

TRILLION DOLLAR COACH

— A BOOK BY —

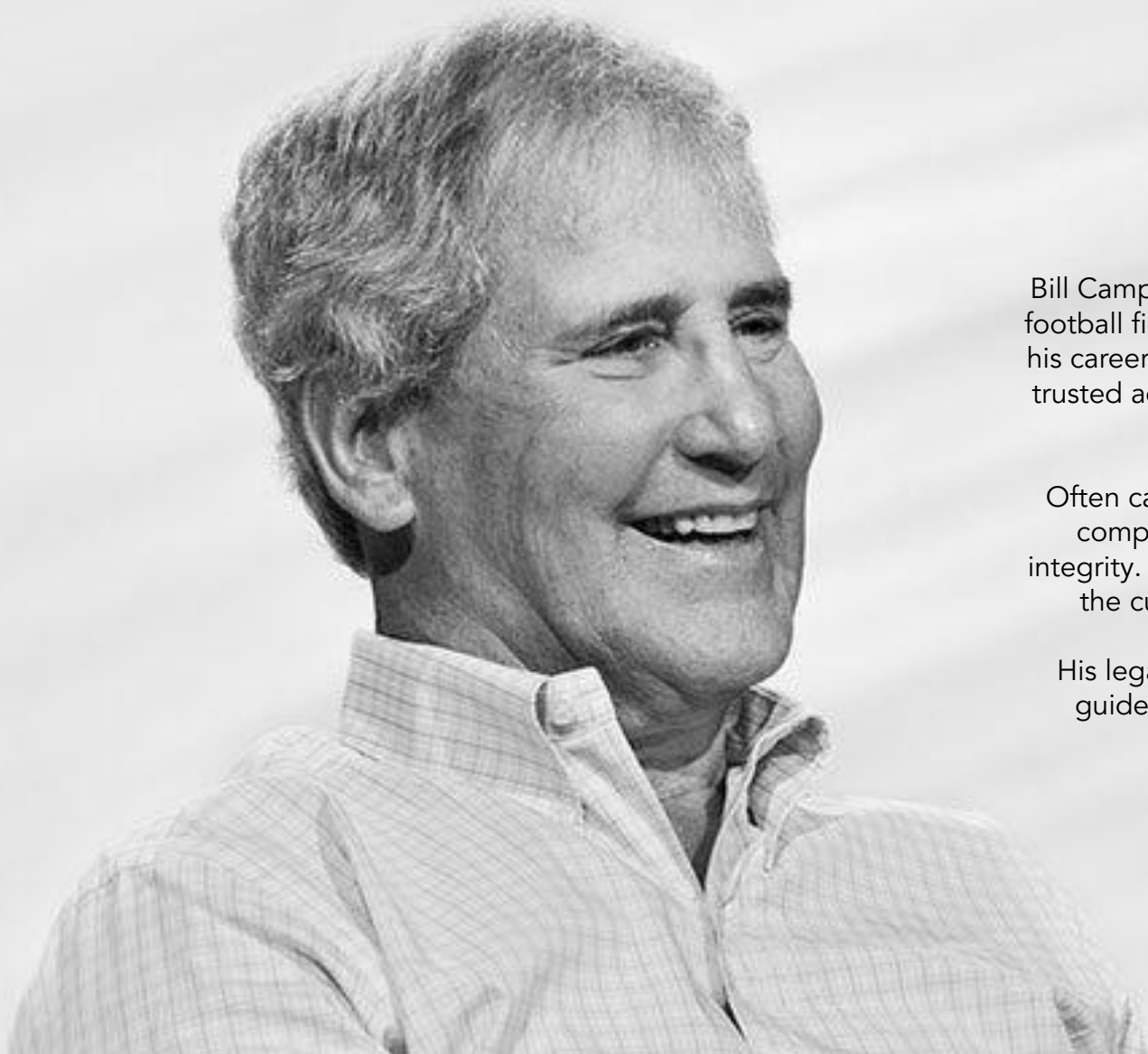
ERIC SCHMIDT

JONATHAN ROSENBERG

ALAN EAGLE



- BILL CAMPBELL



BILL CAMPBELL

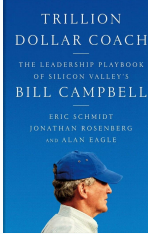
Bill Campbell was a coach in every sense of the word, not just on the football field, but in the boardrooms of Silicon Valley. After beginning his career at Kodak and later leading Claris and Intuit, he became the trusted advisor to some of the most influential technology leaders of our time.

Often called “The Coach of Silicon Valley,” Bill believed that great companies are built on trust, teamwork, and uncompromising integrity. He mentored leaders at Apple and Google, quietly shaping the culture of innovation that transformed the modern world.

