

True to Yourself: Leading a Values-Based Business

By Mark Albion

**"Business... is about being true to yourself, your ideas."
-- Richard Branson, Virgin**

True to Yourself was written to help you build a small business that reflects your values. As my *New York Times* Best Seller® *Making a Life, Making a Living*® illuminated the road to finding yourself, *True to Yourself* focuses on the act of creating yourself – the art of constructing a life and work that allows you to reach your potential and contribute to a better world for all.

But you can't do it alone. The central theme is that paradoxically, to reach *your* dreams you first must help other people reach *their* dreams. At the core of leadership, therefore, is the hard work of building the soft skills necessary to develop and sustain those *relationships*—the soft skills required to make the transition from founder to leader.

Your key task is to design an organization that helps the people you impact do just that – reach their personal dreams which in turn will lead to your organization's success and the realization of your dreams. And to increase your impact and the impact of your business, you must go beyond the traditional boundaries of a company and collaborate with other organizations.

A practical guidebook based on interviews with 75 values-based small business leaders and the author's own entrepreneurial experiences, *True to Yourself* describes the three drivers of a successful values-based business, the three key characteristics of their leaders, and the five best practices these leaders employ to build a best-in-class business. Its intention is to accelerate your learning and help you avoid mistakes to make your job easier, your company more successful, and your life more fulfilling. Its purpose is to make your dreams come true.

We all dream of noble purposes, of making a significant impact in the limited time we have. To do so, as the Sages said two millennia ago: "*Your only obligation in any lifetime is to be true to yourself.*"

Mark Albion is a social entrepreneur who has co-founded seven organizations, including Net Impact, an international network of MBA students and professionals committed to using the power of business to improve the world. He was a marketing professor at Harvard Business School and for the past 11 years has written a monthly 4000 word e-newsletter that serves business professionals in 87 countries via www.makingalife.com.

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