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MORE PURPOSE,
AND
MORE SUCCESS



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Vincent Thompson



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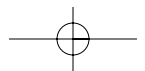
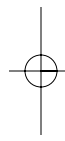
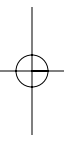
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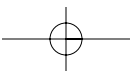
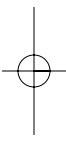
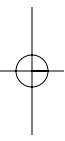
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Dedication

To Jackie, the love of my life, who makes it all seem possible.



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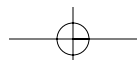
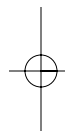
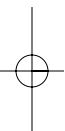
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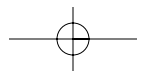
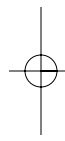
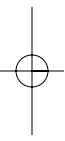
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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

At the height of the social change defining the Sixties, someone asked the Grateful Dead's Jerry Garcia a simple question: why? Jerry responded by saying, "Somebody had to do something, and it's just incredibly pathetic that it had to be us."

I can't repeat Jerry's line without laughing. Any of us who have felt the call of duty can certainly relate. As a manager, I spent far too many hours hoping a great and powerful force would hit the Restart button and create a world for managers where things made sense and business could be and mean all that we wanted it to. With that day not appearing to have been scheduled in my Outlook calendar, it was time to try and do what I could.

Having heard and believed that a good idea does not care who it belongs to, I gave myself the room to explore and began looking at my own Manager's Universe for answers. What I found almost instantly was a passionate and thoughtful community who shared the vision and would give tirelessly to the realization of this work.

The initial validation and trigger for the publishing deal came from my dear friend and mentor Jason Jennings, whose phenomenal success as an author and speaker is a true testament to the power of his passion to give and help others. Jason listened to premise of *Middleshift*, added key insights, and connected me to Tim Moore and Paula Sinnott at Prentice Hall. Tim and Paula challenged me to go deeper in my thinking and then guided me into a book deal with them supported by the power of their company, one of the world's leading publishers.

Soon after, a research team was born. Susannah Kim, a Pepperdine MBA student joined, along with Attila Szucs who lead much of the early research effort. As a former telecom manager in Hungary and an Accenture consultant, Attila had come to Los Angeles to finish his own MBA and went deep into the history of management and management practices for this book. Near the conclusion of this first year of research, we were joined by Brian Solon who, with a JD/MBA, budding musical

career, and passion for business books, had just come finished as the lead researcher on Jason Jennings's bestselling *Think Big, Act Small*. Brian challenged our existing research, took us even deeper, and helped with the outline, early editing, and wordsmithing. We were also fortunate to have Nick Morgan, founder of Public Words and editor of the *Harvard Management Communication Letter*, as an early guide in the books structure. Nick's partner Nikki Smith-Morgan played a key role as well. In order to administer our survey of managers and connect with the community, we needed a great website, and we were thrilled when Tim Sanders set us up with Jack Wu of ScreamStream. Jack not only designed a great site (www.middleshift.com) but powered up his own network to help with our cause.

As you may imagine, all of this effort was rather challenging given my full-time employment as a sales manager. As a research team, we met on Saturdays, and my managers at AOL were incredibly supportive of me using my white space during the weekdays to work on *Middleshift*. When it came time to draft the early pages, they even allowed me a flex schedule during a four-month period schedule that provided many weekdays for writing. It would be hard to overestimate what that support has meant for this project, and with thanks that'll last a lifetime, I'd like to acknowledge Kathy Kayse, the talented Michael Barrett (with whom I worked for several years), and his boss, Mike Kelly, who turned our ad unit at AOL into a real business, while at the same time making it a great place to work.

A few chapters into the early work, something really wonderful happened. We were able to attract Karl Weber to the project. Karl, the former managing director of Times Business (then a division of Random House) and a best-selling author himself, joined to help take the work up a notch with better prose and additional insights. We might never have had the chance to work with someone of Karl's prestige, but he believed that the stories needed to be told, and soon Karl was my partner in this. I'm so thankful for Karl, who taught me a lot and dimensionalized the work in ways far beyond what we could have imagined in the start. Karl is a great writer and a great friend.

With the pages rolling in, Russ Hall, our editor from Prentice Hall, was there to keep us on track and challenge us to provide insights on every

page. As a successful writer and Texan, Russ used great anecdotes that entertained us and at the same time nailed the points.

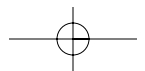
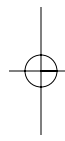
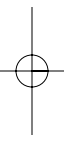
Along the way I had lots of great help from my wonderful and sharp assistant Tina Trankiem, marketing assistant Adam Fox, and our witty transcriber Lynn Colomello. I also benefited greatly from the sanity checks provided to me daily by the AOL Media Networks Team in Los Angeles, who kept me thinking, kept me motivated, and always made me feel part of something bigger. Frank Kenna, CEO of The Marlin Company, the workplace communication experts, was also really helpful and there for us with research when needed.

The support from other authors that I've admired was humbling; Tim Sanders, Keith Ferrazzi, Larry Haughton, Chester Elton and Keith Rosen all were there for me and offered their help as needed.

I'd also like to thank our book review team: managers Sue Burger from AOL, Grant Eppler from Heinz, Gary Cormier from Brass Ring, and Brad Simmons from Experian. Their insights, as well as those who are profiled within this book and the survey respondents who gave elaborate detail, provided additional insights that really helped shape the solutions put forth.

I must also take time to thank those who took my 7:30 a.m. calls almost on a daily basis, and played a key role in the book's content. They are my board of advisors. These folks kept me sane, inspired me, and been there through whatever life brings: Pat Shaughnessy, Mary Furlong, Charlie Warner, Mark Chassman, Byron Elton, Dave Hoover, Shawn Campbell, Jeff Gordon and Marc Sternberg—you mean the world to me.

Finally, thanks to Dilbert and the cast of the television show "The Office." These characters, while making me laugh, regularly demonstrated the pathetic state of management and fueled the frustration and discontent that led me to action and ignited the team of warriors who joined me. Let's hope a day comes when their comedy is based on the past, not the present.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Vincent Thompson, principal at Middleshift Consulting, works with Internet companies to design world-class online marketing solutions and build sales organizations. His clients include Napster, StarStyle.com and Break.com.

Thompson has spent fifteen years as a middle manager leading teams in challenging industries and hotbeds for learning: first in restaurants, then in television, and now in the Internet business.

He spent seven years as Regional Vice President of Sales for America Online.

There, he designed AOL's sales training organization, managed teams in San Francisco, Los Angeles, Chicago, and Dulles, VA; and served as Regional Vice President of AOL's Southwestern Region, where his teams led AOL's West Coast Entertainment and Auto relationships.

He is a featured online expert in the Quantum Training Series, has spoken widely on online advertising, and has contributed to the Iowa Press textbook *Media Selling*.

Thompson holds an undergraduate degree in Communications from the University of Southern California's Annenberg School of Communications, and an MBA from Pepperdine University. He lives in Los Angeles, California with his wife and two daughters.

