

# **REMARKABLE!**

## **A Leadership Parable**

Dr. Randy Ross  
David Salyers  
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### **Foreword**

*I have always believed that a good name is more desirable than great riches. While profits are important to any business, maintaining a strong sense of values and living out your convictions are imperative. If a company's good name to the outside world is its brand, then its real character is revealed in its culture. And while there is much discussion about the need to create a compelling corporate culture in the marketplace today, very few understand the dynamics at play and how to address them effectively. Taking simple truths and placing them in a corporate parable, **Remarkable!** provides the reader with both an enjoyable format and transformational insights.*

**S. Truett Cathy**  
**Founder & CEO, Chick-fil-A, Inc.**

In their introduction, the authors – Dr. Randy Ross and David Salyers, offer some answers to challenging questions that make you want to read and own this book to learn the formula for transforming the culture within any business or organization from silos and defensive and selfish behaviors, to a healthy, vibrant, creative, and collaborative environment.

Frankly, I have never read a book before which not only so accurately describes these low-energy environments within so many companies where people are making the motions just to stay employed, but more importantly, a book that provides a logical road map for creating the opposite kind of company or organization where people on the outside are constantly talking about them and about what a pleasure it is to do business with them.

Some of those questions, and the answers to which, the authors provide include:

- What is that these folks [companies who - other people - 'irrepressibly' have to tell others about] recognize and do consistently that others seemingly do not?
- How does their view of the world lead them to think and behave differently than others?
- When faced with the same opportunities and challenges, how are their choices different . . . and why?

Dr. Ross and David Salyers conclude their introduction by stating their definition of 'leadership' – "Leadership is about influencing people to make conspicuously unusual

*choices that bring health and happiness to life and work. The choices you make will eventually make you. We challenge you to be Remarkable!”*

**Note to Readers** – The book is written in storybook fashion whose main characters include:

**Dusty Harris** – Vice President of Query, a customer care service provider in the utilities industry whose role is to oversee and give direction to the three call centers in the Southeast.

**Jim Mitchell** – CFO of Query and to whom Dusty reports – a wise and caring leader lacking only the understanding and appreciation for what would truly energize and engage his employees and thus his company, but a leader open to new ideas and approaches.

**Fred Walters** – Grease monkey mechanic who is always attired in a well-pressed shirt and khakis, and who is the owner of “Classic Car Care” - the auto repair shop Dusty uses and swears by. It turns out that Fred was Harvard educated and was former CEO of Performax, a very successful multi-national software company – consistently voted as one of the best places to work. Fred willingly assumes the role of Dusty’s mentor.

## **ASSESSMENT – Section One**

***“Nothing is so common-place as to wish to be remarkable”***  
Oliver Wendell Holmes, Sr. (*The Autocrat of the Breakfast Table* (1858), Ch. XII)

### **Chapter One – Shifting Gears**

The story begins as Dusty is on his commute home from work. But contrary to most commutes, he had decided to treat himself that day by driving his mid-life self-indulgent personal purchase – a vintage ’68 candy apple red Thunderbird convertible. And he was glad he was out driving with the top down since it was helping him clear his head and he had a lot on his mind from that work week.

As Vice President of Query, with over 800 energy advisors under his chain of command, he understands the importance of providing exceptional customer care and experience. That’s why he’s so bothered because a recent Employee Engagement Survey had come in two weeks before and in the author’s words, *“the scores could be referred to generously as ‘not good’.”*

In spite of the fact that Dusty felt pride, having been commended for stemming a high turnover rate within the company – with it now at an all-time low –he was realistic enough to realize that in down economic times, employees could be dissatisfied, but not enough to risk leaving, due to the tight job market. That certainly had much to do with the low turnover and for which he knows he couldn’t take any credit.

