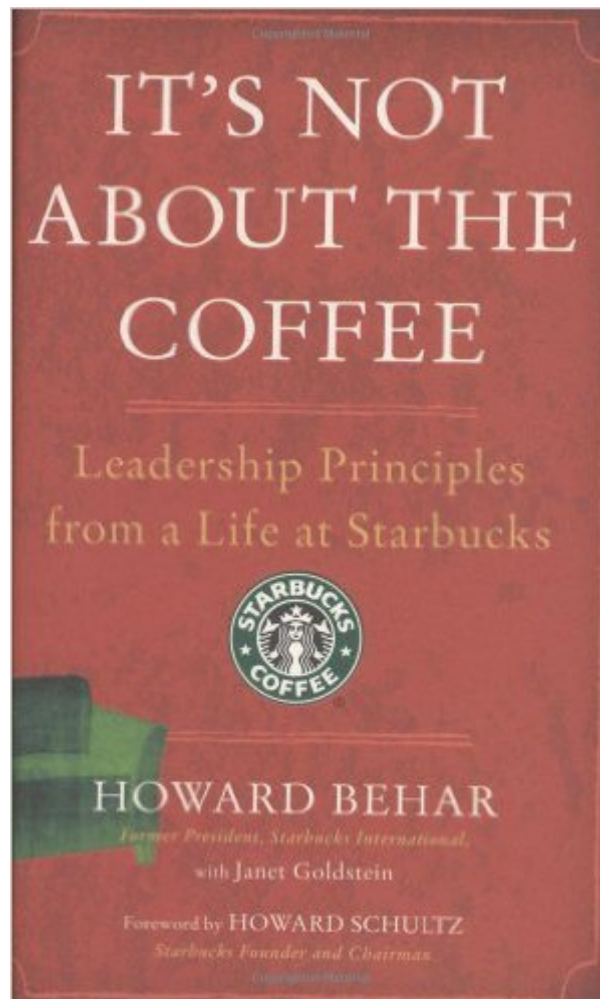


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# It's Not About The Coffee: Leadership Principles From A Life At Starbucks



## Synopsis

It's Not about the Coffee outlines a simple approach to success: focus on people over profits. It presents ten enduring principles that Howard Behar, who helped shape the Starbucks organization, has used in his own life and has practiced as a leader and in developing leadership at one of the most respected companies in the world. Behar has stood for candor and the soul of the Starbucks culture. "People are not 'assets,'" he tells us, "they are human beings." It's Not about the Coffee brings Behar's energy, smarts, high expectations, and belief in people to fundamental leadership lessons we all need to practice as well as preach everyday. Blending personal experiences and inside stories of turning points in the development of Starbucks' culture and business, each chapter in It's Not about the Coffee explores one principle and offers inspiring advice. --This text refers to the CD-ROM edition.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Well, Starbucks has to be about its coffee at some level (and the book admits it on page xiii). For heaven's sake they sure make a big fuss about it, right? In any case, I am not a real Starbucks customer because I don't drink coffee, they don't serve soda, and I think their pastries have no flavor (but they look nice). That being said, I like this book even if it is another in the many books trying to catch some of the glow in the success of Starbucks. Behar at least has the credibility of actually having led a good chunk of the growth. The book is about getting your core understanding of yourself just right and having people centered values. Howard Behar joined Starbucks in 1989 and was named its President in 1995 and retired in 2003. In this book he lists ten principles and then

discusses each in its own chapter (plus an introduction). They are:1) Know who you are2) Know why you're here3) Think independently4) Build trust5) Listen for the truth6) Be accountable7) Take action8) Face challenge9) Practice leadership10) Dare to dreamWhile these seem awfully like light fluffy clouds in a list like this, the chapters do flesh them out in ways that will help you get at why a serious man like Behar believes in them. Really, it comes down to how you work with people. You cannot run a business of any size by yourself and in order to work with people and earn their trust you first have to know something about yourself. Once you have a solid core with serious values you actually live by, you can then reach out and lead others because you are worth following. This is a helpful and concise book and if you appreciate reading about principles for self-development, this will be a book you enjoy. Reviewed by Craig Matteson, Ann Arbor, MI

The problem with most of the books written about Starbucks is they lack a caffeine jolt! Howard Behar's book falls into this trap. Yes, it does contain some interesting (though few if any) new nuggets. The best book on Starbucks continues to be Pour Your Heart Into It by Chairman Howard Schultz who essentially wrote about the same concepts as Behar, but in an interesting and lively manner. Schultz and Behar are master business people. Schultz is also a masterful, inspirational story teller, as anyone who has seen him give a keynote speech will testify. Behar takes the reader through ten business concepts, all of which make good sense but few of them are illustrated in anything but a general way. Combine this with multiple sub-concepts and you have a book that fails to be a page turner. Some of the concepts are downright trite e.g. celebrate failures, which he admits Starbucks doesn't do either! Despite its current problems, Starbucks has done so many things so well that it should be studied by business people. Thus taking any of Behar's ten concepts and implementing them in your business might well be worth trying. Implement them though with passion which is probably what this book is missing.

You have to serve for the people - people who buy your products, people who work with you, people who you work for. Howard Behar is the man who made Starbucks the biggest coffee shops network in the world and now he shares his knowledge and experience with us. There is nothing much new or different from any other business success literature in this book. Howard shares his life journey while developing Starbucks into the biggest coffee chain in the world. He shares ten principles, which made his fortune. All those principles are pretty much the same as many successful people have. What I found different in this book is that Howard writes it from the perspective of people. Mostly he concentrates on all the people who make the business like customers, colleagues and

employees. Author points out how important it is to listen to people around and act on other people's needs. It's Not About the Coffee made me to start looking more deep into people, analyze what they want and find a way to help them in what they need. It was a good reminder of the success principles as well, and mostly it helped me to realize how important people around you are. The book showed me that it's people who do the business. It's important to have a good product, but it's also very important to have and develop good team.

Behar has written an excellent book about the power of servant leadership and putting employees/clients/customers first. I bought this book due to my peaked interest surrounding servant leadership and found that Behar wrote and spoke to my heart. Excellent text for those entering entry level management and want to learn how to practice effective leadership. I plan on buying this book for my staff!

I purchased this book because I wanted to get an idea into the minds of head honchos. To see what makes successes and failures they've encountered during their journey. I was really surprised by how closely the way Starbucks ran their business was how I thought a company should function. I truly believe that for a company to succeed, you need to understand your employees and what motivates them to do their best. Many businesses focus on the bottom line and could care less about their worker bees. Here, they believe that not caring about your employees causes low morale and eventually death of a business. I won't go into details of the book, but I would highly recommend giving this a read, whether you agree with their practices or not, one can truly learn something.

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