

PREFACE

THIS BOOK IS ABOUT LEADERSHIP, because we need a new brand of business and political leaders who know who they are. We need leaders who can relate spiritually and humanely to their fellow human beings, who can overcome challenges and exhibit innovation, creativity, and the courage to tackle obstacles as they arise.

Although, in this case, it was an actual mountain that was scaled, leaders should realize that it is the mountain within that needs to be conquered, one day at a time. These leaders should use failures as stepping-stones for significance. They must be leaders who understand planning and pacing and the importance of creating winning teams and maintaining them. They must be leaders who know not to stay too long at the top, because the rarefied atmosphere in the upper echelons causes us to lose perspective, to become intoxicated with power, status, and wealth and to lose touch with what matters.

This book is a call to create a better, more sustainable framework based on integrity, transparency, good governance, the value of each human being, and the power of teamwork. Its message reinforces what all great leaders



know: that we can accomplish so much more together than any one of us can accomplish separately.

In a story in which adventure meets practical business advice, this book follows two narratives about climbing mountains: one, a failure to reach the summit of Mount Kilimanjaro, and the other, a successful mission to the top. The former, while painful in many ways, eventually served as the motivation and stepping-stone for the latter. What at first felt like a total failure ultimately formed a major part of the lessons outlined in this book.

The dramatic narrative of how I led a group of multinational and multi-ability people in my second attempt to reach the summit of Mount Kilimanjaro (Africa's highest mountain) is the main story line. Of a group of 28 climbers who started off, 16 members (almost 60 percent) of the group reached the top—a significantly better result than the usual statistic of 35 percent of climbers reaching the mountain's summit on expeditions. This turn of events is where I found the proof and inspiration that it's the people around us and our relationships with them that determine our level of success.

Each chapter tells a story about the leadership challenges that our team faced, both internally and externally, en route to reaching the summit of Mount Kilimanjaro. The narrative of climbing (and reascending) that great mountain is the foundation that I use to share powerful business and leadership lessons. These lessons are as applicable in the world of business as they are in a boulder-strewn field. Also, in each chapter, you'll find a conversation with one or two global business and political leaders who embody the lessons offered in that chapter. These individuals are among the



world's most powerful and influential global leaders, representing the United States, Australia, Germany, the United Kingdom, Botswana, Kuwait, Egypt, Austria, South Korea, the Sudan, and Sweden.

Each of us has a mountain within to conquer on the way to the top, whether that top is a great physical feat or a goal of extraordinary career success. Each lesson is designed to be directly relevant to your climb in the corporate world, the political arena, or academia. The lessons shared in this book are also directly relevant to the global economic and political challenges we currently face and need to overcome.

It is my deepest desire to help you conquer your personal mountain and enable you to climb to the top without losing your soul. Now, let the journey begin.

