



**The Player Who  
'Serves' Well Seldom  
Loses - in Business  
it's NO Different**

EVOLVING FROM A BOSS INTO A LEADER

---

# “The Player Who ‘Serves’ Well Seldom Loses - in Business it’s NO Different”

---

## *Evolving from a Boss into a Leader*

Introduction – “Why Should I Evolve?”

Chapter 1 – The First Ripple

Chapter 2 – The Best Employees Are Happy Employees

Chapter 3 – Include Everyone

Chapter 4 – Make Who You Are ( Not What You Sell )  
Your Brand

Chapter 5 – Good or Bad, Everyone Will Know

Chapter 6 – Turn “Settling In” Into a Celebration

Chapter 7 – Your Business, 15 Seconds at a Time

Chapter 8 – The Integration of Celebration

Chapter 9 – Now Do It Again

# Introduction – “Why Should I Evolve?”

---

Howard Schultz was the man at the reins when Starbucks went supernova. Before he joined the Starbucks team, Starbucks was in its humble beginnings phase, having extended only a little beyond the original single storefront in Seattle’s Pike Place Market.

As of today there are over 15,000 Starbucks outlets, servicing a worldwide market.

What does Mr. Schultz consider to be his single greatest contribution to the franchise’s explosion?

He invested in the people working for him. He brought in benefits for part-time employees (unheard of in almost any industry). He made it the company’s goal to hire well-educated people and to pay them more than his competition would in order to defeat the industry’s 300% per year turnover rate.

It probably wasn’t easy. He had to convince a board of directors that it would be worthwhile in the long run (boards being notoriously short-sighted).

But he persisted. He now enjoys an employee retention rate that is over five times that of the industry as a whole.

And Starbucks is..well, *Starbucks*.

*“When you’re surrounded by people who share a passionate commitment around a common purpose, anything is possible.”*

- Howard Schultz

The goal of this book is to help you figure out how to create a company culture, an environment, a vibe, call it what you will, where everyone who is working *for* you wants to work *with* you.

This shift in perspective is twofold. First, your view of your relationship with your employees must change from them being your underlings who are there to serve you, to you being there to serve them.

Second, we want to change your employees' view of you from you just being their boss to you being their leader; the person encouraging them as all of you together work toward a goal shared by everyone and not just yourself.

Your goals will be met quicker.

Word will spread and top people in your industry will want to work for you instead of your competition (even if you can't pay as much as the next company).

You'll enjoy work.

Your employees will enjoy their work.

Your customers or clients and vendors will enjoy working with your happy employees.

It worked for Starbucks. It can work for you.

*"Starbucks is not an advertiser; people think we are a great marketing company, but in fact we spend very little money on marketing and more money on training our people than advertising."*

- Howard Schultz

# 1. The First Ripple

---

Culture isn't something that you can order people to live. It's not something that is cast out from yourself. You have to be there constantly acting to create the vibe you want in your business. Without your constant presence, reinforcement, and tinkering, this new infant culture will die out.

Because it warrants repeating, here is that first tip again – don't order a culture, live it.

If you separate yourself from this feeling that you're trying to create in your company then your employees won't believe in you. "This person is telling us to pull together as a team but then locks himself away in his ivory tower?"

If they don't believe in you they're not going to believe that the new culture actually means anything because you yourself can't be bothered participating in it.

## Get Your Hands Dirty

Have you heard of Dave Neeleman, the president of JetBlue? Every single month he personally gets on a JetBlue flight and helps the stewards and stewardesses give out snacks, pillows, blankets, and answer customer questions. If he doesn't know an answer to a question he takes the number of the customer and promises to have someone get back to them within a day.

How amazing is that? If you're a JetBlue employee and you see the boss doing the exact same work you do then you know that if you have any suggestions that they're going to be listened to seriously. If you're a customer the CEO, and therefore the company itself, isn't some nameless entity that you're powerless against if something goes wrong.

JetBlue has a name and a face.