His legacy is not written in code, but in people; in the leaders he guided, the teams he strengthened, and the human values he championed above all else.

1940 - 2016

TRILLION DOLLAR COACH — A CEO SUMMARY



Bill Campbell's Leadership Philosophy

1 Opening Reflection — Why Coaching Is the Job

Bill said leadership never came from a title. A title might make someone a manager, but only people make someone a leader. Leadership, in Bill's view, accrued quietly over time and earned through trust, service, and the daily act of making others better. He believed CEOs spent too much time talking about strategy and not enough time ensuring the company was well run. Bill paid attention to how meetings were conducted, whether people felt safe speaking up, whether hard truths were surfaced, and whether teams were learning forward instead of assigning blame. Bill described great coaches as people who lie awake at night thinking about how to help others grow. They didn't manage tasks; they painted relationships. That, he believed, was the real work of leadership whether on the field or in the boardroom.

2 Core Leadership Frameworks

Bill never taught abstract theory. His coaching followed repeatable patterns and disciplines leaders could practice every day.

Framework 1: T.R.U.S.T. — The Foundation of Performance, Bill believed trust was the most important currency in any relationship, especially at the CEO level.

- T – Take time to know the person beyond the résumé
- R – Respect shown through listening
- U – Unfiltered honesty delivered with care
- S – Safety to speak, disagree, and debate
- T – Team-first mindset over ego

Bill had always observed: psychological safety, rooted in trust, is the defining trait of high-performing teams—not talent, personality, or experience .

Framework 2: M.E.E.T.I.N.G.S. — Where Leadership Shows Up, Bill insisted that meetings were the CEO's most powerful operating tool.

- M – Make 1:1s sacred
- E – Every voice heard
- E – Early human connection
- T – Tension surfaced, not avoided
- I – Information shared openly
- N – No phones, no disengagement
- G – Good process over perfect answers
- S – Speed and decisiveness

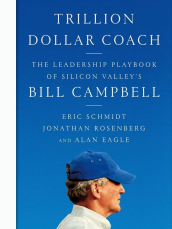
He often said: Get the 1:1 right. Get the staff meeting right. If you do that, you're running the company

Framework 3: C.O.A.C.H. — How Leaders Grow People, To Bill, coaching was not optional—it was the job.

- C – Candor plus caring
- O – Observe patterns and tension
- A – Ask open, respectful questions
- C – Correct in the moment
- H – Help people believe they can do more



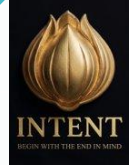
TRILLION DOLLAR COACH — A CEO SUMMARY



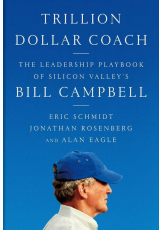
Bill defined a coach as someone who tells you what you don't want to hear, helps you see what you don't want to see, so you can become who you already know you could be

3 Key Leadership Principles

1	Leadership Is Earned, Not Claimed	Bill said respect cannot be demanded and it must accrue. Leaders who serve their teams are the ones people choose to follow	T.R.U.S.T.
2	Put People First to Drive Results	Bill believed positive human values generate positive business outcomes. Ignoring this connection, he warned, undermines long-term success	T.R.U.S.T.
3	Great Managers Create Leaders	In Bill's view, leadership emerged from management excellence. When managers help people flourish, leadership follows naturally	C.O.A.C.H.
4	Candor Only Works When People Know You Care	Bill practiced radical honesty but always grounded in care. People trusted that tough feedback was meant to help them grow.	C.O.A.C.H.
5	Coach in the Moment	Bill rejected delayed feedback. He believed real coaching happened immediately while the context was still alive	C.O.A.C.H.
6	Trust Creates Psychological Safety	Bill's experience aligned with later research: teams perform best when people feel safe to speak honestly without fear	T.R.U.S.T.



TRILLION DOLLAR COACH — A CEO SUMMARY

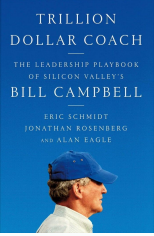


3 Key Leadership Principles Continued.

7	Tell Stories, Not Instructions	Bill coached leaders to stop prescribing solutions. Instead, they should explain the why, allowing teams to figure out the how.	C.O.A.C.H.
8	Encourage Debate, Not Silence	Bill believed healthy teams argue openly. Leaders must frame conflict as debate to surface the best ideas	M.E.E.T.I.N.G.S.
9	Decide and Move Forward	Bill warned that indecision often caused more harm than a wrong decision. A strong process builds confidence and momentum	M.E.E.T.I.N.G.S.
10	Focus on Problems, Not Features	Bill coached leaders to stop prescribing solutions. Instead, they should explain the why, allowing teams to figure out the how.	C.O.A.C.H.
11	Coach in the Moment	Bill famously told product leaders to describe customer problems and context—never dictate features. Teams, he believed, always build better solutions	M.E.E.T.I.N.G.S.
12	Winning Is Collective and Ethical	Bill often reminded leaders that extraordinary outcomes occur when no one cares who gets the credit	T.R.U.S.T.



