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KEN BLANCHARD COLLEEN BARRETT

Foreword by **Herb Kelleher**
Founder of Southwest Airlines

Lead LUV

A DIFFERENT WAY
to CREATE REAL SUCCESS



IT PAYS
TO PUT YOUR
PEOPLE
FIRST

Lead with LUV
A Different Way to Create Real Success

Ken Blanchard

Coauthor of *The One Minute Manager*®

Colleen Barrett

President Emeritus of Southwest Airlines

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Foreword

Ken Blanchard and Colleen Barrett are a philosophical match made in heaven.

I was overjoyed to be asked to write this foreword to their remarkable book because I passionately share their joint belief that the infusion of love is an essential, but oft overlooked, ingredient in any business organization that wants to be superlative for a long period of time, rather than just “successful” for a limited time.

Most people are looking not only for monetary security but also for psychic satisfaction in their work. That satisfaction is provided in our personal lives by the love and affection of family and friends. Why shouldn't a business simply be an enlargement of our circle of family and friends?

For more than forty years, in her relationships with the People of Southwest Airlines, Colleen Barrett has lived the leadership principles extolled by Ken Blanchard. She has ensured that no grief goes unattended; that no joy goes unshared; that each achievement is celebrated; and that those requiring help receive it.

She has made successes of People who thought they were destined for failure and has administered necessary discipline with care, thoughtfulness, understanding, and, ultimately, pure and unflinching justice leavened by mercy. And, always, her unadulterated focus has fastened on what is good, egalitarian, and right for ALL of the People of Southwest Airlines, not just a favored few.

For those who might think that leading with love is simply “soft management,” review the record of Southwest Airlines over the last forty years. In a business so fraught with economic peril that the entire domestic airline industry has compiled a net loss since its inception, Southwest’s People have produced an unprecedented and unparalleled record of job security, Customer satisfaction, and Shareholder return. From these results, it can factually and logically be concluded that if you seek long continued success for your business organization, treat your People as family and

LEAD WITH LOVE

Herb Kelleher
Founder and Chairman Emeritus
Southwest Airlines Co.

* * *

Once upon a time, there was a remarkable person who was known to lead with love.

Her company succeeded where almost all the other companies struggled with problems—from losing money to dealing with disgruntled customers to struggling with unhappy employees.

However, she and her team were remarkably successful. Employees loved to work there, customers were loyal, and the company was profitable year after year for decades.

This loving leader did not have a fancy business degree. In fact, she began her career as an executive secretary. Yet the founder of the company chose her to succeed him as president. When asked why, he said, “Because she knows how to love people to success.”

Perhaps the most remarkable part of this story is that our heroine is a real person. Her name is Colleen Barrett, and she is President Emeritus of Southwest Airlines. Please enjoy getting to know her through the ongoing conversation that you are about to experience.

* * *

WHAT IS LEADERSHIP?

Ken: Colleen, it's a real honor to talk with someone who leads with love. Would you mind if I called you "The Love Manager"?

Colleen: Actually, Ken, I would mind, even if you spelled it LUV.

K: LUV?

C: LUV is our symbol on the New York Stock Exchange. We first started flying out of Love Field in Dallas, and our first advertising slogan in 1971 was "Southwest Airlines, the Someone Else Up There Who LUVs You." We also had a heart on our first signature line and letterhead. And today, forty years later, we still have hearts on our aircraft. So, frankly, if you have a need to put a label on what I do, I would prefer that you call me a LUVing Leader.

K: What do you have against the word manager?

C: Nothing, really. But as someone said years ago, "You can't manage a horse to water." So, at Southwest Airlines, although we have *Manager* titles, we prefer to use the word *Leader* because we want all our People to realize they have the potential to be a Leader; they can make a positive difference in anyone's work and life, regardless of whether they are in a management position. So we try to hire Leaders, no matter what role we want them to fill.