According to Dr. Ross and Salyers,

*“The Employee Engagement Survey painted a picture of unhappy, unmotivated teams, with a significant number of employees seemingly slogging through the drudgery of their daily activities. By their responses, many team members had indicated that they were experiencing little satisfaction or fulfillment in their current environment. The findings from the survey had*

*sent leaders throughout the organization into a frenzied tailspin.” And Query’s “Leaders knew intuitively, that the employee experience and the customer experience were inseparably linked, but this research had actually quantified the connection.”*

But how could this be. After all, the company was well aware of the fact that: *“engagement was at the heart of what Query calls their **Transformational Triad**. This three-pronged mission statement encapsulated their commitment to engagement. It simply read, “**Engage, Empower and Enrich** the Life of Every Associate and Customer.”*

Plaques displaying the Mission Statement populated the walls along with vision and values statements.

How many companies have you worked for or helped where you saw those or similar plaques and ‘values’ statements on the walls? Probably you like Dusty wonders: *“How many of his team members could recite these statements, let alone explain them or embody them.”*

Based upon the Employee Satisfaction Survey, there was enough concern that a task force was formed, and none other than our star – Dusty - was appointed to head it.

So with these thoughts in mind as he is driving home, Dusty is nonetheless distracted by an unusual grinding noise as he downshifts, and he decides to take it to Classic Car Care who has taken care of this car, as well as his other family cars, for many years. Actually by bringing it there as late in the day as it turns out to be, he expects to be told to just bring it in the next morning. But, “NOT SO FAST”!

Out comes Fred Walters to greet him and after both agree it’s probably the clutch, Fred tells him to pull it into an open bay and promises to tackle it first thing in the morning. He then offers Dusty a ride and takes him home in Fred’s vintage 1948 pickup truck. The authors describe their ride home like this: *“Chatting about their love of classic cars like two giddy teenage girls talking about boys.”*

## **Chapter Two - The Clutch**

And, not surprisingly as we learn more about Fred and the exceptional customer experience he always tries to achieve, Dusty receives a cell phone call from Fred shortly after 9:00 the following morning, calling to say, it was the clutch, and that the car is ready. With his car washed – another added value Fred always provides at no cost - Dusty is preparing to leave but wants to say goodbye to Fred. He’s told Fred is in with someone in his office and so Dusty sits down in the waiting area where he is surprised to see the reading material includes, “**The Harvard Business Review**”. And as he is engrossed in an article, “*Managing Yourself - The Paradox of Excellence*”, he is distracted from his reading by laughter coming from Fred’s office.

As Fred walks out of his office - the source of conversation and laughter - he is introduced to **Howard Levine**, whose reputation as a “**Master of Business Transformation**” is well known. Then when he learns that Howard occasionally calls upon Fred – also Harvard educated and Howard’s former classmate - for his advice and wisdom, Dusty is blown away.

Dusty now is the one who is most curious and finds a way to engage Fred in a brief description of his challenges at work and interestingly Fred draws a great analogy with what it

takes to create a 'remarkable' company, and what holds most companies back – with the clutch of a car:

*“The condition of the clutch determines how much discretionary effort your people are willing to put forth. It reflects the level of loyalty, passion and enthusiasm your team members bring to the endeavor. In the final analysis, the clutch will determine momentum and levels of performance.”*

In the author's words, that description left Dusty “**speechless**”.

Continuing, Fred says:

*“The **clutch** is the mechanism that provides for the engagement of two or more components to produce motion. On an interpersonal level, a clutch situation is any encounter that requires the engagement of two or more people to create progress – which is just about every human interaction. A **clutch situation** could be a challenge, a setback, a new directive or a vast opportunity that calls your team to step it up. It could be anything that rocks the status quo or it could be something as simple as a conversation between colleagues. **Any situation that requires two or more parties to work together is a clutch situation.**”*

Fred offers several other ‘**clutch**’ definitions or clarifications:

- *A **clutch player** has the emotional constitution of a winner.*
- ***Clutch players** become evident in times of challenge and transition.*
- ***In the clutch**, a person will either step up to the plate or withdraw into the safety of the shadows.*
- *When the game is on the line, a **clutch player** always wants the ball.*

So Dusty asks Fred the obvious question: “*So what do you do about it?*”

Fred replies: “*You fix it – just like I did on your T-Bird.*”

### **Chapter Three – Tune-Up**

Dusty has been so moved by Fred's grasp of business dynamics and human behavior, he calls to set up an appointment to have the oil changed on his wife's car even though it doesn't need it. Learning that Fred only comes in Tuesday's, Thursday's and Friday's, and that he's not the only one who tries to coordinate their car service work, with a 'Fred conversation', he schedules a Thursday appointment.