*"What you can't buy is the loyalty that comes through our dedicated crew members."*

- Dave Neeleman

Now think about your own business – are your employees likely to think that you have their back? Do your employees want to offer amazing service because they want their actions to reflect well on you and the company they work for?

If not, it might be time for you to get out of the command bunker and into the trenches.

## 2. The Best Employees Are Happy Employees

---

The title of this chapter might seem painfully obvious but think about the jobs you've had right from your high school years up until now. Think of your bosses. How many were inspirational people who made you want to make them proud of you?

Now think about how many saw you only as a tool, while they thought it was only their own greatness that really mattered to the business.

The essential follow-up question is *which kind of boss are you?*

We talked in the introduction about how Howard Schultz put employees first and grew the Starbucks' empire.

There is a way to get a leg up on building your company's culture, to give you a head start – hire nice people.

It sounds super-simple, and it is.

But what if there's a super-intelligent person applying for a job – but they're also incredibly snarky and miserable to be around? Their competition for the position is a very nice person who doesn't have nearly the resume of the first applicant. Wouldn't I do better with Mr. Smarty-pants?

We can't answer this one for you for sure, but consider this – what effect is that super-smart person's attitude going to have on the rest of your employees? When you hire someone you're not just hiring that person – you're hiring every interaction they will ever have with you, your other employees, and with your customers.

Will your other employees suffer because you went with the snarky, miserable person? If so, then you will suffer, even if you never interact directly with the person again.

The second applicant on the other hand may very well act like a shot of adrenaline, boosting everyone else's confidence and enjoyment at work –

including your own. That means a boost to your company's productivity and a boost to your bottom line.

In the end you'll have to make the decision based on your own needs at the time, but we know who we'd rather be working with for the next five years.

*"The people of Southwest have always been my pride, my joy and my love. Their indomitable dedication and esprit de corps have taken Southwest from a three-airplane dream to a 500-airplane reality."*

*"Your employees come first. And if you treat your employees right, guess what? Your customers come back, and that makes your shareholders happy. Start with employees and the rest follows from that."*

- Herb Kelleher – Founder and former CEO of Southwest Airlines



## 3. Include Everyone

---

So you've hired good people and you work alongside them, showing that you're willing and able to participate in their working lives, and that they're able to participate in yours.

Now it's time for you to reap the rewards of your hard work. You do this by sharing your vision of your business.

### Set Your Goals

The first step of course is having a vision at all. It's not enough for you and your company to exist – you have to have specific goals if you want to grow. If you don't have a specific goal in mind yet, make one right now. Pull out a calendar and write down on the date a year from today the way you most want your company to have grown.

Try to be specific. "Bigger," is not a specific-enough goal for your company. "To have 100 new clients" is much better. Or maybe it's to have a shiny new office space. Perhaps you want to have 5 more cars in your rental fleet. Or to be able to add a specific service to your menu of offerings that you just can't handle yet because you don't have the people or necessary equipment.

After you get that one-year (or two-year, or five-year) goal in place, break it down into manageable steps from month to month. If your goal is a certain number of new clients, then this month's subgoal might be to get a professional website up and running.

Not only do such subgoals give you something to shoot for, but they also help you to see what activities are not making the best use of your time (activities not geared towards helping you achieve your goal). You'll be able to delegate and make a far more efficient use of your time.

### Share Your Vision

Once you have your calendar more or less set up it's time for the most important part – *share your vision*. With everyone. Make your dream everyone's dream.

This is how you transform your employees' employment from a job into a calling.

Make your vision as easy to understand as possible. Just to be clear – a goal is a milestone you want your company to achieve. Your vision is what you want your company to be. Your goals are the building blocks of your vision.

## Put It In Writing

Have you ever seen a business with a kind of worker slogan on its walls? Think about that famous police slogan – “To serve and protect.” That’s a vision of a perfect form of a police force. It’s both a statement about what the police force stands for, but also a guiding light for its members when they’re in doubt about how they should act or what they should do in a certain situation.