Talking about the roles People fill, in our internal Company communications, we highlight People's different roles by capitalizing their designation as well as their title. So anyone reading this conversation will notice that, when we refer to Southwest Airlines, not only are Pilot and Mechanic capitalized, but also words such as People, Employee, Leader, Customer, and Company. This is part of what our People call "Colleen's Bible."

K: I'm glad you said *part* of "Colleen's Bible," because I also know that some words that are normally two words or hyphenated words, such as *bottom line*, *team player*, or *check-in*, appear as one word in your "Bible." Because that might drive our non-Southwest readers crazy, we're not going to do that.

C: You mean I don't always get my own way?

K: No, because this is a coauthored work, and we don't want to send our editors into a tizzy.

C: Oh, all right. Geez Louise.

K: Colleen, I hope that everyone eavesdropping on our conversation will get the point you were making before we were interrupted with “Bible” talk: *Everyone has the potential to be a leader and have a positive influence on people they meet.* The reason I reiterate this point is that when I ask groups of managers around the country, “How many of you think you are a leader?” fewer than a third of them raise their hands.

C: Do you know why? Because somehow they think leadership is all about having a position or a title; therefore, leadership is something that is limited to only a few people—often top managers such as CEOs or presidents. I think Leadership is a way of life. All of us can be Leaders, both at work and in our homes and communities.

K: So we agree, then, leadership is an influence process.

*Anytime You Seek To Influence The
Thinking, Behavior, Or Development
Of People In Their Personal Or
Professional Lives, You Are Taking
On The Role Of A Leader*

C: That statement makes me happy, because if you continued to call me *The Love Manager*, we wouldn't have had a very good conversation. I consider myself a Leader, not a manager.

♥ **STOP AND THINK**

In the past, have you considered yourself a manager or a leader? If you have thought of yourself as a manager, how do you feel now, after sitting in on our conversation? If you accept our belief that you are a leader, who are you able to influence the most in your daily interactions at work, in your home, or in your community?

K: When people have such strong feelings about leadership, I'm always interested in where those feelings came from. I love to ask people, "Who had the greatest impact on your life and who you are as a leader?" Hardly anyone ever mentions a manager or supervisor at work. They talk about their mother or father, a grandfather or uncle, or even their spouse or a friend.

C: Bingo. When I think about who influenced my life the most as a Leader, I think of my Mother. She, more than anyone, taught me how to lead with love.

CELEBRATING SUCCESSES

K: Your Mother “done well!” I think your whole approach to leading and motivating People is about love. Don’t you send out thousands of letters every year to your People, celebrating their successes and praising them for their efforts? That sounds pretty loving to me.

C: I guess it is, but I never did that all by myself. We have a small Internal Customer Care Team that, together with my personal staff, helps the Executive Office keep track of every Employee’s birthday, Company anniversary, the birth of children, and other important events. This Team makes sure that cards go out for nearly every occasion. Our office sends out more than 100,000 cards annually. Many of our Officers hand-write several thousand notes each year. Besides being loving, we know this is meaningful to our People, because we hear from them if we miss something significant in their lives, like the high school graduation of one of their kids. We just believe in accentuating the positive and celebrating People’s successes.

To sustain our Company Culture, we cheer People on all the time. We celebrate little things, big things—we celebrate everything! Although we do have some formal celebrations, a lot of them are informal, spontaneous celebrations that cost little or no money. For example, just giving People chocolates when something good has happened can make them feel like you've given them a million dollars. What's important is the fact that you're honoring them and acknowledging that what they do makes a positive difference. In the process, you are making heroes out of them. You are letting them know that you love them for their efforts and you want everybody to celebrate their success.

K: That's why I think you and I are soul mates, Colleen, because that's one of my core beliefs, too. If someone said to me, "Ken, from now on you can't teach anything you have taught or written about in the past except one thing; what do you want to hold onto?" I know exactly what it would be. I would want to continue to share the belief that the key to developing people and creating great organizations is to catch people doing things right and accentuate the positive by praising them.¹ It's all about celebrating a success that someone or a team has had. Celebrating successes has been a key part of my own leadership for a long time.