EXECUTIVE MEMORY GUIDE



1

LEADERSHIP IS
SERVICE TO THE
TEAM, NOT
PERSONAL
AUTHORITY

3

MEETINGS REVEAL
LEADERSHIP
QUALITY MORE
THAN STRATEGY
DOCUMENTS

5

DEBATE IDEAS
FIERCELY WHILE
SUPPORTING
PEOPLE FULLY

7

FRAME PROBLEMS
CLEARLY AND LET
TEAMS SOLVE THEM

9

WIN AS A TEAM OR
DON'T WIN AT ALL

2

TRUST ENABLES
SPEED, HONESTY,
AND INNOVATION

4

COACH WITH
CANDOR AND
CARE, IN REAL TIME

6

DECIDE AND MOVE;
PROCESS CREATES
CONFIDENCE

8

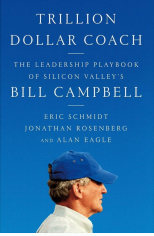
PAIR PEOPLE
INSTEAD OF
DICTATING TASKS

10

BILL'S FINAL
REMINDER: THE
ROSES ARE YOUR
PEOPLE



BILL'S FRAMEWORK FOR 1:1s AND REVIEWS



1

PERFORMANCE ON JOB REQUIREMENTS

- Could be sales figures
- Could be product delivery or product milestones
- Could be customer feedback or product quality
- Could be budget numbers

2

RELATIONSHIP WITH PEER GROUPS

- (This is critical for company integration and cohesiveness)
- Product and Engineering
 - Marketing and Product
 - Sales and Engineering

3

MANAGEMENT/ LEADERSHIP

- Are you guiding/ coaching your people?
- Are you weeding out the bad ones?
- Are you working hard at hiring?
- Are you able to get your people to do heroic things?

4

INNOVATION (BEST PRACTICES)

- Are you constantly moving ahead... thinking about how to continually get better?
- Are you constantly evaluating new technologies, new products, new practices?
- Do you measure yourself against the best in the industry/world?



THE WHAT NEXT? DECISION FOR SENIOR LEADERS

John Donahoe faced a situation somewhat similar to Eric's when he stepped down as CEO of eBay in 2015: successful businessman, past age fifty, kids grown What do you do next? John tackled this question by interviewing dozens of people who were older than him but had retained plenty of vitality, asking them how they had approached similar transitions and how they stayed engaged in their later-in-life careers. The answers:

1

BE CREATIVE

Your post-fifty years should be your most creative time. You have wisdom of experience and freedom to apply it where you want. Avoid metaphors such as you are on the "back nine." This denigrates the impact you can have.

2

DON'T BE A DILETTANTE

Don't just do a portfolio of things. Whatever you get involved with, have accountability and consequence. Drive it.

3

FIND PEOPLE WHO HAVE VITALITY

Surround yourself with them; engage with them. Often, they will be younger.

4

APPLY YOUR GIFTS

Figure out what you are uniquely good at, what sets you apart. And understand the things inside you that give you a sense of purpose. Then apply them.

5

DON'T WASTE TIME WORRYING ABOUT THE FUTURE

Allow serendipity to play a role. Most of the turning points in life cannot be redirected or controlled.



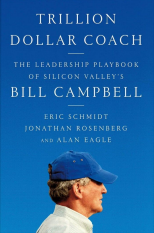
THE JOURNEY OF A
TRILLION-DOLLAR
COACH

Case study - Apple Inc.



INTENT
BEYOND WITH THE END IN MIND

APPLE INC. IN TRILLION DOLLAR COACH — KEY STORY & LESSONS



Bill Campbell's relationship with Apple is one of the book's most powerful case studies. It centers less on product strategy and more on leadership, trust, and human judgment at the highest level.

1

BILL CAMPBELL & STEVE JOBS

- Bill Campbell became a trusted coach and confidant to Steve Jobs after Jobs returned to Apple in 1997.
- Their relationship was intense and honest—Bill wasn't afraid to challenge Jobs directly, even when Jobs was at his most difficult.
- Campbell helped Jobs grow from a brilliant but volatile leader into a more empathetic, people-centered CEO.

