

Free let my people go surfing book review example

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The book *Let My People Go Surfing: The Education of a Reluctant Businessman* is an autobiography and an inspirational business book by Yvon Chouinard. The book is about a prominent edge company called Patagonia that demonstrates a prosperous business approach. Patagonia is a company that manufactures clothing as well as outdoors equipment and is well-known for its policies that create environmental awareness. As a co-founder of the business Chouinard provides a moving autobiography regarding the inception of the Patagonia and the management policy that typifies an authentic success in business and in life.

The book is divided into three parts. The first part of the story focuses on Chouinard and his character. The second part is a narrative regarding companies, Chouinard, Black Diamond, and to a larger extent, Patagonia. The third part of the book provides comprehensive information regarding eight philosophies that embody Patagonia. This part shows document indicating the ambitious plan of the Patagonia, what the company seeks to achieve and for what reason. In a nut shell, the book provides information regarding product design, invention, distribution, image, economic viability, human resource management, management, and conservationism.

The book is stimulating as it focuses on the Patagonia's corporate responsibility. It shows the manner in which the company has taken deliberate strides to promote safe working conditions and fair employment practices. Corporate social responsibility is usually a broad-based approach in businesses that inspires organizations to become responsible for the impact of their operations on employees, customers, the environment, and the communities around them. As such, the book is inspirational to other

businesses that seek to take control of their activities in relaxed yet more efficient through well thought-out plans that ultimately lead to safe, reasonable, aboveboard, and humane operational practices.

Lack of thoughtful strategies is the cause of many social issues in the contemporary societies, especially the environmental issues. The urge to create more wealth in many present-day companies inhibits the need to address social issues. However, the vision of Chouinard especially with regard to environment has ensured that Patagonia continues to flourish while also creating a formidable responsibility culture that is apparent with its employees. Its culture ensures that even those that are likely to come after the current leadership will be able to continue Chouinard's healthy, responsibility, productivity, and sustainability principles. Basically, the book takes the perspective that the more a business enterprise becomes responsible, the more it becomes profitable.

The policy of Patagonia "Let My People Go Surfing" is a guiding principle that allows the employees to do work by their rules without much restriction thereby instilling a sense of duty among the employees. The management does not concern itself with what the employees are doing provided that they do their work promptly. This is a good approach that allows the employees to broaden their creativity and to surf or do what interests them whenever they feel like doing it. This is a noble gesture on the part of the company as it is clear that the company perceives happiness and healthy living of its personnel as the best way to achieve value, productivity, and commitment of the employees. This point is exemplified by the cafeteria that provides healthy, organic, and generally vegetarian nutrition combined with

the employee's ability to spare time that other companies may perceive as wastage to take part in an environmental program or begin a program of their own liking provided that they get their work in the company done. Chouinard's philosophy shows that he is well aware of his limitations hence appoints properly qualified personnel to run the affairs of the company. Such employments are the antecedent for 'clean design' and excellent customer service.

Patagonia's environmental philosophy is summed up by five factors: leading an examined life, cleaning up own act, doing own penance, supporting civil democracy, and influencing other companies. This is an approach that is admirable as the company does not assume, unlike most companies, that someone else is going to care for the environment. This strategy demonstrates the importance of being part of a solution to a social problem. As the book plunges into the specific policies that are the motivating force for Patagonia, it ridicules the profit-focused economy. The description of the financial philosophy highlights the greed that illuminates the cultures of most businesses. This is apparent when Chouinard states, "Being a publicly held corporation or even a partnership would put shackles on how we operate, restrict what we do with our profits, and put us on a growth/suicide track." This expression demonstrates just how hard it is for business ventures other than privately held companies contribute considerably to the environmental problems that occur because they find it hard to sacrifice their time to carry out non-profitable activities (Bansal, 2000). Chouinard sums up the motive of the company when he says, "Our intent is to remain a closely held private company, so we can continue to focus on our bottom line, doing good"

(Chouinard, 2006).

Of note is that the prevailing economic conditions do not favor the publicly held companies to accomplish even part of what Patagonia has continued to pursue in terms of social responsibility. This is partly because of the stockholder's avidity for the short-term profits and myopic views regarding corporate responsibility. It is easier for stockholders in public companies to rebel against social responsibilities that they may perceive as a waste of time and resources because their focus is maximizing their profits and fail to recognize that corporate social responsibility is for their own good and for the general good of the society (Halpern, 2012). As such, companies need to create awareness regarding the importance of environmental conservation and other social responsibilities then may be in future public companies will follow the example that Patagonia has set and get to enjoy an even better financial success than they do today. Some private companies may be afraid of trying but there are more gains than losses as exemplified by Patagonia. Although the information provided in the book, especially at the introductory part, sounds as if the author is advertising Patagonia, the message that the book communicates is entirely different. For instance, the author acknowledges that his business has negative impacts to the environment but states his commitment towards minimizing the negative effects. Accordingly, the information in the book is a blend of the autobiography of the author, a business manuscript, and an outline for corporate social responsibility through the perspective of Chouinard. The book raises the reader's environmental awareness regarding the kind of impact that increased production and consumption has on the mother earth. It inspires businesses

or any person that is involved in business to take deliberate steps towards forming their own policies to remedy the damage that their businesses have on the environment. Truly, the book is an “ education of a reluctant businessman”.

References

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