. Were they hands-on? Were they doers? Did they build the team? He would listen for the pronouns: does the person say "I" (could signify a me-first mentality) or "we" (a potential indicator of a team player.)? A big turnoff for Bill was if they were no longer learning. Do they have more answers than questions? That's a bad sign!

He looked for commitment to the cause and not just to their own success. Team first! You need to find, as Sundar Pichai says, "people who understand that their success depends on working well together, that there's give-and-take—people who put the company first." Whenever Sundar and Bill found people like that, Sundar says, "We would cherish them."

How do you know when you have found such person? Keep note of the times when they give up things, and when they are excited for someone else's success. Sundar notes that "sometimes decisions come up and people have to give up things. I over index on those signals when people give something up. Also when someone is excited because something else is working well in the company. It isn't related to them, but they are excited. I watch for that. Like when you see a player on the bench cheering for someone else on the team, like Steph Curry jumping up and down when Kevin Durant hits a big shot. You can't fake that."

As you evaluate people, it's important to consider how they fit in the team and the company. People, especially in Silicon Valley, tend to look for "super heroes," people with superior smarts and savvy who can do it all and be the best at everything. This is magnified at companies' senior levels. As Philipp Schindler says, "Bill made the point that you don't want to staff a team with just quarterbacks; you need to pay a lot of attention to the team composition and have a diverse set of different talents smartly woven together." All people have their limitations; what's important is to understand them individually, to identify what makes them different, and then to see how you can help them mesh with the rest of the team. Bill appreciated high cognitive abilities, but he also understood the value of soft skills, like empathy, that aren't always valued in businesses, especially tech ones. At Google, he helped us learn to appreciate that this combination—smarts and hearts—creates better managers.

He did not overemphasize experience. He looked at skills and mind-set, and he could project what you could become. This is a coach's talent, the ability to see a player's potential, not just current performance though maybe not completely accurately. As Stanford professor Carol Dweck points out in her 2006 book, *Mindset*, someone's true potential is unknowable, since "it's impossible to foresee what can be accomplished with years of passion, toil, and training. Even without that accuracy, you can bet on potential enough to avoid writing off people solely because they lack experience. The general tendency is to hire for experience. I'm hiring for job X, so I want someone who has years of experience doing job X. If you are creating a high-performing team and building for the future, you need to hire for potential as well as experience.

The essence of Bill was the essence of just about any sports coach: team first. All players, from stars to scrubs, must be ready to place the needs of the team above the needs of the individual. Given that commitment, teams can accomplish great things. That's why, when faced with an issue, his first question wasn't about the issue itself, it was about the team tasked with tackling the issue. Get the team right and you'll get the issue right.

Chapter 5: The Power of Love

Love is a word you don't hear a lot in business settings. Oh sure, maybe people will express love toward an idea, a product, a brand, or a plan or to that dessert they are serving in the cafeteria today, but not to a person. We've all been conditioned and trained to separate our personal emotions from the business environment. We all want to hire people with passion, but only in the business sense, of

course, lest the lawyers and HR people get concerned. So what happens, what we live with daily, is an existence where our human selves and working selves are practically separate beings.

Not Bill. He didn't separate the human and working selves; he just treated everyone as a person including professional, personal, family, emotions…all the components wrapped up in one. If you were one of his people, he cared about you fiercely and genuinely. "When Bill walked into the office at Benchmark, it was like a party arriving," Bill Gurley says. "He'd walk around greeting people by name, hugging them." After the hugs and greetings, he would talk about families, trips and friends. Bill was a coach of teams and a lover of people. What we learned from him is that you can't be one without the other. Academic research, as usual, bears this out, showing that an organization full of the type of "companionate love" that Bill demonstrated (caring, affectionate) will have higher employee satisfaction and teamwork, lower absenteeism, and better team performance.

"To care about people you have to care about people." This seems like it should be some hoary quote; we heard it a few times in our conversations with people about Bill. To care about people you have to care about people! You hear over and over again in corporate-speak that a company's most important asset is its people, that businesses put their people first, that they care about their employees, that blah blah blah. These aren't necessarily empty words; most companies and executives truly do care about their people but maybe not the whole person.

Bill cared about people. He treated everyone with respect by learning their names, and giving them a warm greeting. He cared about their families, and his actions in this regard spoke more loudly than his words. None of this feels that novel, does it? When we get together with colleagues, we often inquire about their families. The difference with Bill, and the hard thing to do in a busy business environment, is that he somehow found a way to get to know the families. Many times, he accomplished this simply by taking the questions a few steps beyond the "how are the kids?" norm. With Jonathan, it wasn't just how the family was doing; it was how Hannah did at her latest soccer game which evolved into where she was thinking about college, which evolved into some detailed advice about where she would fit best. Then, when he'd see the family at various events, they'd get the same hug as anyone else.

Compassion isn't just good, it's good for business, and a 2004 paper argues that compassion at an individual level, such as what Bill demonstrated, can turn into "organizational compassion" when team members collectively notice, feel, and respond to pain experienced by team members. This happens when the organization "legitimates" that empathy, for example when leaders take the lead in helping individual team members. Compassion can start at the top.