One other thing that's important about your philosophy, Colleen, is that you don't praise your People just for showing up; you celebrate specific things they have done. As Spencer Johnson and I emphasized in *The One Minute Manager*[®], when it comes to One Minute Praisings, just wandering around and telling people, "Thanks for your effort," without being specific, has little meaning. But when you say to a woman who reports to you, "I just read your operational analysis report, and let me tell you, it was so clear. I loved the recommendations you made, particularly the cost-cutting suggestions. They will not only help us contain our costs, but also improve our efficiency"—that person will know you're sincere and really know what she is doing. The same approach works at home. "Alec, your mother showed me your report card. Three As and two Bs. Way to go! That's a real improvement from last semester."

C: We also try to make any cheering of People timely—as close to the event or performance as possible. I know that is another important element of a One Minute Praising.

K: It sure is. If a long time elapses between when someone does something right and when it is noticed, the praising loses its luster.

C: People hate waiting until their annual performance review to get all the good news or bad news.

♥ STOP AND THINK

Are you tired of all the praisings you get at work? At home? Do you wish people would lay off? Most folks laugh when they are asked those questions, because the reality is that catching people doing things right and celebrating their successes is not common practice at work, at home, or anywhere else. How are you doing with praising your people and celebrating their successes? When you get home at night, do you wander around and see what went *right* during the day? Try it with your people and your family, and they will be thrilled. And always remember to be immediate and specific.

K: Colleen, tell me: If you lead with love, how do you handle bad news—when someone is doing something wrong?

C: That's where another kind of love comes in. Some call it "tough love" because it may look like you are being tough. But I think sometimes the most loving thing you can do is to be straight with People when they are getting off course. Let me give you some examples:

- I had to let a personal staff member go because she did not display Golden Rule behavior with her peers. She played well “up” the ladder, so to speak, but not as well with folks she perceived to be at or below her position level. Her skills were top notch—it took two people to replace her—and it was very difficult for me. But it obviously had to be done.
- One of my best friends at work, who was also an exemplary Employee, had very little respect for her new boss and was becoming a different person from the one I had admired and loved. In a challenging conversation, I had to let her know that her supervisor would be staying in place for at least a couple of years and that if she couldn’t find a way to recapture her once-positive attitude and make it work with him, she needed to leave.
- I’ve often had to tell good friends that I couldn’t write them letters of recommendation or that I couldn’t intercede regarding disciplinary action because my review of the facts didn’t warrant those favors.

- Like most Leaders, I've been in a position over the years of having to support involuntary terminations due to circumstances. But in several cases I have been able to continue close personal relationships with these same folks after they left Southwest.

K: It sounds like you certainly don't let poor behavior or performance go unnoticed.

C: Absolutely not. And it's never easy or pleasant. But after dealing with it, if the person is still part of our Team, I watch him or her closely so that, as soon as possible, I can catch that person doing something right. I prefer praising and celebrating successes to dealing with problems.

♥ STOP AND THINK

How do you deal with inappropriate behavior or performance? Are you a seagull manager—do you fly in, make a lot of noise, dump on people, and then fly out? Or do you deal with people in a straight and loving way as soon as you observe inappropriate behavior? Is this an area where you need some work?

HAVING MENTORS

K: Where did your addiction to celebrating People's success and praising their efforts come from, Colleen?

C: Once again, I would have to say it was from my Mother. She had a huge heart. She not only loved and cared for people, she respected them. Although she didn't actually use the expression, she modeled The Golden Rule:

*Do Unto Others
As You Would Have Them
Do Unto You*

Mom's guiding belief in life was that if you are good to others, others will be good to you. As long as you were respectful of others and treated people the way you would like to be treated, you would get that back in kind.

As a result of my Mother's influence, my biggest expectation with our People is that they be egalitarian in nature. When I use the word *egalitarian*, I mean that everybody has the right to be treated with respect, and everyone should be required to treat others with respect. And, perhaps more importantly, everyone has an equal opportunity to contribute to the overall success and well-being of the Company.