In preparing for a meeting the next day of the Task Force, Fred reviews the two previous Employee engagement Surveys and is frustrated to understand “*why the multiple corporate initiatives had garnered such meager results.*” They had addressed areas such as “*educational opportunities, life-management soft skills, effectively dealing with finances, time management and improving communications*”, all which had “*failed to move the needles of engagement northward.*”

And team leaders were being asked to “*identify corrective measures*”, in spite of the fact that there was a “*lack of clarity*” as to the causes. According to the authors, “*Consequently the*

*'remedies' often quickly degenerated into nothing more than organizing bowling outings and pizza parties in a feeble attempt to boost morale."*

At the next day's meeting, we learn a little more about Jim Mitchell, the CFO, and find him to be a "*big champion of the work concerning employee engagement*". And he is absolutely convinced (even more so than Dusty) that "*high levels of engagement are directly linked to high levels of productivity.*"

Dusty had heard Jim say on numerous occasions:

*"Where trust is high, resistance is low. Therefore, change and progress come quickly. Conversely, where trust is low, resistance is high. Therefore, change and progress come slowly."*

At the end of the meeting, Jim's demeanor becomes more serious and "*His face and tone convey his intensity. He had everyone's full and undivided attention: If our company was a car, I would say that we are long overdue for a tune-up or possibly an engine overhaul. If we want to run smoothly and efficiently, it's time to do a multi-point checkup. Given all that we have discussed today, there are a few questions that I want you to ponder. Since our efforts in the past have failed to achieve the desired results, how can we do things differently this time around? After all, it was Albert Einstein who said, 'Problems cannot be solved by the same level of thinking that created them'. We need to look at engagement through a whole new lens.*"

Jim concludes with: "***I want us to own our destiny and dream a dream that will inspire everyone to bring their best to the table each and every day. I want us to reach our full potential as individuals and as a company.***"

Then he puts this slide up:

***A Compelling Culture is Created When People:***

- **BELIEVE** the best **IN** each other
- **WANT** the best **FOR** each other
- **EXPECT** the best **FROM** each other

## **Chapter Four - The Oil Change**

We pick up with Fred telling his wife, Lisa, that he's taking her car in to have the oil changed. Whoops! He gets caught in his little white lie when she points out an oil change isn't needed for another 1,000 miles. He confesses the real reason – to discuss business matters with Fred but she logically asks why not just a cup of coffee rather than the expense of an oil change?

We also learn here and at various points along the way, that things on the home front aren't exactly copacetic – and that includes the relationship with his son, Mike. The authors go into considerable detail describing an all-too common story of a relationship that has drifted so far apart that they're basically just sharing space under the same roof: "*They had been sucking the lifeblood out of each other like two leeches locked in a deadly depleting hold on one another. Frankly, he didn't know how much longer they could hold it together – or if he really wanted to anymore.*"

Not surprisingly, Fred immediately notices that the car isn't in need of a current oil change, but readily agrees to meet and offer some 'business advice'.

Fred starts with a cautionary statement: *"I would be happy to offer advice where I think it might be helpful, but I won't attempt to bluff you if it's outside my **value grade**."* Confused by this term as opposed to '**pay grade**' with which he's already familiar, Dusty asks Fred to clarify the meaning:

*"LIFE, Fred says, is all about **creating value**. The secret to fulfillment is in seeking to **bring value** to every endeavor. Pay grade speaks to the kind of value that you **extract from** the organization. Value grade speaks to the kind of value that you **create for** the organization."*

And as Fred continues the 'clutch analogy', he adds a few additional zingers as it regards the process of "**change**" – regardless of what the issues involved may be:

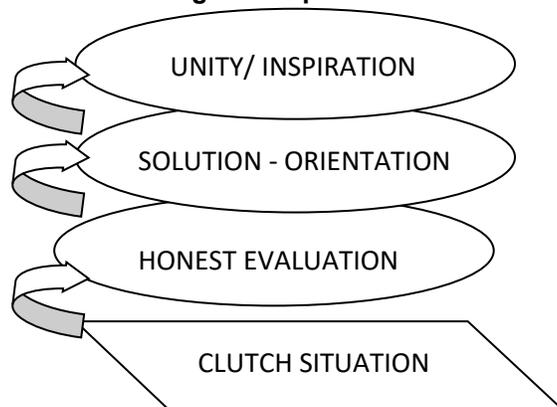
- *Change is inevitable and it always begins with a situation – a clutch situation.*
- *Each clutch situation will either lead to personal growth or it will produce pain.*
- *At this pivotal point, we have a choice to make. If we embrace the situation and engage in the change process, we have the opportunity for personal growth.*
- *If, on the other hand, we become defensive and resistant to change, then we forfeit an opportunity for growth and just see the situation as a hardship.*
- *Whether you see the clutch situation as a hardship or an opportunity for growth all depends upon your perspective. It's a matter of choice.*
- *It's what I like to call the **Either / Or** factor. **Either** we choose to resist change and stagnate. . **Or**, we choose to embrace the situation and grow.*
- *Choosing to grow leads to transformation, while choosing otherwise leads to degeneration.*
- ***We all get to make our own choices freely in life, up to a certain point – and then, our choices begin to make us!***

Fred next launches into an explanation of one of the key elements of the book – "**The Growth Spiral**", or also referred to as "**shifting into growth gear**":

**"The 'oil' that makes shifting into growth gear possible without grinding is *humility*."**

*"Humility allows us to see ourselves honestly, without pretense, and leads to great self-awareness. Humility is an acknowledgment of our humanity. It is the awareness that we are not perfect and we have no need to posture ourselves as being perfect. The fact is that we all have room for growth. Unfortunately, many people are stunted in their growth because they are self-deluded, believing things about themselves that simply are not true. Rather than embracing the challenge of change, they resist and try to posture themselves in a flattering light. But without honesty and humility, **valucentricity** is virtually impossible."*

On a napkin, Fred sketches out the '**growth spiral**'



Fred explains that ‘**humility**’ and ‘**honest introspection**’ opens us up to ‘**self-awareness**’. . .which causes us to see ourselves as we truly are and weigh the options and potential outcomes of our actions: *“Candid evaluation launches us on a journey to seek truth. However the extent to which we find truth is directly proportionate to our openness and willingness to receive it.”*

Fred says to Dusty: *“The answers to your questions are within your reach. They always have been. But you have to ask the questions before you can receive the answers.”*

But then the next question arises when Fred points out that there are always an “abundance of people willing to offer their opinions”. The question becomes: *“To whom will you listen and what will you receive?”*

Fred responds: *“It’s really pretty simple. You must choose carefully whom you will allow to influence your decisions. Good counsel perpetuates good choices. Bad counsel perpetuates bad choices. Good counsel amplifies valuentricity and bad counsel short circuits valuentricity.”*

Fred goes on to describe three kinds of questions:

**Poor questions produce poor answers** – *“they deflect responsibility or affirm our position and ourselves. The answers may make for lively conversation but they are never helpful. Even if we successfully assign blame, we are no closer to resolving the problem.”*

**Good questions produce good answers** – *“they guide us toward a better understanding of the factors at play but they stop short of getting us to any reasonable resolutions.”*

**Profound questions often will produce profound answers** – *“they get to the heart of the matter. They open new worlds of possibilities and hold hope for change because they dissect the dysfunction that led to the problem and they set up the solution. Great questions focus on the fix.”*

*“When you move beyond personalities and problems and shift the thinking to a solution-oriented perspective, it becomes inspirational. When you get to the solution side, people are much more likely to roll up their sleeves and get to work. . . In short, growth itself is inspirational. When people are authentic and are open to change, then others are drawn into the process and are inspired to be open and honest as well. When authenticity and humility are present, unity is often the result. And unity is the most powerful force in the universe for the creation of good. Unity enhances value creation.”*

This chapter and the first section are concluded with Dusty still not being certain of what Fred means by “**valuentricity**”, but that has to wait for a Fred ‘bathroom break’.

