



Author: Authentic leaders succeed

Author: Authentic leaders succeed

By [Anthony Cronin](#)

Published on 4/12/2009 in [Home](#) » [Business](#) » [Business Columns](#)

Neil Ducoff doesn't believe in compromise - not if you're going to be an effective leader, or corporation, or government.

He does, instead, believe in a “no compromise” leadership style, which the longtime business and leadership coach says compelled him to author a book, called appropriately enough, “No-Compromise Leadership: A Higher Standard of Leadership Thinking and Behavior.”

Ducoff, the chief executive of the Centerbrook-based Strategies business training and coaching company (www.strategies.com), says that no compromise leadership is about being compassionate - and getting the job done. Ducoff says that all too often complacency, compromise and status quo dictate the course of events, whether it's the workplace or government or our lives.

And, sure, Ducoff realizes that there are times when compromise is indeed necessary, but he says that a no-compromise approach can empower an individual, or a corporation, for that matter.

He says he's seen the damage to leaders, employees, vendors - even families - when too much compromise leads to inaction, indecision and, in the case of a business, falling revenues and profits. As a business guru of some 40 years, that's why he published his book - and that's why he took a no-compromise leadership stance with his own firm, which employs about 18 trainers and coaches.

His book, published by DC Press, is available at bookstores, through online booksellers or via www.nocompromiseleadership.com. Ducoff says he set the book up in three stages: discovering how to become a no-compromise leader; how to successfully affect the four business stages - productivity, profitability, staff retention, and customer loyalty - and putting no-compromise leadership to work at your own company.

The book is sprinkled with entertaining, and informative sayings dubbed “Neilisms,” like “Without passion, work is work. Who wants to follow a leader with no passion?” or “A healthy cash reserve is 'sleep good at night' money.” The Neilisms, by the way, are cleverly set up graphically with a drawing of the bearded Ducoff with a cartoon bubble above his head with the various sayings.

Ducoff, an Old Saybrook resident, says he began using the term “no compromise” a few years back, when he would lecture, or do writing or consulting work. He defines no compromise as a leadership style that is committed to consistency, accountability and integrity. And he says that when he explained his leadership philosophy, it struck a note among his listeners - a powerful one at that.

“Think of no compromise,” he writes in his book, “as a powerful internal compass that keeps you and your company steadfastly on course.” Quite simply, Ducoff says that a no-compromise leadership style - which he stresses is never dictatorial - cuts through the excuses, emotional blockages and the procrastination that destroys effective leadership.

The best no-compromise leader, according to Ducoff, is someone who is 100 percent authentic, because trust, loyalty and commitment flows both ways between the leader and those he or she leads.

“The decision to write this book was a simple one, because I have seen the damage that compromise can inflict not just on a business, but on its leaders, employees, families, vendors and all those who depend on it,” he writes. “And like it or not ... compromise is a choice.”

ANTHONY CRONIN IS THE DAY'S BUSINESS EDITOR.