2

THE APPLE BOARDROOM DYNAMIC

- Campbell played a critical role in Apple's executive team and board culture, often acting as the emotional and moral anchor.
- He believed the CEO's job was to build a great team, not to be the smartest person in the room.
- Meetings at Apple were known for rigor, debate, and clarity, but also for respect—something Campbell actively reinforced.

3

COACHING PHILOSOPHY IN ACTION

At Apple, Campbell emphasized:

- People over strategy: Get the right people, and the strategy will follow.
- Trust and candor: Say hard things directly, with care.
- Accountability with compassion: High standards don't require being inhumane.
- One-on-one relationships: Coaching happens privately, not performatively.

4

IMPACT ON APPLE'S SUCCESS

- Campbell helped Jobs and other leaders (like Tim Cook) think through people decisions, succession, and leadership behavior.
- His influence shaped Apple's internal culture during its rise to becoming one of the most valuable companies in the world.
- Even after Jobs' death, Campbell remained deeply respected at Apple—Tim Cook called him "the conscience of Silicon Valley."

CORE TAKEAWAY FROM THE APPLE STORY

Great companies are built by great teams, and great teams are built by leaders who genuinely care about people and *are brave enough to hold them to high standards.*



CORE ATTRIBUTES - GOOGLE

For the past 12 months, to what extent do you agree/ disagree that each person:

- 1 Displayed extraordinary in-role performance.
- 2 Exemplified world-class leadership.
- 3 Achieved outcomes that were in the best interest of both Google as a whole and his/her organization.
- 4 Expanded the boundaries of what is possible for Google through innovation and/or application of best practices.
- 5 Collaborated effectively with peers (for example, worked well together, resolved barriers/issues with others) and championed the same in his/her team.
- 6 Contributed effectively during senior team meetings (for example, was prepared, participated actively, listened well, was open and respectful to others, disagreed constructively).

PRODUCT LEADER ATTRIBUTES

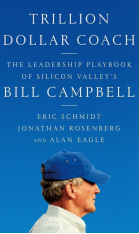
For the past 12 months, to what extent do you agree/ disagree that each person demonstrated exemplary leadership in the following areas:

