



# Icons and Idiots: Straight Talk on Leadership

*Bob Lutz*

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When Bob Lutz retired from General Motors in 2010, after an unparalleled forty-seven-year career in the auto industry, he was one of the most respected leaders in American business. He had survived all kinds of managers over those decades: tough and timid, analytical and irrational, charismatic and antisocial, and some who seemed to shift frequently among all those traits. His experiences made him an expert on leadership, every bit as much as he was an expert on cars and trucks.

Now Lutz is revealing the leaders—good, bad, and ugly—who made the strongest impression on him throughout his career. *Icons and Idiots* is a collection of shocking and often hilarious true stories and the lessons Lutz drew from them. From enduring the sadism of a Marine Corps drill instructor, to working with a washed-up alcoholic, to taking over the reins from a convicted felon, he reflects on the complexities of all-too-human leaders. No textbook or business school course can fully capture their idiosyncrasies, foibles and weaknesses – which can make or break companies in the real world.

Lutz shows that we can learn just as much from the most stubborn, stupid, and corrupt leaders as we can from the inspiring geniuses. He offers fascinating profiles of icons and idiots such as...

- **Eberhard von Kuenheim.** The famed CEO of BMW was an aristocrat-cum-street fighter who ruled with secrecy, fear, and deft maneuvering.
- **Harold A. “Red” Poling:** A Ford CEO and the ultimate bean counter. If it couldn't be quantified, he didn't want to know about it.
- **Lee Iacocca:** The legendary Chrysler CEO appeared to be brilliant and bold, but was often vulnerable and insecure behind the scenes.
- **G. Richard “Rick” Wagoner:** The perfect peacetime CEO whose superior intelligence couldn't save GM from steep decline and a government bailout.

As Lutz writes:

*We'll examine bosses who were profane, insensitive, totally politically incorrect, and who “appropriated” insignificant items from hotels or the company. We'll visit the mind of a leader who did little but sit in his office. We'll look at another boss who could analyze a highly complex profit-and-loss statement or a balance sheet at a glance, yet who, at times, failed to grasp the simplest financial mechanisms—how things actually worked in practice to create the numbers in the real world.*

The result is a powerful and entertaining guide for any aspiring leader.

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#### **Kerry Giles:**

Playing with family in the park, coming to see the water world or hanging out with buddies is thing that usually you could have done when you have spare time, after that why you don't try matter that really opposite from that. One activity that make you not sensation tired but still relaxing, trilling like on roller coaster you have been ride on and with addition of knowledge. Even you love Icons and Idiots: Straight Talk on Leadership, you are able to enjoy both. It is fine combination right, you still would like to miss it? What kind of hang-out type is it? Oh occur its mind hangout guys. What? Still don't obtain it, oh come on its known as reading friends.

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