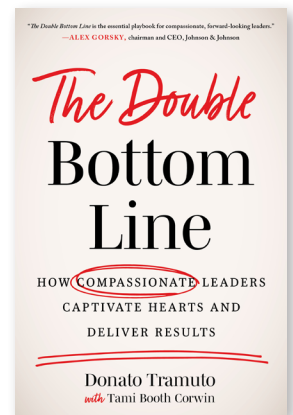


# The Double Bottom Line

How Compassionate Leaders Captivate Hearts and Deliver Results

by **Donato Tramuto**



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## THE SUMMARY IN BRIEF

Combining the collective wisdom gleaned from over 40 interviews with successful leaders who practice compassionate leadership, *The Double Bottom Line: How Compassionate Leaders Captivate Hearts and Deliver Results* shows how to add true compassionate leadership to your playbook.

You'll discover that most leaders have an innate desire to be compassionate, but many don't know how to put it into practice. This summary shares actionable methods used by proven leaders for being compassionate and tough, empathetic and action-oriented in equal measure. After all, taking care of your people is proven to lead to better results.

Written by CEO, business leader, innovator, and philanthropist Donato Tramuto, *The Double Bottom Line* is an effective guide to becoming a leader that is both more compassionate and more effective at getting the job done.

## IN THIS SUMMARY, YOU WILL LEARN:

- How to become a leader that drives trust, success, and innovation.
- How to raise morale, build stronger teams, and improve overall performance at your organization.
- How to create sustainable commitment to your organization's mission and values.

### Introduction

Now more than ever, leaders need to upgrade skills such as communication, transparency, adaptability, and understanding and support of employees' needs. They need to embrace diversity and inclusion, create stronger teams, and take responsibility for the impact they have on the communities in which they work and on the world. And, most importantly—as we are seeing how these shifts affect our neighbors, families, employees, and coworkers—we need to raise empathy and compassion to the top of the list.

During the pandemic, many companies struggled to stay open or simply had to shut their doors. Still others rose to the challenge, not only weathering the storm but also finding breakthrough ideas and moving from strength to strength to drive their businesses. They've seen that this test has solidified their organizations and unified their teams. There are many variables that separate those who have survived and thrived from those who have suffered, but it's clear that the most effective leaders are putting people at the top of their priority list and embracing compassion and humanity to a greater degree than ever before in their workplace. They are finding that putting people first and delivering results are not two separate goals. Rather, a strong focus on people drives strong results. That is The Double Bottom Line.

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### Part I: Defining a New Model of Leadership

#### It's Time to Flip Traditional Leadership on Its Head

Compassionate leadership means listening to others' challenges, needs, or problems; having empathy for them; and then actually doing something about it. Empathy—the ability to think about and feel for another person's problems, suffering, or experience—is a critical component. Compassion, on the other hand, usually starts with or coexists with empathy, but it adds the desire and action to relieve that person's suffering, help them overcome a challenge, or otherwise better their situation.

In an organization, where it is only people who get results, it means that you invest your time in individuals, and that is how the organization prospers. In other words, people are your true focus.

#### Empathy Isn't Enough

Empathy on its own has important applications in business,

education, politics, and relationships. Anyone developing products, services, or solutions needs to understand the experience of the customer or constituency they serve. To deliver a solution to a problem, you have to understand what it feels like to face that problem. Cultivating empathy is essential. Many business leaders know this, and it leads to their success. In an interview, Satya Nadella of Microsoft, one of the business world's most passionate proponents of compassionate leadership, said, "Our core business is connected with the customers' needs, and we will not be able to satisfy them if we don't have a deep sense of empathy."

Action is the fuel that brings empathy to life. To bridge this gap between how CEOs see the role of empathy and how employees expect to see empathy show up in their organizations, we must first effectively listen and communicate, then combine empathy with actions that address employees' specific challenges, hardships, and needs.

#### Lead from the Heart

Compassionate leadership is driven by a desire and a commitment to better your people, your customers, your stakeholders, and your community. It's about understanding what touches the hearts of others in order to bring out the best in them and allow them to feel connected to their work and see it as part of something bigger than themselves.

Having a sense of mission and communicating that to employees or team members gives them a sense of meaning in their work. Communicating how each individual's role connects with and contributes to a broader purpose allows everyone to feel part of the bigger opportunity to help people or make the world better. When employees feel they are contributing in meaningful ways—whether big or small—they increase their engagement, commitment, and job satisfaction.

#### Compassion is Strength

Some people think that a compassionate leader is a weak leader, or that compassionate leadership is not strong, powerful, and results-oriented leadership. That could not be further from the truth. Once you understand compassionate leadership and understand how it's applied (and how it's not), you'll see it in its true light. You'll have a new vision of compassion that is strong, courageous, and kind. You'll understand that by the very definition of the term, compassionate leaders are necessarily strong and tough leaders. Compassion isn't weak; it's the power skill for the next generation.

Interestingly, though sixty-seven percent of the most senior respondents (CEO, president, owner, etc.) in a workplace

survey said that compassionate leadership is often viewed as weak, they also said that it's important. And, on the flip side, when asked if this type of leadership is weak, the majority of the group of compassionate leaders interviewed for this book said the opposite: Only twenty-three percent strongly or somewhat agreed. That is an important difference. It tells us that once practiced, its power and effectiveness is clear.