Our mission at Southwest is "dedication to the highest quality of Customer Service delivered with a sense of warmth, friendliness, individual pride, and Company Spirit." But you don't have to know the mission word for word if you're an Employee—although most can probably quote it to you—as long as you know that the number-one expectation is that you will practice The Golden Rule every day in a loving way.

*"Colleen teaches us that
love is what matters and that
you have to lead with your heart
and know that the heart
will take you in the right direction."*

—Kevin Krone, VP Marketing, Sales, and Distribution

K: How did your Mother teach those values to you?

C: Using your terms, Ken, she constantly caught me doing things right. In fact, I have a great story about my cheerleading Mom.

A few years ago, I received a special airline industry award, the Tony Jannus Award. I was the first female to receive it, so I felt honored. But I don't like having attention called to myself; I just hate the limelight. At this formal gathering, there were some five hundred people in the audience, including all the honchos of the airline and aviation industries. Also in attendance were a few special friends like Kevin and Jackie Freiberg, who together wrote *Nuts*,² a wonderful book about the People of Southwest Airlines. I also invited my baby brother (my other brother had died many years earlier at the tender age of 21) and other relatives, a number of whom I hadn't seen in years. My family isn't very large anymore, so all of them were seated in the front at one table.

I'm not in the habit of making prepared remarks. But Herb Kelleher, the Founder of Southwest Airlines who had received this particular award years earlier, told me that for this event I had to have prepared remarks. It was that important. I fretted for a week. I really worked on these remarks and was finally satisfied. On the night of the awards ceremony, I didn't even dare have a glass of wine. I sat through the big presentation with this award hanging over my head. It felt like it weighed about five hundred pounds. Finally, after I was introduced, I went to the podium to make my remarks. Unbeknownst to me, my brother had snuck in twelve cowbells. As I was about to speak, my whole family stood up and rang those cowbells.

When that happened, my first response—besides getting really choked up—was to think: Oh my gosh, now all these people are going to realize that I am nothing but a hick from the sticks of Vermont! Then I just lost it. I got so choked up that I could not talk, nor could I see the words of my prepared remarks. So I skipped my prepared remarks and just talked from my heart, as I am prone to do. I was emotional as I explained that the rowdy group with the cowbells was my family. Then I told them the significance of the cowbells.

When I was growing up in Vermont, we didn't have much of anything, but we had a lot of love in our family. We lived on top of a hill in a little house. There was really no place to play, so we had to go across to a cemetery that was parallel to our road. When it was time for us to come in from playing in the cemetery, my Mother would ring an old cowbell.

Over the years, this foolish cowbell became like an announcement of anything that was important in our family. For example, if somebody got an A on their report card, Mom would ring the cowbell. Or if we had company coming, my Mother would go out and ring the silly cowbell. The people on the street never knew what was going on, but when they heard the cowbell, they knew something was going on at the Crotty (my maiden name) household! When our house burned down, that foolish cowbell was burned to the point that it didn't work. So Mom kept the old cowbell, got another one that worked, and the tradition went on. She did this until she died.

After that awards night, Herb said that my acceptance was the best speech I'd ever made. My values showed through.

K: I wish I had been there. It must have been a hoot. It sounds like Herb Kelleher has been an important role model for you, too.

C: He has, Ken. In the world of work, I couldn't have had a better teacher, coach, or mentor than Herb. At the beginning of my career when I first met Herb, he had been at his law firm for ten years and had never had a full-time secretary. He just sort of went around and passed out his work, and whoever was available typed it. He also had not opened a single file. That was when I knew that he really needed me. He literally had two offices at this law firm: one that he worked in, and another that had no furniture whatsoever—only files and stacks of paper all over the floor. You cannot imagine what a mess it was. So I thought, as his executive secretary, I would save him, and I guess you would say the rest is history.

Herb and I are so different. It truly is a miracle that we've survived forty-plus years of working together, but I think it's because we're so different. Herb is really brilliant and incredibly visionary. And back then, especially, he would see the vision but he wouldn't have any idea how many steps you had to take to get there; he would just want it done. At that time, I was pragmatic and systematic and quite organized. So that's how our team, or partnership, started.