- 1 Product Vision
- 2 Product Quality
- 3 Product Execution

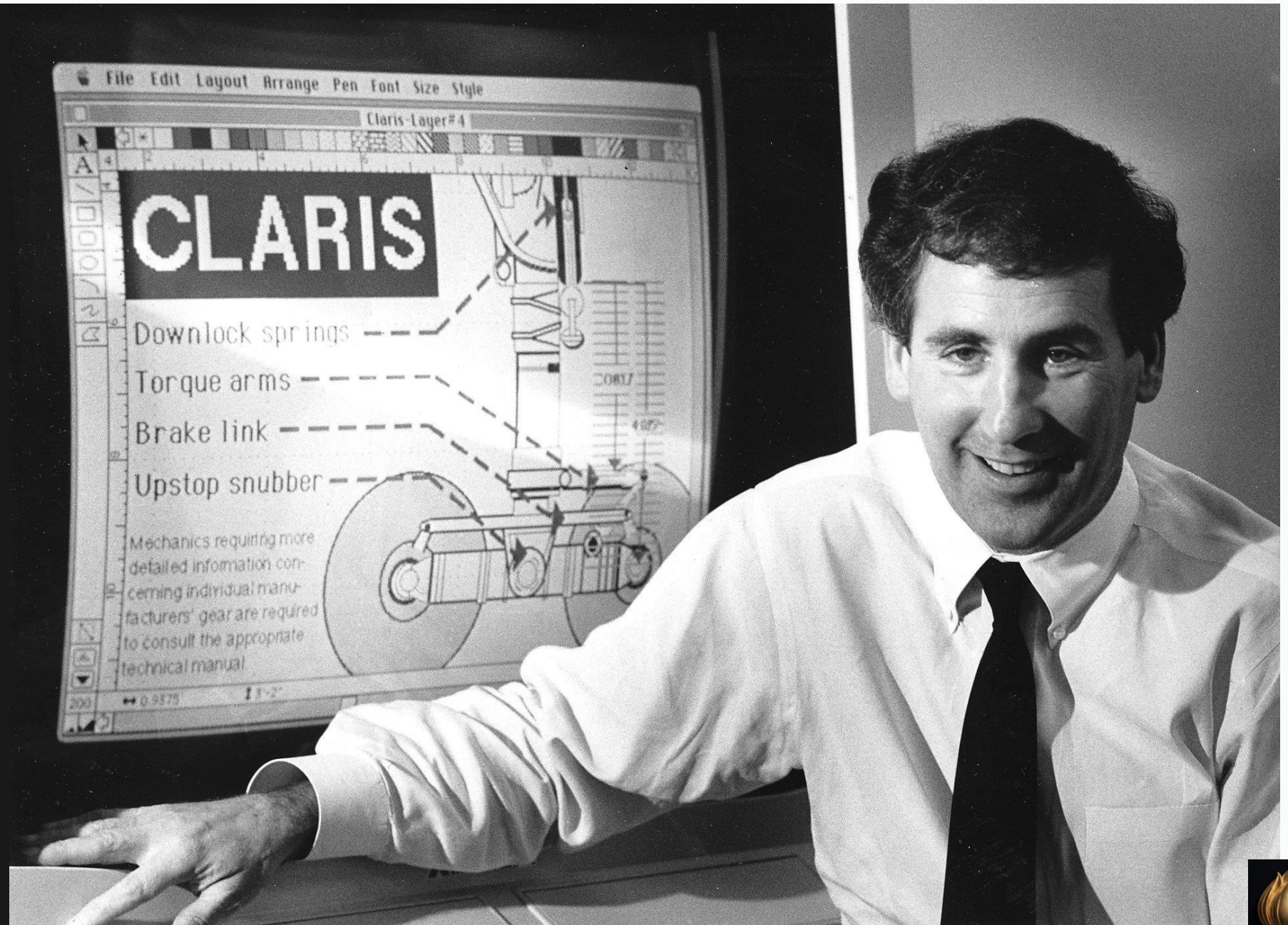
OPEN-TEXT QUESTIONS

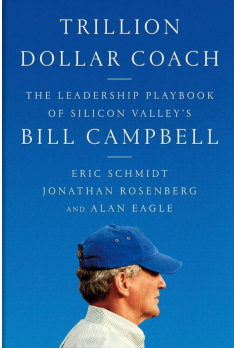
What differentiates each SVP and makes him/her effective today?

What advice would you give each SVP to be more effective and/or have greater impact?

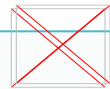


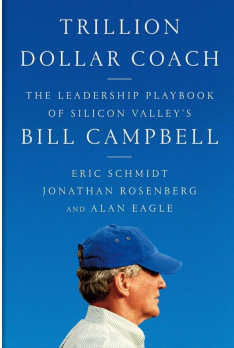
WORDS
THAT
SHAPED
SILICON
VALLEY





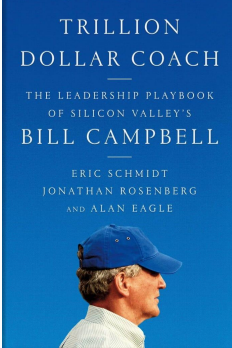
YOUR TITLE MAKES YOU A MANAGER.
YOUR PEOPLE MAKE YOU A LEADER.



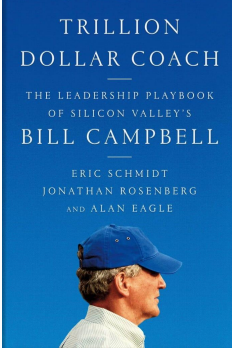


IT'S THE PEOPLE - THE TOP PRIORITY OF
ANY MANAGER IS THE WELL-BEING AND
SUCCESS OF HER PEOPLE.



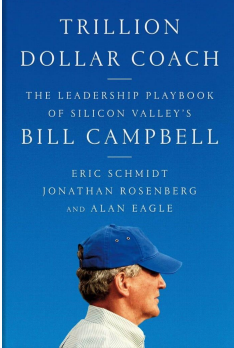


START WITH TRIP REPORTS - TO BUILD RAPPORT AND BETTER RELATIONSHIPS AMONG TEAM MEMBERS, START TEAM MEETINGS WITH TRIP REPORTS, OR OTHER TYPES OF MORE PERSONAL, NON-BUSINESS TOPICS.



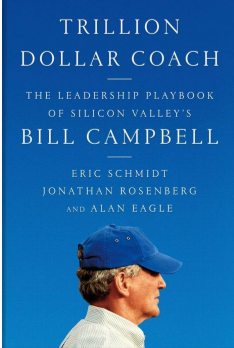
WORDS ON A WHITEBOARD - HAVE A
STRUCTURE FOR 1:1s, AND TAKE THE TIME
TO PREPARE FOR THEM, AS THEY ARE THE
BEST WAY TO HELP PEOPLE BE MORE
EFFECTIVE AND TO GROW.





