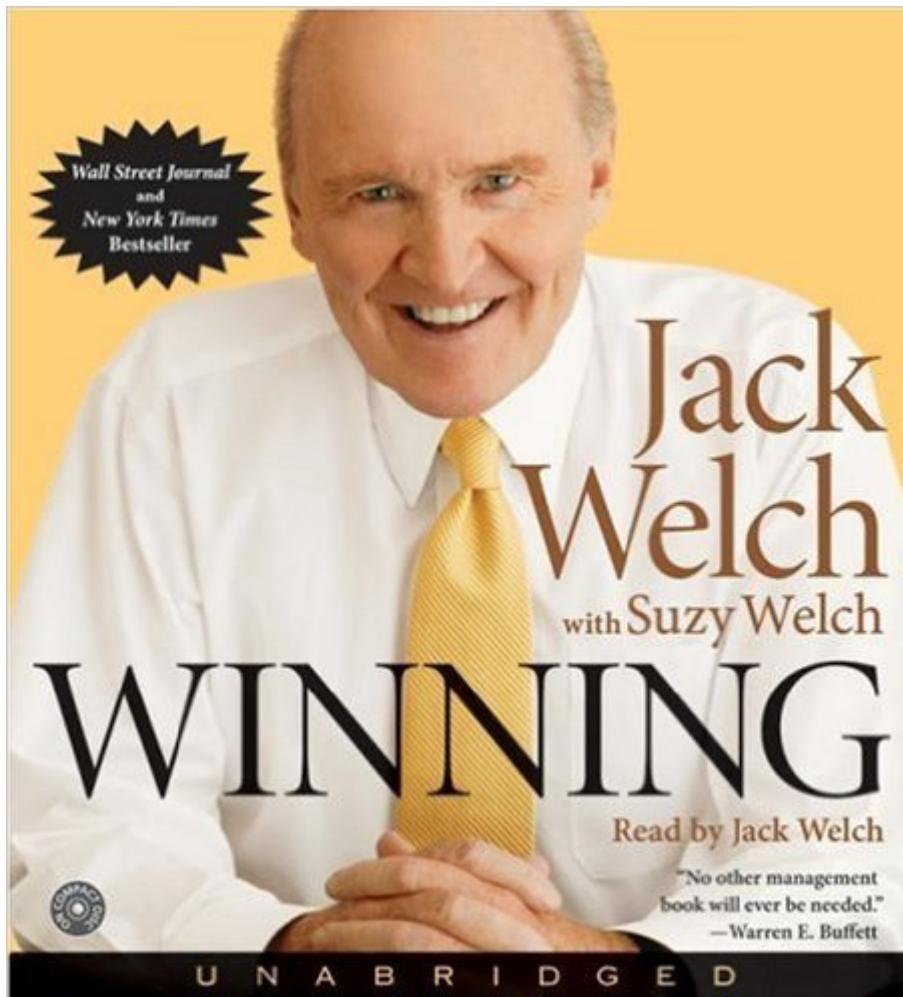


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# Winning



## **Synopsis**

Jack Welch knows how to win. During his forty-year career at General Electric, he led the company to year-after-year success around the globe, in multiple markets, against brutal competition. His honest, be-the-best style of management became the gold standard in business, with his relentless focus on people, teamwork, and profits. Welch's optimistic, no excuses, get-it-done mind-set is riveting. Packed with personal anecdotes and written in Jack's distinctive no-b.s. voice, *Winning* is a great read and a great business book. It offers deep insights, original thinking, and nuts-and-bolts advice that are bound to change the way people think about work. Read by Jack Welch

## **Book Information**

Audio CD: 176 pages

Publisher: HarperAudio; Unabridged edition (April 5, 2005)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0060785683

ISBN-13: 978-0060785680

Product Dimensions: 5.9 x 5.2 x 1.3 inches

Shipping Weight: 14.4 ounces

Average Customer Review: 4.3 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (396 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #1,136,515 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #345 in Books > Books on CD > Business > Management #808 in Books > Books on CD > Business > General #2181 in Books > Books on CD > General