It’s easy to remember and it explains how a police officer in pursuit of police officer-y perfection should act.

Get your vision down somewhere it can be seen and studied. A poster. An email to all of your employees. Make it short, clear, and concise.

## Live the Vision

Anyone can write a slogan on a whiteboard. But if that’s all you do then it’s going to be quickly forgotten or be a source of much eye-rolling amongst your employees.

A boss writes the vision down and snaps his or her fingers – get to it! A leader on the other hand becomes the living embodiment of that vision and gives their employees the tools they need to make the vision come true.

You get your people to invest in that vision by you investing in them. Here are 5 methods to do just that:

1. **Pay accordingly.** Your goal with your pay isn’t to get the cheapest people possible. That just leads to ongoing turnovers (which lead to hiring costs, training costs, severance pay, etc..). Your goal with your hiring practices is to be the company that is the sexiest business in your industry for people to work at. It’s about what you can give your employees as opposed as to what you can exploit from them.

2. **Make yourself available.** It's no use sharing your vision and then not being open to great new ideas that you may spark in your people.
3. **Delegate.** Let your people make some real decisions. The more responsibilities they have, the more they're going to feel like they're really contributing to the business. This, by the way, is one way to compensate your employees if you can't pay as much as your competition – give them real responsibility in the fortunes of the business instead of their being just another cog in the machine somewhere else.
4. **Pay for Training.** Nothing is going to show an employee that you believe in them as much as investing in their future. You'll be showing that you want them to stick around and that you believe they're worth you investing real money in their careers.
5. **Share the Windfall.** Tie your employees' fortunes directly to the fortunes of the business. Who isn't going to put more effort into a company that compensates accordingly?

If your company feels like a family then you're doing something right. Happy employees make for happy customers, and happy customers make for happy investors.

## 4. Make Who You Are (Not What You Sell) Your Brand

---

Have you heard of Zappos.com? They're an online clothing and shoe retailer. It was started by one man, Nick Swinmurn, in 1999 who grew frustrated when he found there wasn't a major online retailer that specialises in shoes.

Ten short years later Zappos had exploded to a gross revenue of \$1 billion. Demand was so great that in order to keep orders heading out on time they had to restructure into 10 separate companies all under the Zappos umbrella.

Here is their vision as stated on their website:

- One day, 30% of all retail transactions in the US will be online.
- People will buy from the company with the best service and the best selection.
- Zappos.com will be that online store.

That's a vision that's easy to understand and easy to share.

If you go to the "Jobs" section of their website you see the attitude they want to instill in their employees summed up in 10 points:

1. Deliver WOW Through Service.
2. Embrace and Drive Change.
3. Create Fun and a Little Weirdness.
4. Be Adventurous, Creative and Open-minded.
5. Pursue Growth and Learning.
6. Build Open and Honest Relationships with Communication.
7. Build a Positive Team and Family Spirit.
8. Do More With Less.
9. Be Passionate and Determined.
10. Be Humble.

The trick is to make sure that words like the above 10 points don't just appear on some poster somewhere but are actually embodied in the company's culture.

Zappos does that right at the beginning, in the hiring phase. They conduct a “cultural fit interview” which accounts for *half* the consideration of whether or not the candidate is hired.

If someone is hired but after a week it seems like the job isn't a good fit then they're offered \$2000 to quit. Only 2 or 3% have ever taken it – and those that stay are even happier and more committed – they realise they've found a job where they aren't in it just for the money.

Raises are earned by passing tests and having a record that indicates ability – no office politics are involved.

All of this culture is directly passed on to the customers.

*“Our number one priority is company culture. Our whole belief is that if you get the culture right, most of the other stuff like delivering great customer service or building a long-term enduring brand will just happen naturally on its own.”*

*“Zappos is a customer service company that just happens to sell shoes.”*

*- Tony Hsieh – Zappos CEO*

Some of Zappos customer service stories have gone viral over the years. There was an incident where a customer's mother died so the company sent the customer flowers. Another involves talking with a customer for over 8 hours.