## **ALIGNMENT – Section Two**

### **Chapter Five – Valuentricity**

“**Value-centric**”, Fred says, *“simply means that values are at the very core of who you are and what you do. Your values determine how you see the world and respond to it. Or, you could say that a person’s world-view is shaped by values.”. . . “Valuentricity then, is the energy and momentum that can be produced when values are properly aligned”.* And Fred adds, *“When we intentionally choose to align values, those values create a circuit through which power can flow. When we understand value*

*alignment and value creation, we can craft movements of good through which positive energy can flow to light up the world.”*

The authors, Dr. Randy Ross and David Salyers reference the science of “**axiology**”, pioneered by Dr. Robert S. Hartman, who according to the authors, “*postulated that all of our choices are value-driven. According to him, values form the foundation for all human behavior.*”

*In defining and pursuing the study of ‘good’, Hartman considered something ‘good’, “if it possessed all the properties necessary to fulfill its purpose. Good in Hartman’s thinking is all about fulfilling one’s personal potential. It has more to do with pursuing excellence than it does with success.. Success is often measured in comparison to what others have done, which is always a self-defeating proposition.”*

I really like what the authors say here: “**Good, then, is defined as functioning fully and effectively to maximize your strengths, passions and capabilities. As such, the creation of good could be considered humanity’s most lofty pursuit.**”

But Dusty digs deeper, inquiring about “**valucentricity**” – “*So valucentricity is the power produced through alignment of strong morals?*”

Fred responds:

*“A person’s morals are definitely a part of the equation, but there is more to it than that. Your moral values will certainly find expression in your daily decisions. . . .It may make more sense to say that valucentricity refers to the energy that can be created when you place the proper emphasis on certain aspects of life. It is about alignment of one’s perspectives and priorities. . . .Another way of expressing it is to say that a person’s values are the results of how he values – or prioritizes – certain aspects of life and work.. . .So, as I said earlier, the more our personal values align with the natural structure of value in the universe, the healthier and more productive we will be as human beings. Thus alignment generates valucentricity.”*

In response to Dusty’s question concerning the ‘spiritual’ aspect of **valucentricity**, Fred clarifies it this way:

*“There certainly is a spiritual component to valucentricity. Most religions known to man are grounded on the ideals of treating others with honor, dignity and respect while doing everything within one’s power to fulfill his or her God-given potential. At the same time, clarity and proper alignment of values provides that foundation for someone to live on purpose.”*

Fred explains: “*Living on purpose means you live purposefully, **with** purpose, and **for** a purpose. For a purpose defines the **what**. It answers the question, ‘To what end?’ To be remarkable, this ‘**what**’ must be larger than self, providing a focus that is outward in nature and creates value for others. **With** purpose is about the **how**. It speaks to the passion, enthusiasm and creativity that one brings to the effort. It is the intensity with which a person pursues the what. And, purposefully implies both inspiration and intentionality. It is the **why**. It provides the motivation, because the why brings meaning and significance to any endeavor.”. . .  
“So ‘**on purpose**’ means that one is purposeful in the approach, passionate and undeterred about a purpose, and focused on a purpose beyond self.”*

## Chapter Six – On Purpose

So Dusty, now armed with some great wisdom from Fred, tries to decide how best to insert some of it to the discussion at the Tuesday Task Force meeting – without overdoing it. Luckily Jim helps tee the ball up by kicking the meeting off with phrases like: “. . . *we need to figure out who and what we want to become , and then take the necessary measures to inspire the best in our people! Growth is necessary for us to fulfill our potential. How are we going to do that?*” . . . “*The floor is open for your observations and suggestions. Let’s do some creative brainstorming and some good work today.*”

Dusty, inspired by some of Jim’s words like ‘**growth**’ and ‘**good**’, find they trigger memories of conversations with Fred, like “**getting into growth gear**” and “**good**” as it relates to “**fulfilling one’s personal potential – pursuing excellence**”. I’ll let you read how Dusty eloquently puts his “Fred tutelage” to work on **pages 57-60**, but if you want to read a script for opening up a conversation on ‘**change**’ and ‘**transformation**’, purchasing the book and reading Dusty’s opening will cover the cost many times over.

