

The New York Times BEST-SELLING AUTHOR OF OVER 18 MILLION BOOKS!

KEN BLANCHARD COLLEEN BARRETT

Foreword by **Herb Kelleher**
Founder of Southwest Airlines

Lead LUV

A DIFFERENT WAY
to CREATE REAL SUCCESS



IT PAYS
TO PUT YOUR
PEOPLE
FIRST

Praise for
Lead with LUV
by Ken Blanchard and Colleen Barrett

“Even the idea of Ken Blanchard and Colleen Barrett creating a book together staggers the imagination. As to the result, for the committed reader I fully expect it will be a truly life-altering event. This is a wonderful book with a wonderful message—it is to be savored and meditated upon and implemented.”

—**Tom Peters**, *New York Times* bestselling author of *In Search of Excellence*

“I LUVVED this book so much that it’s at the top of my Required Reading List for everyone I know or anyone who wants to understand what Real Leadership is all about. Ken and Colleen have finally incarnated the L word into what really counts in the noble process of leading. In their work and lives, they are living avatars of their words.”

—**Warren Bennis**, Distinguished Professor of Business,
University of Southern California;
author of *Still Surprised: A Memoir of a Life in Leadership*

“Ken and Colleen are excellent examples of inspired leadership—they lead from their souls. When love permeates an organization in this way, great things can come from it. You will learn from Ken and Colleen how to lead with love, humility, heart, and soul. They have written an inspirational book for today’s leaders that will foster personal and professional fulfillment along with organizational success.”

—**Deepak Chopra**, *New York Times* bestselling author of *The Soul of Leadership*

“*Lead with LUV* is an engaging and real conversation between two preeminent thought leaders—one who has pioneered the field of leadership development, and another who has piloted one of the world’s best companies. When there is so much hype about what makes companies great, it’s a real treat to hear an open, candid, and quiet dialogue on the critical themes of vision, values, love, and servant leadership. You’ll love the stories and the advice; but most importantly, you’ll love the message and the honesty. Business needs a whole lot more of what Ken Blanchard and Colleen Barrett discuss. Do yourself a favor and read this important book. You will feel refreshed, inspired, and filled with more hope when you do.”

—**Jim Kouzes**, coauthor of *The Leadership Challenge* and *The Truth about Leadership*; Dean’s Executive Professor of Leadership,
Leavey School of Business, Santa Clara University

Provider of Choice

K: It isn't easy to be the provider of choice in today's marketplace. Competition is fierce as new competitors emerge unexpectedly. Customers are more demanding because they have many more options at their fingertips. They expect to get what they want when they want it, and they want to have it customized to suit their needs. The world has changed in such a way that today the buyer, not the seller, is sitting in the driver's seat. These days, nobody has to convince anybody that the customer reigns. People are realizing that their organizations will go nowhere without the loyalty and commitment of their customers. Companies are motivated to change when they discover the new rule:

*Today
If You Don't Take Great Care
Of Your Customers,
Somebody Else Will.*

C: That's for sure! So great Customer Service has to be top of mind for all of your People. We emphasize that all the time. I love the way you and Sheldon Bowles challenged us all to create Raving Fans®, not simply satisfied customers.⁶

K: We think enthusiastic Raving Fan customers make your business a great business. Today you can't be content to simply satisfy customers. Raving Fan customers are customers who are so excited about the way you treat them that they want to brag about you—they become part of your sales force. Let me give you a simple yet powerful example of this, from an experience I had personally with your airline.

What usually happens when you call most airlines to either make or change a reservation? You get a recording that says, “All of our agents are busy right now, but your business is very important to us, so please stay on the line and we will be with you as soon as possible.” Then the music starts. You could be on hold for who knows how long, sitting and waiting to talk to a human being. Recently, I called Southwest to change a reservation. Normally at Southwest, a human being picks up the phone. This time, a recording said, “I’m sorry, our Customer Service Agents are all busy right now; but at the beep, please leave your name and telephone number, and we will call you back within ten minutes.” So that’s what I did. What do you think happened a few minutes later? My cell phone rang, and this pleasant voice said,

“Is this Ken Blanchard?”

I said, “Yes.”

“Ken, this is Bob from Southwest Airlines. How may I help you?”

Colleen, I’ve never had that experience with any other airline. How did you make that happen?

C: That's a feature that's available to all airlines. It's called *virtual queuing*. It helps us handle our heaviest calling times without lowering our Customer Service standard.

K: Why would Southwest use such a feature when no other airline seems to be doing it?

C: We're always looking for service capabilities that far exceed those of the competition, and that even exceed Customer expectations. Being called back by an airline? It was beyond most Customers' belief. Yet we routinely try to do the unexpected so we can then enjoy the growth and good reputation generated by Customers like you, Ken, who have spontaneously joined our sales force by bragging about us.

We recognize that the publicity we get from stories our Raving Fan Customers share about how our Employees treat them is more valuable and revenue-generating than advertising. Here are a few examples:

Our Flight Crews are always thinking of creative ways to make flights interesting and fun for our Passengers. I think a lot of them must have colored outside the lines when they were children.

Dear Southwest,

I want to tell you about an experience I had recently that made me fall in love with you guys all over again. I was on Flight 3077 from San Diego to Denver when the flight attendant made an unusual announcement.

“Okay, folks,” he began, “I gotta be honest with you. It’s been a really long day for us. To tell you the truth, we’re tired.”

A few passengers giggled at that. These Southwest people were funny.

“Ordinarily,” the flight attendant continued, “this is the part of the flight when we announce that we’ll be passing out peanuts and crackers for you all to snack on. But as I said, we’re tired. So instead of passing them out, we’re going to put them in a big pile up here at the front of the plane. When the plane takes off, the peanuts are going to slide down the center aisle. If you want some, grab ’em.”