It pays off – 75% of Zappos' customers are repeat customers. They're consistently on “Best Companies To Work For” lists including those of Fortune and Entrepreneur.com (which means they're going to have the best people applying to work for them.)

In a talk he gave at Stanford Hsieh emphasises that he doesn't think about creating a “work-life separation” or a “work-life balance” like other companies do; instead he says that work *is* life. Not in the sense that it is all-consuming and leaves room for nothing else, but rather that it takes up a significant portion of people's lives.

He gets the most out of his people by working hard to make his employees' work/lives enjoyable. He makes sure people are working with other people that they enjoy being around.

As your business expands there's going to come a point where you can't hire everyone yourself, it will simply take too much time. So you want to make sure your business' culture is something you get to work on as early as possible so that the people who eventually do your hiring for you are still hiring the kinds of people you want to be around.

Just so we're clear – you don't have to use Zappos' particular values. Figure out what values affect you the most and gear your own business to live and breathe them. Your customers and clients will notice – and come back for more.

It's not *what* you sell. Lots of people are going to be selling what you're selling. It's *how* you sell it that truly matters. Be a customer service company that just happens to sell \_\_\_\_\_.

Added bonus - Good word of mouth will save you a *ton* of money in marketing.

## 5. Good or Bad, Everyone Will Know

---

In the internet age every single action your business takes has the chance to make ripples, or even go viral. Obviously you want your good deeds to be the ones that spread, not your mistakes.

However, you are human, your employees are human (unless you're reading this later than the year 2113, in which case *Greetings Robot Overlords!*), and you're going to make mistakes.

Mistakes are fine. What is not fine is acting like it's not your fault, trying to push the blame onto your customer, or trying to act like nothing's wrong at all. That's how negative notice starts to spread from one dissatisfied customer posting on their Facebook, the bad word spreading to their friends, and then their friends' friends, and so on.

In fact, mistakes can be an opportunity. For one thing, they help you identify where something could use some tweaking in your business. Maybe you could be more efficient in your delivery system. Or perhaps you'll learn, if the same complaint comes up multiple times, that it's not marketing or customer service at fault, but your product itself that needs to be fixed up.

Second, you can turn that negative comment on Facebook or Twitter into a much bigger positive. If you respond quickly to the complaint, apologise, and then hustle like crazy to make things right for that particular customer (or reward their patience by offering more than what they paid for) you'll show that customer (and all the people following the exchange on social media) that you're a customer service oriented company.

### What to Do if You Receive a Complaint:

1. **Take a breath.** Even if the customer is completely harsh you're not going to win more customers through this exchange if you go into attack mode. Criticisms can hurt, but remember, potential customers are waiting for you on the far side of this problem.
2. **Look at it from their point of view.** The only way you're really going to make yourself happy in this situation is by making the customer happy.

So be sure you're clear on why they're upset before you get in touch with them. If it's not clear then go over their points with them.

3. **Say that you're sorry.** Even if it turns out that the complaint is all smoke and mirrors opening with an apology diffuses some of the anger and tension.
4. **Make things clear to the customer.** If there have been mistakes on either your part or on the customer's explain what was meant to happen and how things went wrong. Clarity is a further way to diffuse tension, plus it explains to onlookers what's going on.
5. **Steer the customer (and onlookers) towards a happy outcome.** If you're to blame, or partly to blame, don't just rectify the situation, throw in a bonus to soothe the wronged party. You're looking for a reaction from the customer (and onlookers) that is something along the lines of "WOW! This company really cares!" instead of, "Well, yeah, I guess it's alright then."
6. **Fix the problem.**
7. **Follow through.** You want to remind your customer (and the exchange onlookers) that you really made an effort to make things better. So shoot the offended party a follow-through email or letter thanking them for showing you where your business had a hiccup and how because of them you're now a better company that is now able to serve its customers in an even better manner.

Aside from dealing with complaints, what are some other ways you can add some pop to your customers' or clients' exchanges with you?