Let’s put it this way, Dusty does such a terrific job that Jim gives Dusty a follow up assignment:

*“Dusty, I want to hear your thoughts about how all of this might be played out in our corporate context. Can you come back to next Tuesday’s meeting with a formal presentation of what you might envision for us moving forward?”*

*“Now I’ve done it, Dusty thought. He had opened Pandora’s Box.”*

## Chapter Seven - Creativity

So as you might guess, Dusty intends to make his next one-hour session with Fred as productive as possible. He immediately blurts out his first question spurred by some interim research on ‘axiology’, and his belief that part of the solution for the company is to have a better understanding of ‘**living on purpose**’. His first question is: “**How do you teach someone to live on purpose?**”

Fred’s ‘short answer’ is that “**living on purpose is about choosing to live above your circumstances**. *In order to do that, you have to understand the **maxims** that guide value creation.*”

Fred defines “**maxim**” as a *general truth, a principle or rule of conduct*. Think of maxims as, “*the best means to maximize your performance.*”

This maxim says that, “*as human beings, we are designed to create value in life.*” So, the first Maxim for value creation is “**creativity**”.

Here Fred introduces what I would consider two of the most compelling, powerful and opposite alternatives and approaches to life: *to **extract** value from every endeavor, and the other seeks to **create and bring value** to every endeavor. Not just the same as Givers and Takers:*

*“Healthy people want to grow. Healthy people, by nature, want to improve and establish a sense of self-mastery. This emphasis on personal responsibility is the antithesis of entitlement. As people and organizations mature, so does a desire to make a positive contribution*

*to the world and those immediately around us. . . This desire to bring value however can often be twisted into a drive to achieve. Some people think that life is defined and measured by pay scale and material possessions. It's the same mentality that says, 'He who dies with the most toys wins.' For some people, success is all about titles and trinkets. This is a perversion of a natural longing for significance that comes through value creation."*

*"Self-worth comes from the conviction that you are a person of great value and the confidence of knowing that you've made a significant contribution to a good cause. In other words, self-worth comes from knowing you have created value."*

On the topic of **'value engineering**, Fred differentiates his way of thinking from the standard definition:

*"Value engineering is based upon function and cost analysis. It is an attempt to get a better product to market faster and cheaper than competitors." . . . "Valucentricity is generated by focusing upon creating such a remarkable product or service for the customer that you deliver an experience worth repeating. And **remarkable experiences** have more to do with personal attention than they do with price point." . . . "The difference is found in making meaningful emotional connections with people." . . . "You see, relationships trump transactions every time. And when the value you provide exceeds all expectations, then people will talk about you. You become remarkable!"*

The authors quote Robert Stephens, the founder of Geek Squad, and it's now become one of my favorite quotations: **"Advertising is the tax you pay for being Unremarkable."**

## **Chapter 8 - Positivity**

Fred explains how, as a person **creates value**, his or her **energy level increases** and **"Positivity explains just how it happens"** – the 2<sup>nd</sup> Maxim for 'value creation' - **Positivity**:

*". . . authentic positivity is the by-product of creating true value. . . Positivity and valucentricity are synonymous. And value creation answers the question, 'How does someone experience the good in life?'"*

Fred goes on to touch upon innovation in a corporate setting – what increases it, as well as what defeats it:

*"Innovation, and the ability to adapt to a changing marketplace, is absolutely essential to the survival of any organization, However, the more a company attempts to systematize efficiency in the pursuit of innovation, the less likely that organization will experience great measures of it. The more structure, policies and procedures an organization puts in place to pursue innovation, and the more pressure that is applied to produce it, the less likely it will occur. This is because pressure drains emotional energy that could and should be applied to nurture creativity. When that energy is siphoned off by rigid dictates and demands, the gravitational forces of efficiency keep the imagination earthbound." . . . "But the reality is that if you want to create an environment of innovation, you need to give people time to think and dream while on the clock. Give them the opportunity and resources to work on a solution to a problem or come up with a service that is of interest to them – something they really want to work on in an area where they can create the greatest possible value. The stated objective of this discretionary time should always be to employ their passion and their strengths to bring as much value to the organization as they possibly can. Then, step back and watch innovation take place."*