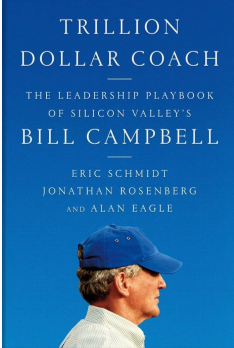
THE THRONE BEHIND THE ROUND TABLE - THE
MANAGER'S JOB IS TO RUN A DECISION -MAKING
PROCESS THAT ENSURES ALL PERSPECTIVES GET HEARD
AND CONSIDERED, AND, IF NECESSARY, TO BREAK TIES
AND MAKE THE DECISION.





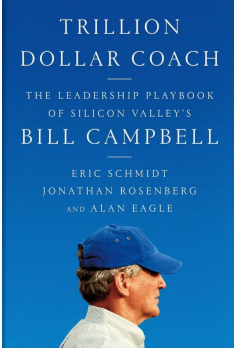
LEAD BASED ON FIRST PRINCIPLES - DEFINE THE "FIRST PRINCIPLES" FOR THE SITUATION, THE IMMUTABLE TRUTHS THAT ARE THE FOUNDATION FOR THE COMPANY OR PRODUCT AND HELP GUIDE THE DECISION FROM THOSE PRINCIPLES.





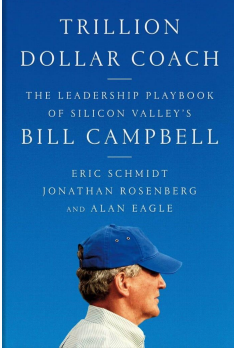
MANAGE THE ABERRANT GENIUS - ABERRANT GENIUSES -HIGH-PERFORMING BUT DIFFICULT TEAM MEMBERS-SHOULD BE TOLERATED AND EVEN PROTECTED, AS LONG AS THEIR BEHAVIOR ISN'T UNETHICAL OR ABUSIVE AND THEIR VALUE OUTWEIGHS THE TOLL THEIR BEHAVIOR TAKES ON MANAGEMENT, COLLEAGUES, AND TEAMS.





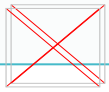
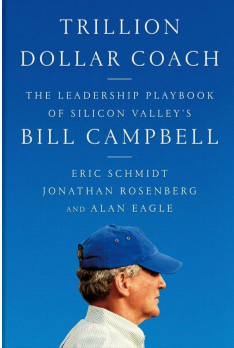
MONEY'S NOT ABOUT MONEY - COMPENSATING
PEOPLE WELL DEMONSTRATES LOVE AND
RESPECT AND TIES THEM STRONGLY TO THE
GOALS OF THE COMPANY.





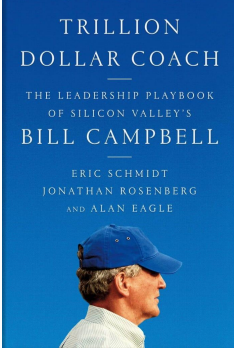
INNOVATION IS WHERE THE CRAZY PEOPLE
HAVE STATURE - THE PURPOSE OF A COMPANY
IS TO BRING A PRODUCT VISION TO LIFE. ALL
THE OTHER COMPONENTS ARE IN SERVICE TO
PRODUCT.





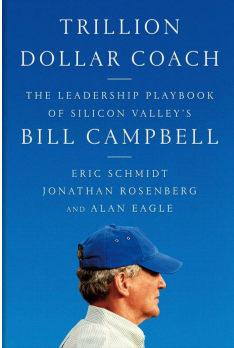
BILL ON BOARDS - IT'S THE CEO'S JOB TO
MANAGE BOARDS, NOT THE OTHER WAY
AROUND.





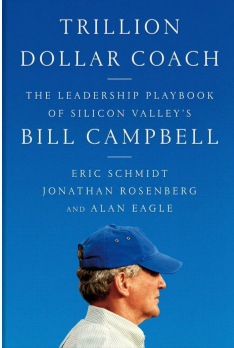
ONLY COACH THE COACHABLE - THE TRAITS THAT MAKE A PERSON COACHABLE INCLUDE HONESTY AND HUMILITY, THE WILLINGNESS TO PERSEVERE AND WORK HARD, AND A CONSTANT OPENNESS TO LEARNING.





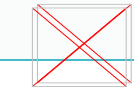
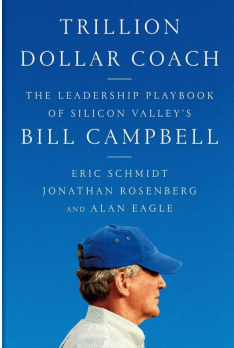
PRACTICE FREE-FORM LISTENING - LISTEN TO
PEOPLE WITH YOUR FULL AND UNDIVIDED
ATTENTION-DON'T THINK AHEAD TO WHAT YOU'RE
GOING TO SAY NEXT-AND ASK QUESTIONS TO GET
TO THE REAL ISSUE.