For many years as Herb's executive secretary, I was so naïve and inexperienced that I don't think I appreciated what he was doing for me when he took me under his wing. All Herb ever really wanted to do was practice law. He didn't want to run an airline. It's just one of those things that evolved and happened. But he had a small group of five people (two lawyers, a law clerk, and me), and anything that he did, we did. I didn't know that that was unusual. If he went to Washington to lobby on something, I was there with him, as well as his law clerk. Whatever he did, we did. He always included us. We were all part of the team and part of the family. Herb was there to serve us, and we were there to serve him.

*“The first word that comes to mind is family.
You know—you treat your family the way
you want to be treated;
you care for them; you respect them.
And everywhere I go in my travels,
I see that in Southwest Airlines Employees.”*

—Southwest Customer Eric Krueger

♥ STOP AND THINK

Take a minute to think about the people who have most influenced your thinking, behavior, and development as a leader. What did they do that impacted you, and where does that show up today in your various roles as a leader? Remember that sometimes negative influencers can be helpful, too. They model what *not* to do as a leader. Have you had any of those kinds of influencers in your life?

SERVANT LEADERSHIP IS LOVE IN ACTION

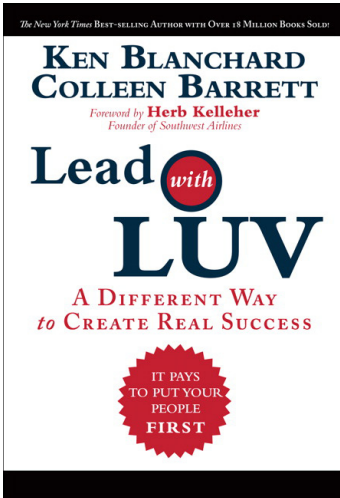
K: Colleen, talking about serving, I think you are a Servant Leader. Servant Leadership is love in action—and that’s what you and Herb have been doing at Southwest for forty years.

C: I appreciate your calling me a Servant Leader, Ken, but when I mention that term to people, they often associate it with soft management. If I were to add that Servant Leadership is love in action, they would freak out! Love isn’t a word that’s used too often in corporate America. In fact, we’ve received some push-back about the very subject of this book.

♥ STOP AND THINK

What was your first reaction when you read “Servant Leadership is love in action?” Did you think about putting the book down, or were you excited to read on? Be honest!

Want to read more about how to achieve breakthrough performance by *leading with love*?



Lead with LUV: A Different Way to Create Real Success

Ken Blanchard and
Colleen Barrett

\$19.99 | 176 pages
ISBN-13: 9780137039746

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“What real leadership is all about.”

WARREN BENNIS

Join **Ken Blanchard**, CO-AUTHOR OF *THE ONE MINUTE MANAGER*, and **Colleen Barrett**, PRESIDENT EMERITUS OF SOUTHWEST AIRLINES in a *remarkable conversation* about leadership, love, and performance.

ONCE, THERE WAS A REMARKABLE PERSON WHO LED WITH LOVE. Her company succeeded where its competitors struggled. Its customers were loyal, its employees loved to work there, and it was profitable year after year, for decades. This loving leader began her career as an executive secretary, yet the company’s founder chose her to succeed him as president. When asked why, he said, “Because she knows how to love people to success.” She is Colleen Barrett, President Emeritus of Southwest Airlines.

LEAD WITH LUV is an extraordinary, wide-ranging conversation between Barrett and the legendary Ken Blanchard, co-author of *The One Minute Manager*. Drawing on personal experience, Barrett and Blanchard reveal why leading with love is the most powerful way to lead and how it can help you achieve truly amazing levels of performance. Discover:

- What “love” means in an organizational context.
- How to use redirection and tough love to handle inappropriate behavior or performance.
- Why servant leadership is love in action and how to make it work.
- How to build the compelling vision and culture that sustains leadership with love.