Is there a freebie you can throw in for first-time customers alongside a little "Thank-you" card?

Can you show someone how to do some light maintenance on your equipment even though you might make more money if you were called in to service it? (You'll make more money in the long run by having return customers and by having existing customers recommend you to others.)

Can you serve beverages or tasty little snacks if you're the kind of business that has a waiting room?



These little touches have an exponential effect on your clients remembering you. They come expecting good service, they'll return because you offer that little something more.

## 6. Turn “Settling In” Into a Celebration

---

Imagine arriving at a new job. Someone points out your cubicle, says, “Sit there”, and then you’re left on your own.

Not much of a welcome, right?

Now imagine if you arrive on your first day at the job and everyone in your department is up on their feet to shake your hand and introduce themselves. Maybe there are flowers on your desk or a gift certificate for the local eatery where everyone grabs their lunch.

A bigger help is to have someone mentor that new employee. It will help them feel less anxiety about trying to do things right when they first get on the job, plus they won’t feel alone in a group of people who otherwise all know each other.

Even bigger still – what if every new hire gets the chance to meet you in their first day or two? That can be a huge deal for a new recruit, and it doesn’t cost you anything (unless of course you would have to travel, in which case the biggest gun at that location takes your place for the moment).

The greetings don’t have to stop at the business’ door – if you send a little something to their home chances are you’re going to make a good first impression with the employee’s significant other or someone important in their life.

Greet Street, a multimedia greeting card company, greets new employees by having them unwrap a large box that contains their desk and chair. Also, there are no formal titles, so the employees get to make up anything they want. The two co-founders’ titles are “Creator of Chaos” and “Creator of Substance.”

Persistence Software sets up a basket of breakfast food near the desk of a new hire and sends out an email to all their employees inviting them to stop by for some food and an introduction.

MetaSolv Software has a keg party every Friday during happy hour and new recruits are asked to work the kegs.

These little bits of extra goodness can pack a heck of a punch when it comes to making a lasting first impression with either employees (or customers). Think about when you first started buying from.. well, anywhere. How many businesses did something as simple as slip in a little bit of cardstock with a welcoming “Thank you” note?

Probably not many, right? This means that if you do it it's really going to stand out.

## 7. Your Business, 15 Seconds at a Time

---

How long on average does a customer interact with a representative of your business? Is it an 8-hour phone call or a 15-second interaction across a bar or counter?

However long it takes, during that time your employee is your entire business to that customer.

That means you need to empower each of your employees to make the exchange as amazing as possible. If they have the ability to do something that will make the customer feel like they're having an awesome experience, the customer will come back (and recommend you to others).

But if your employee is hamstrung in decision-making or their ability to adjust things to the customer's benefit then the experience obviously diminishes, and it may become a time-suck as the employee has to kick the customer's request up the interoffice food chain in order to get anything done.

Here's a simple psychological truth – if someone has an experience that feels good they'll seek to repeat it. If the experience is bad they'll do their best to avoid having to endure it again.

### Empowering Your Employees

There are basically 3 categories of obstacles that can get in the way of steering your business to this level of customer service:

1. Work processes that no longer work.
2. Infrastructure (e.g. computer programs) that doesn't do what you need it to.
3. People who won't get with the program.

(All of this assumes that your service or product itself is top-notch and is not the problem. The what you sell of your business is fine, it's the how you sell it that needs a polish.)

Your first step is to identify the problem(s). To do this head right to the experts – your employees. Find out what struggles they’re having, what’s getting in the way of their delivering gold star service.

You can also go to the customers, asking them to fill out little survey cards if it’s not too much of a bother. Or even, as the CEO or big boss, talk to some of the customers yourself (remember Dave Neeleman of JetBlue in Chapter 1?).

Added bonus – you can even make these efforts work as marketing. Make it noticeable that you’re putting some serious effort into crafting a better experience

Maybe you have one gigantic problem. Or maybe it’s a thousand-and-one little problems. Either way, you now have new goals and subgoals to add to your calendar.