So what does Fred describe as by-products of 'creating value'? His list includes: **"success, happiness, significance, courage and optimism"** . . . **"Creating value in relationships**

*engenders trust and openness. It breeds camaraderie among colleagues. It fosters good will. It heals hurts. It offers forgiveness and second chances. At the same time, it holds people accountable for bringing their very best to the table in every endeavor.”*

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As usual in my summaries, from this point forward, I stop covering sections and chapters in more complete detail, and begin including key points and some ‘teaser’ questions which would make anyone not only want to finish reading my summary, but hopefully to purchase the book and stick this summary in it. This will make it easy to reference key points and refresh other elements the authors built upon over the course of the book.

This book is exceptional. Up until now, much of the book has been spent characterizing what’s wrong with most companies seeking to become ‘remarkable’ and deluding themselves to believe that they are ‘remarkable’, while falling far short. To this point, they have laid TWO of the FOUR principles (maxims) which should be followed in order to create a REMARKABLE company or organization focused on ‘creating value’, but less time, offering a specific road map for how they can accomplish this.

In our book club meeting, we’ll have some fun both in lamenting some of the shortcomings we’ve seen in attempting to transform and change, and hopefully how applying some of the approaches covered within could have made a difference.

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## **ADJUSTMENT – Section Three**

### **Chapter Nine – Sustainability**

According to Fred, “**Sustainability**” – is the 3<sup>rd</sup> Maxim for ‘value creation’. It says that, “. . . in order to continuously create value, leverage your passion and strengths to solve problems.”

Fred says that, “*Inspirational leaders also connect the organization objectives to personal passion. When people are emotionally engaged in their work, they are much more likely to offer discretionary effort. Loyalty, morale and performance all increase when team members are highly engaged. People need to see that they are making a difference in the lives of others and contributing positively to the world. Sometimes that process begins by reframing someone’s perspective of work.*”

**Examples abound of the janitor who sees his job of making people happier by being in a totally clean setting. . . or the grocery clerk who goes above and beyond simply to become the very best grocery clerk.**

But Fred emphasizes, “*Reframing one’s situation to inspire passion is only one side of a triangle. With **strong values** serving as the base [of the triangle] and **passion** on one side, the other side involves **leveraging your individual strengths** to create maximum value.*” And Fred adds what many believe: “*Far too much time and energy is wasted in performance reviews on ‘gap’ development – the politically correct way of saying ‘weaknesses.’ . . . Focusing on strengths keeps the emphasis on how to bring value to others.*”

Read pages 88 and 89 to learn more about how to apply passion and strengths to solve problems.

This chapter ends with a question Dusty poses and which many would have at this point: **“So, how in the heck do you do that** [cultivate a culture of positivity].”

## Chapter Ten – Choice

Fred’s quick response, “*You give them a choice.*”

This chapter is loaded with great wisdom and real-life ways to structure questions to get ‘buy-in’.

It begins with a statement we should all remember: **“Nothing of long-lasting positive value ever happens by force.”**

*“That is why domination and manipulation never work. You may be able to force your will upon others for a season, but it will ultimately fail. As soon as they get out from under your control, they will make their own choices.”*

Some of the ‘choices’ Fred covers in this chapter include “*I over Us*” and the “*Scarcity Mentality*” vs. the “*Abundance Mentality*” and the “*ER Factor*” (E for Ego and R for Rivalry) – the opposite of ‘humility’.

Another great quote from this chapter, **“Unsolicited advice is rarely well-received.”**

The bad choices all lead to the opposite of the “**Growth Spiral**” where there is “value creation”, as shown earlier. The opposite, spiraling downward – “**value extraction**” - is characterized by Rationalization, Stagnation, and ultimately Alienation and Desperation.