NO GAP BETWEEN STATEMENTS AND FACT - BE
RELENTLESSLY HONEST AND CANDID, COUPLE
NEGATIVE FEEDBACK WITH CARING, GIVE
FEEDBACK AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, AND IF THE
FEEDBACK IS NEGATIVE, DELIVER IT PRIVATELY.





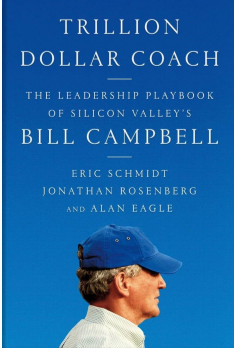
DON'T STICK IT IN THEIR EAR - DON'T TELL
PEOPLE WHAT TO DO; OFFER STORIES AND HELP
GUIDE THEM TO THE BEST DECISIONS FOR
THEM.





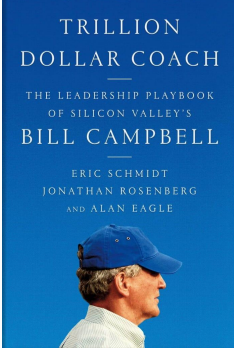
BE THE EVANGELIST FOR COURAGE - BELIEVE
IN PEOPLE MORE THAN THEY BELIEVE IN
THEMSELVES, AND PUSH THEM TO BE MORE
COURAGEOUS.





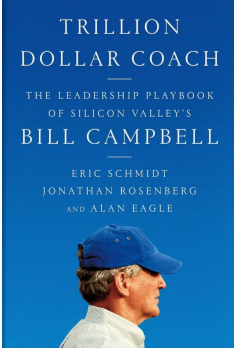
FULL IDENTITY FRONT AND CENTER - PEOPLE
ARE MOST EFFECTIVE WHEN THEY CAN BE
COMPLETELY THEMSELVES AND BRING THEIR
FULL IDENTITY TO WORK.





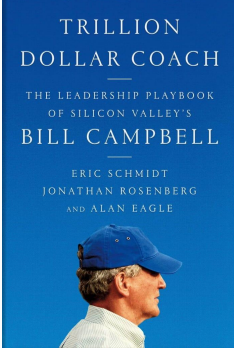
WORK THE TEAM, THEN THE PROBLEM - WHEN
FACED WITH A PROBLEM OR OPPORTUNITY, THE
FIRST STEP IS TO ENSURE THE RIGHT TEAM IS IN
PLACE AND WORKING ON IT.





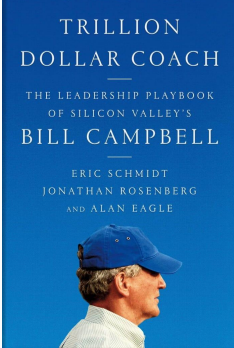
PICK THE RIGHT PLAYERS - THE TOP CHARACTERISTICS TO LOOK FOR ARE SMARTS AND HEARTS: THE ABILITY TO LEARN FAST, A WILLINGNESS TO WORK HARD, INTEGRITY, GRIT, EMPATHY, AND A TEAM-FIRST ATTITUDE.





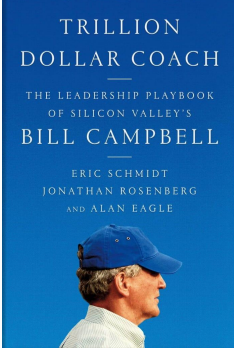
PAIR PEOPLE - PEER RELATIONSHIPS ARE
CRITICAL AND OFTEN OVERLOOKED, SO SEEK
OPPORTUNITIES TO PAIR PEOPLE UP ON
PROJECTS OR DECISIONS.





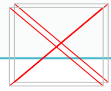
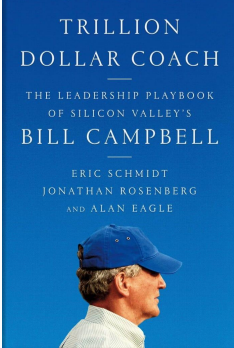
GET TO THE TABLE - WINNING DEPENDS ON
HAVING THE BEST TEAM, AND THE BEST TEAMS
HAVE MORE WOMEN.