The big question you always need to be asking is, “How are we making our customers feel?” Those feelings are what they’re going to base their purchases on and whether or not they give you their repeat business.

That feeling is your brand.

## Don’t Be Afraid to Ask

There’s a somewhat infamous story of how the fine people at Ritz-Carlton thought they’d win over extra customer loyalty by spiffing up their bathrooms. They spent truckloads of money on designs and materials including green marble that they imported from Italy.

There was only one big problem – the customers didn’t like it. A survey done after the new installations showed that visitors wanted the bathrooms to be pure white so that they could see the cleanliness of the room.

Whoops.

All they had to do was ask. The same goes for you.

You’re not going to know what your customers want. Not everything, at least. It’s impossible. So do what the Ritz-Carlton people did after the bathroom debacle – put customer satisfaction at the top of your to-do list.

Work to get customer surveys into the “very satisfied” or “extremely satisfied” categories. If they’re not, then work to find out what you can do to bump them up.

Every time an error in customer service is made, even a tiny little one-time thing, mark it down and see what you can do to ensure that it doesn’t happen again.

Chart successful problem-solving techniques so that all of your employees have a guideline they can follow when a similar problem arises (leaving them wiggle-room for slight differences).

And when one of your employees goes out of their way to really help a customer out celebrate it. That celebration makes everyone feel good and acts as a learning experience for every other employee.

To sum up, the most important words that will ever come out of your mouth as your business’ leader are, “What can I do to help you?” Aimed at either employees or customers, it’s going to make a world of difference.

Ask the question tomorrow. And again next week. And next month and next year. There’s always something you can be doing to make your business experience better.

## 8. The Integration of Celebration

---

Speaking of celebrations – why do it? After all, you’re already paying people to do their jobs, isn’t that celebration enough?

First, you can celebrate accomplishments (or just the fact that you’re all working together) because you genuinely want to make your people happy. That’s a pretty good reason in and of itself.

Second, it pays off.

While it will pay off for any size of company, making an employee feel like a rockstar can really pay off for start-ups and smaller companies that face big-company competition. The competition will always come sniffing around for your employees, especially the ones who are shining especially bright.

You can’t necessarily out-pay the competition, and/or you can’t offer bigger benefits.

The only arrow in your quiver might be that you’re able to make your employees feel like they’re more than just employees - they’re part of a family.

Even better, they’re part of a family that loves having them around. They may get more money at the other company, but if they’re just a small cog in a big machine or they end up in a sea of bland or even antagonistic co-workers they’re going to regret ever leaving you and want to come back.

Your people work for money, but they live for positive recognition.

Your customers will come back for the awesome service that results from interacting with employees that love their company.

Richard Branson, that Virgin guy, relates how his empire began with the one low-income record shop in a post to Entrepreneur.com:

*“After the launch, the business’s finances were pretty tight -- at the end of each week, we’d have to figure out if we had earned enough money to pay the rent and the staff - but this didn’t bother us. We were having such a great time that we kept going, mostly because we just liked hanging out together.”*

*“Since we were happy, we treated our Virgin Records customers like they were part of the family. And since our customers loved their experience, they kept coming back for more. Before we knew it, we had opened more shops and we were selling more records.”*

*“As Virgin grew, our ‘serious fun’ approach became a driving force for our enterprise.”*

If you crave some numbers the [2015 Employee Recognition Report](#) by the Society for Human Resource Management and Globoforce surveyed 823 HR pros to see how employee recognition affected their companies:

- 68% say recognition made a positive impact on employee retention rates.
- 84% said that employee relationships were improved.
- 86% said that the employees’ happiness was increased.
- 90% said that it positively impacted employee engagement.

## **There Ain’t No Party Like a [Your Company Here] Party**

So now you want to integrate these celebrations as part of your business’ culture – but what should you do?

Southwest Airlines, famous for their friendly staff, has a wall of memorabilia donated by staff. It’s completely composed of items that signify special moments for the employees – sort of a Planet Hollywood kind of display created by happy employees.