## **Customer Reviews**

There are two ways to look at this book and at Jack's management philosophies. One can focus on Jack Welch the person, or Jack Welch the business leader. For those who choose to focus on Jack Welch as a person and how he lived his personal life, then I suggest he is not the man to follow. However, if you want some simple, powerful and proven management practices, then he is arguably one of the best ever. I continue to be amazed at the simple clarity of his message: empower others, ask questions, tap into the potential of all of your associates, choose integrity and candor over charts, graphs, and politics, and spend more time in action instead of planning and posturing budgets. I cannot read his words, or hear him speak without feeling again as I did as a member of his team at GE. Without fail, I was inspired and honored to be at a company which really believed that bureaucracy was to be avoided, and those who could look at reality without the politics and act accordingly were highly regarded. The one aspect I did not count on was that after leaving GE due

to geographical and travel demands, those simple truths which engage and inspire people to reach stretch goals would be so rare. In fact the most basic aspects of candor and open honest dialog about the business are punished in some organizations. The book itself is written in a conversational tone. It is easy to read, and feels as though you are in a dialog with him over a cup of coffee. Several key themes emerge which may be surprising to others who know him by reputation only. One, Jack holds no malice and actually celebrates those whose careers involved leaving GE for roles elsewhere.

It appears that (after a couple of misfires) Jack Welch has finally written a book to match his legend. It probably also helps that his new wife Suzy (and co-author), a former editor at HBR, knows a thing or two about writing. No matter what you think of either Welch, this book is worth the price of admission. Put "Winning" on the top shelf next to "Good to Great" and "Built to Last." In fact, Welch's "Winning" is the perfect complement to Collins' two-some. Collins' work is dramatically research-based, Welch's is utterly life-based. In particular, I enjoyed his 8 leadership principles that balance soft skills (communicating vision, building trust, motivating others) and character attributes (making the tough call, being positive, being nurturing to the core). I also enjoyed how Welch answers his critics on the infamous 20-70-10 rule and his hiring frameworks. One strength of "Winning" is in the breadth of topics covered - both in the realm of organizational leadership as well as career development. Lots of books do one well, but Welch manages to excel in both without being superficial or glossing-over (though most other books aren't 350+ pages!). Make no mistake about it - the ideas presented are not new. For example, two of Welch's leadership principles: "exude positive energy" and "push and probe with a curiosity that borders on skepticism" sound a lot like Collins' "confront the brutal facts, yet never lose faith" principle. But it's Welch's down-to-earth writing style that helps you understand these timeless principles in a fresh way. As you're reading, you can almost picture him speaking the words in some business school auditorium or some Fortune 100 management retreat.

Winning by Jack Welch is a must read for anyone who wants to succeed in business. The book is informative and readable, and offers specific actions I can take to win in the marketplace. The parts of the book which I found interesting were creating a company's mission statement, documenting its values and coming up with a strategy. I also found Jack Welch's explanation of the value of candor convincing, and his discussion of work-life balance provocative. His comments on differentiation (using Six Sigma to rank employees), and on the value of the business press were

instructive.Mission StatementIn Winning, Jack Welch writes that a mission statement must answer the question, "How do we intend to win in this business?" Otherwise, he suggests that a mission statement can turn into "a set of generic platitudes that do nothing but leave employees directionless or cynical," such as "XYZ Company values quality and service" or "Such-and-Such Company is customer driven."Using GE as an example, Jack describes an effective mission statement: "To be the most competitive enterprise in the world by being No. 1 or No. 2 in every market - fixing, selling, or closing every underperforming business that couldn't get there."To me, this mission statement and the way he describes creating it makes sense.ValuesRelated to the mission statement are values, specific and concrete behaviors which give employees a roadmap to follow to achieve the mission statement.Using Bank One as an example, Jack Welch describes values that are explained well."Never let profit center conflicts get in the way of doing what is right for the customer."and"Always look for ways to make it easier to do business with us.

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