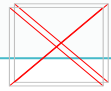
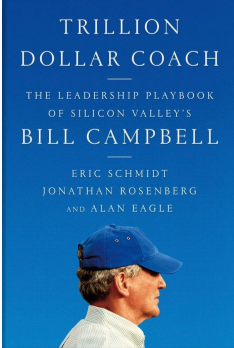
SOLVE THE BIGGEST PROBLEM - IDENTIFY THE BIGGEST PROBLEM, THE "ELEPHANT IN THE ROOM," BRING IT FRONT AND CENTER, AND TACKLE IT FIRST.





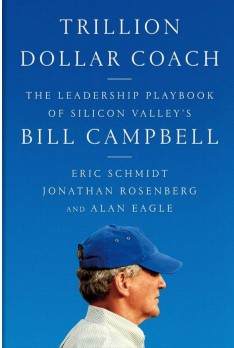
DON'T LET THE BITCH SESSIONS LAST - AIR ALL THE NEGATIVE ISSUES, BUT DON'T DWELL ON THEM. MOVE ON AS FAST AS POSSIBLE.





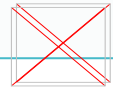
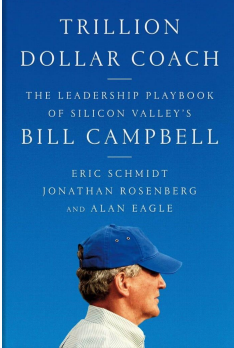
WINNING RIGHT - STRIVE TO WIN BUT ALWAYS
WIN RIGHT, WITH COMMITMENT, TEAMWORK
AND INTEGRITY.





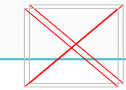
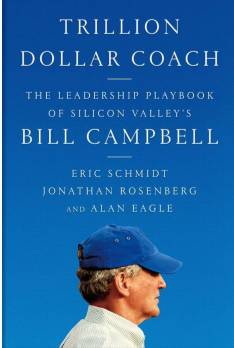
LEADERS LEAD - WHEN THINGS ARE GOING BAD,
TEAMS ARE LOOKING FOR EVEN MORE LOYALTY,
COMMITMENT, AND DECISIVENESS FROM THEIR
LEADERS.





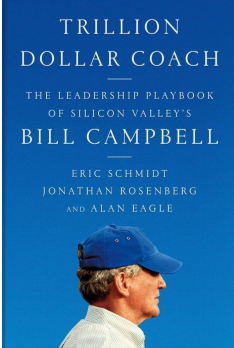
FILL THE GAPS BETWEEN PEOPLE - LISTEN,
OBSERVE, AND FILL THE COMMUNICATION AND
UNDERSTANDING GAPS BETWEEN PEOPLE.





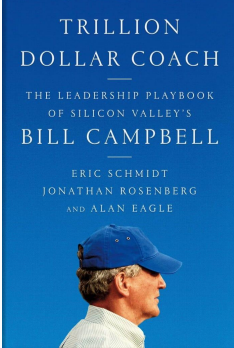
PERMISSION TO BE EMPATHETIC - LEADING
TEAMS BECOMES A LOT MORE JOYFUL, AND
THE TEAMS MORE EFFECTIVE, WHEN YOU KNOW
AND CARE ABOUT THE PEOPLE.



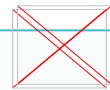


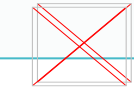
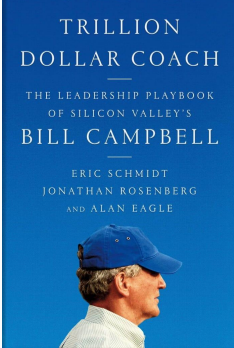
THE LOVELY RESET - TO CARE ABOUT PEOPLE
YOU HAVE TO CARE ABOUT PEOPLE: ASK ABOUT
THEIR LIVES OUTSIDE OF WORK, UNDERSTAND
THEIR FAMILIES, AND WHEN THINGS GET
ROUGH, SHOW UP.





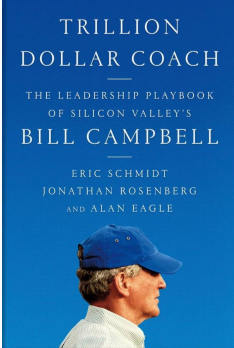
THE PERCUSSIVE CLAP - CHEER DEMONSTRABLY FOR PEOPLE AND THEIR SUCCESSES





ALWAYS BUILD COMMUNITIES - BUILD
COMMUNITIES INSIDE AND OUTSIDE OF WORK.
A PLACE IS MUCH STRONGER WHEN PEOPLE ARE
CONNECTED.





LOVE THE FOUNDERS - HOLD A SPECIAL
REVERENCE FOR-AND PROTECT-THE PEOPLE
WITH THE MOST VISION AND PASSION FOR THE
COMPANY.





INTENT

BEGIN WITH THE END IN MIND