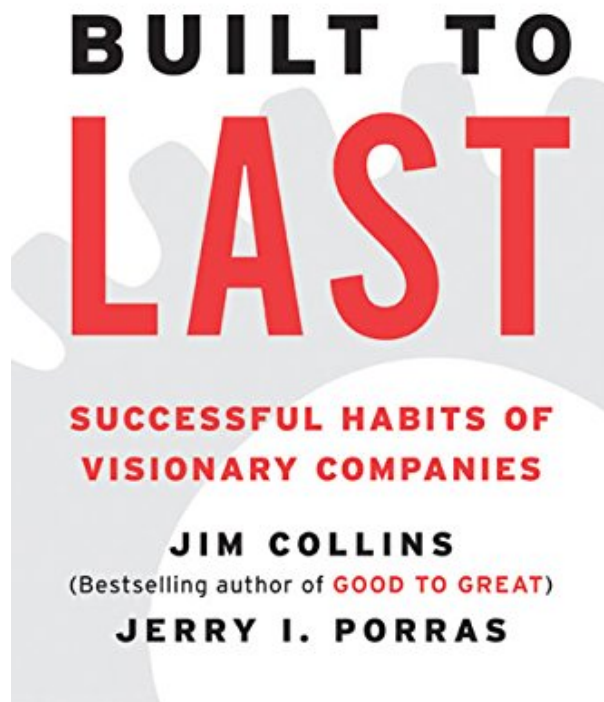


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JIM COLLINS

(Bestselling author of **GOOD TO GREAT**)

JERRY I. PORRAS

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Built to Last became an instant business classic. This audio abridgement is read by the authors, who alternate chapters. Collins is a bit breathlessly enthusiastic, but clear and interesting; Porras, unfortunately, is poorly inflected and wooden. They set out to determine what's special about "visionary" companies--the Disneys, Wal-Marts, and Mercks, companies at the very top of their game that have demonstrated longevity and great brand image. The authors compare 18 "visionary" picks to a control group of "successful-but-second-rank" companies. Thus Disney is compared to Columbia Pictures, Ford to GM, and so on.

A central myth, according to the authors, is that visionary companies start with a great product and are pushed into the future by charismatic leaders. Usually false, Collins and Porras find. Much more important, and a much more telling line of demarcation between a wild success like 3M and an also-ran like Norton, is flexibility. 3M had no master plan, little structure, and no prima donnas. Instead it had an atmosphere in which bright people were not afraid to "try a lot of stuff and keep what works."

If you listen to this audiocassette on your daily commute, you may discover whether you are headed to a "visionary" place of work--and, if so, whether you are the kind of employee who fits your employer's vision. (Running time: two hours, two cassettes) --Richard Farr

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Drawing upon a six-year research project at the Stanford University Graduate School of Business, James C. Collins and Jerry I. Porras took eighteen truly exceptional and long-lasting companies and studied each in direct comparison to one of its top competitors. They examined the companies from their very beginnings to the present day -- as start-ups, as midsize companies, and as large corporations. Throughout, the authors asked: "What makes the truly exceptional companies different from the comparison companies and what were the common practices these enduringly great companies followed throughout their history?"

Filled with hundreds of specific examples and organized into a coherent framework of practical concepts that can be applied by managers and entrepreneurs at all levels, Built to Last provides a master blueprint for building organizations that will prosper long into the 21st century and beyond.

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this book will undoubtedly inspire you to reach great heights.

By Joshua M.

[book:Built to Last: Successful Habits of Visionary Companies|4122] was one of the first business books I've ever read. At the time, as an aspiring entrepreneur, James C. Collins spoke volume to me and how I should structure an everlasting company. Written by two Stanford University's Graduate School of Business professors, the level of knowledge and experience they jointly possess will exceed your expectations. The main point of the book is to either identify your business as a "clock builder" or a "time teller." Time tellers focus on being the loudest and most disruptive companies, while clock builders are more reserved and focus on growth and preserving their core values for centuries into the future. As a well researched book might indicate, the authors provide a tremendous amount of detail on what makes companies such as Coca-Cola, Citi Bank, Wal-Mart, Walt Disney, Nordstrom, stand the test of time. These companies have been active in our lives for generations and they reveal exactly how they have endured, and how they will continue to endure for many generations to come. Whether you are an entrepreneur, owner, middle management or a salesmen, this book will undoubtedly inspire you to reach great heights.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful.

A Must Read for the CEO

By Edward J. Barton

Anyone tasked with the daunting responsibility of running an organization is faced with the challenge of culture. In the event that you are the "lucky" successor to a founder or a turn-around situation (my professional scenarios all have been in this realm), the task of what to do, where to go, and how to get there are huge - the culture is either well established, failing, and needs to change, or the culture may have been one of personality, facing a vacuum, and needs to be institutionalized. Collins and Porras look at a series of

companies that have transcended this challenge and have developed a visionary culture that withstands the test of time.

Summarizing the basic themes:

- * Be an architect and clock builder and design and develop a vision that stand the test of time
- * Embrace the "Genius of AND." - do not accept difficult trade-offs and strive for the near impossible
- * Preserve the core/stimulate progress - Develop, hone and ruthlessly protect core values, and innovate around that core
- * Seek consistent alignment - Align all stakeholders to the vision of the organization and continue to insure alignment

Unlike some of the challenges faced by the companies chosen by Tom Peters in "In Search of Excellence", a 25 year run on Collins book finds many of his study subjects still in the forefront of their industries. Collins is definitely onto something, and is one of the more engaging writers of the genre. Definitely worth the read.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful.

picture a vision for your own unique case harnessed with verified principles...

By Utkan Uluçay

It is not a how-to book. It is not suggesting recipes for your own case to succeed. Rather it is explaining what visioary companies did different than control group companies (still remarkably successfull compared to sectoral averages). You need to extract your lessons which suits to your spesific case.

I believe that this a good approach. It acknowledges that your case is unique. It also recognizes yourself as capable and willing to progress, hence inspires you about possible vision. In case you need to be convinced you could follow cases or quotations from the research.

This is another good feature because you have the chance to skip sections that %100 agree with author. It makes you fast to read whole book.

I like the coinciding ideas of visionary companies and TOC literature. You could find marks of Blue Ocean Strategies as well in the book.

I feel energized and motivated to feel "do something, now, I can, no need tobe CEO!"

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