## Chapter Eleven - Responsibility

The fourth and final Maxim for value creation and producing a ‘valucentric’ company or organization is “**Responsibility**” which states that ownership empowers people to take responsibility for creating value. Fred describes the difference between **OR** (*Ownership and Relationship*) which lends to foster strong decision-making capability vs. **ER** (*Ego and Rivalry*).

Fred’s key point:

*“When people feel that they ‘own’ the business, or at least a part of it, then they become more responsible for guarding the activity, resources and relationships in the business. Simply stated, where there is a sense of ownership, there is deeper emotional attachment. Ownership empowers people to take responsibility for creating value, thereby enhancing results?”*

Learn the real power of the equation on page 117 - “*VC (value creation) = WE (we) /ME (me) X OR*” – “*When people learn to empower their people and employ these principles, they leverage the power of multiplied effort and increase productivity exponentially.*”

Fred concludes this part with an explanation of ‘**culture**’ as it applies to almost any team or organization:



- So what does Fred suggest as ways to deal with the three main categories of those who typically become the sources of ‘resistance’ – “**Victims, Naysayers, and Know-it-All’s**”?

Find out in **Chapter 15 – “Remarkable”** (Pages 157-176) and also learn more about the critical importance of “**Unity**”:

*“Companies that thrive are resilient, tenacious and, most importantly unified. Creative, innovative, and adaptable are also adjectives to describe Remarkable! Organizations,. But Unity is by far, the most powerful force for good, and it’s the result of a healthy culture. The best companies know that culture trumps everything else and they are intentional about crafting environments that are engaging and compelling.”*

The final chapter – “**Reward**” – leaves the reader with the happiest of endings. You can read how Query, the organization - has changed – with more energized, innovative, and creative employees – better leaders helping employees not only succeed at work, but striking a better work/life and family balance.

How the pockets of resistance had been slowly overcome – the naysayers and the ‘know-it-alls’ minimalized – replaced by an atmosphere of ‘positivity’.

And find out how by applying these same principles, maxims, and actions not only transforms the company, but how they do the same for Dusty’s relationship with Mike, his son, and with Lisa, his wife. Not overnight – but with time and consistency, and by making ‘superior choices’.

The conclusion - creating a **REMARKABLE!** Company or organization is all about creating a **Remarkable Culture**:

*“It is a culture where values are aligned, thinking is enhanced and behaviors are inspired to achieve superior results. This Remarkable Culture produces an environment where silos are shattered and synergy prevails. In such a setting, movements of good have the potential to produce exponential returns, reducing competition and amplifying collaboration. Loyalty, morale, and discretionary efforts are all actualized as by-products of value creation.”*

It is a Culture where:

People **BELIEVE** the best *IN* each other

**WANT** the best *FOR* each other

**and**

**EXPECT** the best *FROM* each other

Dr. Randy Ross and David Salyers include several tools in the appendices of the book including

**Appendix A** – ways to actually use the Book – “REMARKABLE!” as well as for use as a speaker for a meeting or corporate retreat, go to [www.CreateRemarkable.com](http://www.CreateRemarkable.com) .

**Appendix B** – Two assessment tools – “The Judgment Index” and “The Engagement Index” which can be completed at <http://CreateRemarkable.com/assessments/>

Also some value-based assessments for selection and hiring the right people - up front – largely helping to eliminate the ‘victims’, ‘nay-sayers’ and ‘know-it-alls’ later. Go to <http://CreateRemarkable.com/HireWell/>

**Appendix C** – A Remarkable! Culture Survey – grade where your company or organization currently stands.

**Appendix D** – Gives you more history about Robert S. Hartman, a German, born in 1910, who saw Hitler as not only an evil man, but someone who had the ability to **organize evil**. After several close calls, he escaped Germany to England on a falsified passport just as the Nazis were closing in on him. You should read some other fascinating things about this man who helped shape the antithesis of Hitler – **how to organize ‘good’**. For more information, visit: [www.HartmanInstitute.org](http://www.HartmanInstitute.org) .

**Appendix E** – a Glossary of Key Terms – most of which we’ve covered in the summary but great as a quick review tool.

**Appendix F** – The Four Maxims of Value Creation – Also great for a quick review