You can reward milestones. Groupon awards employees a track jacket after their first full year, and adds star patches for each additional year.

Influence & Co. (a content marketing agency) reward employees who make significant contributions with “The Belt” – a wrestling-championship style belt.

Zappos has reinvented the old performance bonus routine – they let employees reward other employees with a \$50 bonus once a month. How motivating is that?



If you don't have a lot of money you can get a little weird – Red Velvet Events (an event-planning company) has a little troll doll that the current doll-holder passes off to another employee during their weekly meeting, recapping the recipients' good deeds that previous week.

Also, don't think you have to reward only the big successes. Reward the risk-takers, even if they fail. Those risk-takers are going to be the ones who make some amazing break-through eventually that will put your business ahead of your competition.

You can even make an effort to make the people you reject feel good about themselves. If someone interviews for a job with you but doesn't get it, you can still make them feel decent about their efforts by sending them a customised thank-you letter, and maybe a voucher for one of your products (hopefully they won't take that as you rubbing it in).

Not only is it classy, but you're going to be making a huge impression on that person that most of your competitors will not equal – if this is how you treat people you say “no” to, how awesome must it be to actually work for you?

Help out an employee who has fallen on hard times.

Be generous with parental leave.

Get a little personal with your employees. Can you imagine how fantastic it would be for a Virgin employee to turn around to find the Richard Branson there, come to shake his or her hand and to say thanks for making the company look good? They're going to talk about that moment forever.

Every single little bit of recognition you dish out grants an exponential return from your business' most important asset – your people.

## 9. Now Do It Again

---

Traditional book publishing houses should have seen it coming. Actually, they probably did see that there was the smell of change in the digital-scented air.. but they did nothing about it. They thought their old way was good enough and they flapped a collective dismissive hand at the thought of online ordering and e-books.

Amazon now owns about 65% of all ebook sales. Apple owns a significant chunk of the remaining balance. Now the traditional publishers spend most of their time trying to demonise Amazon instead of whipping up their own (preferably superior) delivery systems.

*“Your success in life isn’t based on your ability to simply change. It is based on your ability to change faster than your competition, customers and business.”*

- Mark Sanborn, Leadership

You’ve transformed yourself from a boss into a leader by building a culture within your company that has your employees rarin’ to go. They take pride in their work, and they’re deliriously happy to be a member of your business family.

Now how do you translate that into results that grow your business?

First, you need to recognise that a good start is just that – it’s a start. The work that you put into making your employees feel like rock stars is never going to end – it’s only going to change. You need to be constantly on the look-out for ways in which you can make your employees’ working lives better.

At least some members of your esteemed competition will certainly be constantly evolving their relationship with their team, and if at some point that relationship looks sexier than the one you’ve established with your people there goes your high retention rate.

Second, you need to focus that good will. We’ve already discussed how – by setting up a calendar with your goals and subgoals.

Checking off items on a to-do list can be a tremendous source of morale for your team. It also makes it much easier to see your business' growth.

Make your goals as simple and as easy to understand as possible. Monitor your progress – if progress is slow turn to the people working on that particular problem and ask them the big question – “What can I do to help?” There may be barriers in their way that the big boss can help eliminate.

Monitor your competition. See what they're doing right. And instead of complaining about it, set out to not only do the same, but do it *better* (unlike the traditional book publishing companies).

Get those customer surveys rolled out and make a rating of “Excellent” your goal in all categories.

How quickly do you ship orders or deliver a service? Can you do it faster?

Do you have enough inventory to cover orders or are you always back-ordering?

Do you have enough people to deliver services or are you always keeping customers/clients waiting?

How fast does your company answer the phone?

What percentage of your business is made up of return customers?

All of these questions (and more) are measurable. They all represent goals that you can use to excite and unify your people if you're a leader instead of a boss.

Recognise the hard work of your employees. Reward them. Help them remove barriers to their (and your company's) success.

And then do it again. And again.

A leader is always just getting started.