



Leading By Design: The Ikea Story

By Ingvar Kamprad, Bertil Torekull

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Leading By Design: The Ikea Story By Ingvar Kamprad, Bertil Torekull

Based on exclusive interviews with the legendary founder of IKEA, Ingvar Kamprad, *Leading by Design* tells the inside story of Kamprad's humble roots and of the visionary concepts and innovative strategies that turned a small, Swedish mail-order company into a worldwide commercial giant.

When in 1943 at age seventeen Ingvar Kamprad founded IKEA, he had no way of knowing that IKEA would come to represent dedication to quality, a distinct design style, and convenience to the harried modern consumer. Today, more than 195 million people worldwide frequent his 150 stores in thirty countries, and almost 100 million catalogs are printed each year.

As the grandson of German immigrants who went to Sweden in search of a better life, Ingvar Kamprad grew up on a farm in a rural village. But he was no farmer. Early in his life, he discovered his natural affinity for business. From cigarette lighters and fish to Christmas cards and pens, young Ingvar devoted himself to importing and selling anything he thought he could make a profit on. Furniture was just one item in a long and fairly undistinguished list until, in an effort to best his main competitor, he took a chance on an armless nursing chair he called Ruth. It quickly sold out. Adding a coffee table and then a sofa bed and then a chandelier, Kamprad was astonished by how quickly the merchandise moved.

The rest is business history. In *Leading by Design*, Bertil Torekull, a well-known Swedish journalist, reveals the genius and the secrets behind IKEA's extraordinary success. With candor and detail, he offers insights into Kamprad's cutting-edge management strategies, his enthusiasm to embrace innovative methods (such as producing ready-to-assemble merchandise and using a car door factory to produce affordable products with universal appeal), and the tools he used to grow the IKEA brand into a veritable industry unto itself.

More than a standard business history *Leading by Design* captures the essence of Kamprad himself. It is a testament to the inspiration, the ideas, and the innovations that make a good business great.

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

Leading by Design is really, of course, the story of Ingvar Kamprad, the Swedish furniture retailer who turned Ikea into a company that now has 41,000 workers at 150 stores in 30 countries who annually distribute 100 million catalogs and sell \$6.25 billion in goods. And what a story it is. Based on extensive conversations with the subject, 100 additional interviews, and various documents both public and private, business journalist Bertil Torekull employs an unusual mixture of blunt first-person recollections and narrative overviews delivered with literary flair to peel away the intricacies of Kamprad's life. Along the way, Torekull reveals the creative forces that propelled Kamprad's distinctive entrepreneurial drive and fashioned a successful company. "Imagine one of the coldest little countries in the world. Think of the most barren part of that country. See in front of you a godforsaken place deep in the wild spruce forests," Torekull begins. "This book is about a man who grew up in that harsh environment, which was to mark his whole life and fundamentally color the philosophy with which he built his vast empire." Delving into a fascinating career that began taking shape at the unlikely age of 5, Torekull presents this tale in a way that entertains as well as educates. --Howard Rothman

From Publishers Weekly

Like IKEA's mass market-priced beds and dressers, this authorized history of the Swedish furniture company is accessible. Unfortunately, Torekull, a prominent Swedish financial journalist, is all too willing to downplay messy details as he charts the company's evolution from founder Ingvar Kamprad's first sales of cheap fountain pens in 1943 to the present-day behemoth, which boasts 150 stores in 30 countries on four continents with 41,000 employees. Emerging from the interviews with Kamprad and others is a flattering portrait of an entrepreneur with drive and vision who has been responsive to every opportunity to reduce costs. In a demonstration of quick reflexes in the face of changing market conditions, Kamprad sought out sources in Poland and other Eastern European countries as soon as local Swedish suppliers became too expensive. Over time, Kamprad's bold responses to challenges have undeniably been successful. Yet Torekull indicates that IKEA's future may not be as rosy as its past: Kamprad's sons tend to sit in silent obedience when their father is in the room, and new IKEA projects still invariably originate with Kamprad himself. The iron fist of the founder is also evident in the wall of disingenuousness that Torekull confronted in his attempts to investigate Kamprad's past associations with Hitler supporters and Swedish neo-Fascist political groups. Readers might suspect that Torekull would have relished writing an unauthorized history of IKEA. Confronted with the hagiographical excesses here, they will surely wish he had. Illustrations not seen by PW. (Sept.)

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From Library Journal

Torekull, an editor and founder of Dagens Industri, an economic newspaper in Sweden, provides a picturesque and insightful view of Swedish entrepreneur Ingvar Kamprad, the founder of IKEA, who was born in 1926. A descendant of merchants and traders, Kamprad started his own mail-order firm (IKEA) at 17, selling fountain pens, Christmas cards, and other sundries. Years later, he was the first to develop the idea, commercially, of selling furniture unassembled in easily transported flat boxes. Drawing on personal interviews, extensive research, and meetings with Kamprad, the author eloquently describes the company, its founder, and his business philosophy. Kamprad's reputation was tarnished when in 1994 it was discovered that from ages 16 to 25 he had contacts with a pro-Nazi activist, who was favored by his stern German grandmother and German father. Kamprad explains how he was indoctrinated and regrets this time in his

life, but he asks, "When is an old man to be forgiven for the sins of his youth?" Recommended for business collections. ABellinda Wise, Nassau Community Coll. Lib., Garden City, NY
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Users Review

From reader reviews:

Daniel Padilla:

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Bert Ferguson:

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Joshua Smith:

A lot of people always spent their free time to vacation or perhaps go to the outside with them friends and family or their friend. Were you aware? Many a lot of people spent these people free time just watching TV, or playing video games all day long. If you would like try to find a new activity that's look different you can read some sort of book. It is really fun for yourself. If you enjoy the book which you read you can spent the whole day to reading a reserve. The book Leading By Design: The Ikea Story it is very good to read. There are a lot of people that recommended this book. They were enjoying reading this book. When you did not have enough space to create this book you can buy the e-book. You can m0ore simply to read this book from your smart phone. The price is not too costly but this book has high quality.

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