In our own lives, we don't try to match the way in which Bill loved people. We don't hug; we don't go quite as deep into people's family lives. If you don't naturally have as big a heart as Bill's, faking it won't work. Most of us like our coworkers. We care about them, but we check all but the most

sanitized feelings at the door when we walk into the office. Bill taught us to do the opposite. Bring it in! Ask the questions about the family, learn people's names, then ask more questions, then look at the pictures, and, above all, care.

Bill was perhaps the most "people person" we've ever met. So how does someone who isn't so naturally inclined to love people do it? Practice. Bruce Chizen worked with Bill at Claris and later went onto become the CEO of Adobe Systems. When he first joined Adobe, in 1994, Bruce remembered what he had observed Bill do at Claris and tried to do the same, but it didn't come so naturally to him. "I tried to remember people's names," Bruce recalls. "When I ran into someone in the elevator, I'd start up a dialogue, how's it going, what are you working on? I would go out of my way to have lunch in the cafeteria with new people. I would put myself in interactions that were not as natural for me, but it made a difference."

Bruce attributes his success at Adobe in part to these more social aspects of his work there. Before he ascended to the CEO spot, the company's founders asked him to take over products, something quite unusual for someone with a sales and marketing background. Their reasoning was that engineering leaders had developed a great deal of respect for him, due to his willingness to engage them and their developers in conversation.

The principles we outline in this book may not feel natural, but they can be learned. The key is pushing yourself to do it. When you're in that elevator, passing someone in the hallway, or seeing a group from your team in the cafeteria, take a moment to stop and chat. Bruce's lines are as good a starter as any: "How's it going? What are you working on?" In time, it becomes natural. "Trying to develop that personal connection didn't come that easily for me, but I worked at it," Bruce says. "Fortunately, it gets easier."

One of our big surprises in working on this book was how often the word love came up when people talked about Bill. This isn't a typical word when speaking with tech executives, venture capitalists, and the like. Bill made it okay to bring love to the workplace. He created a culture of what people who study these things call "companionate" love: feelings of affection, compassion, caring, and tenderness for others. He did this by genuinely caring about people and their lives outside of work, by being an enthusiastic cheerleader, by building communities, by doing favors and helping people whenever he could, and by keeping a special place in his heart for founders and entrepreneurs. Love is part of what makes a great team great.

Chapter 6: The Yardstick

To be successful, companies need to have teams that work together as communities, where individuals integrate their interests and put aside differences to be individually and collectively obsessed with what's good and right for the company. Since this doesn't naturally happen among groups of people, especially high-performing, ambitious people, you need someone playing the

role of a coach, a team coach, to make it happen. Any company that wants to succeed in a time where technology has suffused every industry and most aspects of consumer life, where speed and innovation are paramount, must have team coaching as part of its culture. This is especially true at its top levels; executive teams must have a coach if they want to perform at their best.

We were lucky to have a Bill Campbell acting as our team coach, but most teams aren't so lucky, which is fine because the best person to be the team's coach is the team's manager. Being a good coach is essential to being a good manager and leader. Coaching is no longer a specialty; you cannot be a good manager without being a good coach. The path to success in a fast-moving, highly competitive, technology-driven business world is to form high-performing teams and give them the resources and freedom to do great things. An essential component of high-performing teams is a leader who is both a savvy manager and a caring coach.

We have explored how Bill approached his role as a coach of teams. He insisted on management excellence and hammered home the importance of simple practices that add up to a strong operation. He believed that managers who put their people first and run a strong operation are held as leaders by their employees; these managers don't assume leadership, they earn it. He had a thoughtful and consistent approach to communication. He prized decisiveness; strong managers recognize when the time for debate is over and make a decision. He appreciated "aberrant geniuses," those strong performers whose behavior can stray outside the norm, but also advocated moving on quickly if their behavior endangers the team. He believed that great products and the teams that create them are at the core of a great company. Everything else should be in service to that core. He knew that sometimes managers need to let people go, but they should also allow them to leave with their dignity intact.

He understood that relationships are built on trust, so he prioritized building trust and loyalty with the people he worked with. He listened completely, was relentlessly candid, and believed in his people more than they believed in themselves. He thought that the team was paramount, insisted on team-first behavior, and, when faced with any issue, his first step was to look at the team, not the problem. He sought out the biggest problems, the elephants in the room, and brought them front and center, ensuring they got looked at first. He worked behind the scenes, in hallway meetings, phone calls and 1:1s, to fill communication gaps. He pushed leaders to lead, especially when things were bleak. He believed in diversity and in being completely yourself in the workplace.

He loved people. He brought that love to communities he created or joined. He made it okay to bring it into the workplace. When asked about his habit of eschewing compensation, Bill would say that he had a different way of measuring his impact, his own kind of yardstick. I look at all the people who've worked for me or who I've helped in some way, he would say, and I count up how many are great leaders now. That's how I measure success. We interviewed more than eighty great leaders in working on this book, all of whom credit Bill with playing a major role in their success, and there are more we missed. Bill's yardstick is looking pretty good.

Trillion Dollar Coach

We hope that you have picked up some principles on how to be a better manager and coach. We hope that you are thinking about how to make your team great, and how you can propel yourself to be great, to go beyond your self-imposed limits. We hope that you will become another leader on Bill's yardstick. The world faces many challenges, and they can only be solved by teams. Those teams need coaches.