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## Part II: Secrets of Successful Leaders Who Win Hearts and Deliver Results

### Earn Trust First

Many management theorists and leaders believe that culture comes first when building a successful organization. Many say that “culture eats strategy for lunch.” But trust eats strategy for lunch every day of the week. Trust is a precondition to building a positive culture. Trust has to be established first to lay the groundwork for effective leadership. Everything else follows.

Trust is essential in all relationships. Positive, trusting relationships drive productivity, creativity, change, and growth. As a leader, you can put any program out there, you can communicate your vision, mission, and values. But unless you have your people's trust, these critical things won't be universally embraced or put into action at the highest level possible. Trust is the glue that makes it all work.

### Build Compassionate Culture

Healthy and productive culture is built on trust and powered by compassion. These elements are interlinked. A compassionate and trust-based culture is the strongest foundation from which an organization can grow and thrive over time.

Strong leaders from successful organizations know this. But some leaders and corporate boards view culture as a lower priority, something that you might devote time to after focusing on hiring the best people you can afford or find, delivering your best product or service, or (especially from the old model's perspective) hitting your numbers. Others see it as a separate entity, distinct from the main activities of the organization. Many address it once in a while or sporadically during the life of the organization when perhaps external changes arise to challenge its survival. While the notion of hitting numbers first may sound appealing, it is a short-term focus. You may deliver on your numbers for a year or two, but sustaining them without a culture built on trust is like someone saying, “Let me develop the space shuttle to take you to the moon, but

you need to find me the instructions to craft the engines.” The person might wing it to get the engines working, but sustaining the engines will be a miracle at best.

### Work Better Together

In a workplace survey, communication, commitment, and collaboration ranked as the top three keys to compassionate culture and collaborative teams. These keys of compassionate leadership combine to help the people involved form a strong sense of community, which is the essence of successful teams.

Employees or members of a community want to know that their leaders have their backs during difficult times. Teams want to know that their leaders are doing their best to provide all available resources when they are collaborating to achieve a challenging goal or make an unfamiliar shift in direction together. When leaders do demonstrate their commitment to their people, what will happen? People will go the extra mile to reach a goal. They will feel safe enough to share ideas that just might move the team, the organization, or that important project forward. They trust enough to ask for help.

### Harness the Power of Differences

Great leaders know something that gives them a strategic advantage and increases employee morale, retention, productivity, and innovation: Great leaders know how to harness the power of differences in their organizations.

In part, this practice includes building, respecting, and celebrating the diversity and differences among team members. However, great leaders go a step further. They intentionally cultivate diverse teams and optimize their performance. It is not just their internal teams that are built to be diverse. It is the whole organization, including the board.

Diverse companies have proven to be stronger across many key measures, profitability included. Cultivating workplaces that are rich with different types of talented people is not only the right thing to do and the compassionate thing to do, but also a beneficial thing to do to support your people and boost your top-line revenues and bottom-line profits.

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## Part III: Cultivating More Compassionate People

### Cultivating Compassion within Yourself

The Dalai Lama said, “If you want others to be happy, practice compassion. If you want to be happy, practice compas-

sion.” These words sum up this virtuous loop of compassion and provide a compelling reason to adopt this as a practice.

As much as compassion helps your organization, as I have already discussed at some length, it helps you just as much or more! Practicing self-compassion first makes the compassion you express to others more powerful and meaningful. Those are compelling reasons to take steps to become a more compassionate leader.

### Can You Teach Others to Be Compassionate?

From the standpoint of the leader, just talking about it will not be effective if it isn't also acted on throughout each workday. In the workplace or in an organization, helping people learn and grow has to be integrated into day-to-day relationships, communications, processes, and operations. It needs to be applied in the situations and settings where it's seen and felt by others. The most impactful way leaders can teach compassion is by modeling it themselves—in other words, leading by example.

Ongoing implementation and reinforcement from leaders and managers throughout the organization is the key driver that allows this to take hold. When leaders talk the talk and walk the walk, every day, it sets a visible example of compassion in practice.

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## Conclusion: What Every Leader Needs to Know About the Future

Change calls for sharp awareness from leaders. Two major shifts stand out to me that are fundamentally changing what the workforce needs from its leaders.

The first is the generational shift in the workforce, from one that is baby boomer-centric to one that is predominantly made up of millennials and Gen Zers. With that shift, there is a need for leaders to become attuned to a whole new set of understandings, perceptions, and skills.

Technology is the second major driver. Technological change continues to accelerate. It's changing the nature of the skills we need in our workforce—and not necessarily in all the ways you might think. We don't just need more technically savvy workers, we need people with more finely tuned human skills, and we need leaders who understand how to bring these competencies out in proper proportions across their workforce.

We all have the power to have a positive impact on others and the world. The best way to start is by taking small actions that accumulate to create bigger collective changes and a more compassionate world.



**Donato Tramuto** is a global health activist, former CEO of Tivity Health, and founder of the Tramuto Foundation and Health eVillages. He was the recipient of the prestigious Robert F. Kennedy Ripple of Hope Award in 2014, alongside Hillary Clinton, Robert De Niro, and Tony Bennett, and the 2017 Robert F. Kennedy Embracing His Legacy Award.

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