



Life Lessons on Leadership, Coaching and Culture

Keith Hertling

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Keith Hertling's *Life Lessons on Leadership, Coaching and Culture* offers business and educational leadership advice from a very personal perspective.

Hertling shows how his own life experiences and the mentors he had along the way contributed to his leadership beliefs. This approach lends an intimacy that makes the book more of a memoir than a book about leadership. It also employs a combination of sports stories and analogies, biblical references, and examples taken primarily from Hertling's work with Jersey Mike's Franchising Systems to illustrate the role of a leader and coach and to explore corporate culture. This somewhat odd amalgamation often works—Hertling's storytelling ability is the glue that keeps the disparate parts together.

Topically, mentoring and corporate culture anchor the book. "The power of example should be in the toolbox of every coach/teacher who is cultivating moral leadership," writes Hertling. This is demonstrated time and again in stories about coaches and monks at Benedictine College who mentored the author, and the ways in which the author mentors others. Particularly engrossing is Hertling's account of coaching a local chapter of Special Olympics, which helped him appreciate that every child really is special.

Corporate culture is illustrated primarily through the culture of Jersey Mike's, whose mantra is "Great culture attracts people. People are our purpose, and leaders take care of their people." Examples of how Hertling reinforced such a culture come in the retelling of how he opened up his own Jersey Mike's franchise, as well as how he coached at the corporate level. The book explains how Jersey Mike's supports its people-oriented culture through practices such as asking store franchisees to select a local charity for their "Month of Giving" and "Day of Giving." Any business can apply similar ideas, and Jersey Mike's "7 Principles of Success," included in the book, will undoubtedly be useful to other restaurant chains.

The writing style is engaging and inspirational. The book's last chapter, "Final Coaching Thoughts," includes personal photographs, as well as difficult-to-read reproductions of index cards with words of wisdom from Hertling's college years.

While the book explores the importance of leadership and coaching in general, it is clearly a public relations vehicle for Jersey Mike's, whose logo is on the front cover. The chapter "Qualities of a Sub-Above Coach" incorporates the chain's slogan, "A Sub Above." The qualities themselves (encouragement, compassion, listening, inspiration, integrity, discipline, love, and humility) are all important, but here they are narrowly focused, if still meaningful and sincere.

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BARRY SILVERSTEIN (September 10, 2018)

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