

Western Carolina University
Book Report
by Mike Boyd, DBA
Associate Professor of Entrepreneurship

Title: "The Google Story"
Authors: David A. Vise and Mark Malseed
Publisher: Delta Trade
Length: 326 pages
Price: \$14.00
Reading time: 12 hours
Reading rating: 9 (1 = very difficult; 10 = very easy)
Overall rating: 4 (1 = average; 4 = outstanding)

Google is the catchphrase on everyone's lips as a source for information. Ask Google is often heard when there is knowledge to be gained and immediate access to data is required. Whether one needs the latest business news or the status of a scholar, the Google site is the place to go. While it has become synonymous with instant information, it is also a role model for success as a company, even with, or especially with, its non-traditional approach to operations and strategies.

Google was founded in 1998 by two Ph.D. students at Stanford University, Sergey Brin and Larry Page, who gave first shot at purchasing their revolutionary search engine to venture capital and high technology firms for \$1 million. The refusal of these firms forced the two young entrepreneurs to start their own firm and the rest is history. They went public August 19, 2004, and became billionaires.

Business strategies of the unusual variety sprang from the venture started by these two young men. Their corporate motto was "Don't Be Evil". A personal favorite is how they approach important problems. They say that you must "have a healthy disregard for the impossible"; in other words, "You should try to do things that most people would not." (p. 11)

Every attitude bespeaks innovation in this company. For example, Brin indicates that "The only way you are going to have success is to have lots of failures first". How unusual is that thinking in large companies?

The book is interesting and easy to enjoy. The best parts from an entrepreneurial perspective are the attitudes engendered by the founders into the employees; the methodology used for hiring, the involvement of the founders on every level; the openness of space and attitude; the willingness to allow employees to pursue their own interests on company time (within reason), and the most wonderful fact that the entrepreneurs are still in charge of this fascinating company.

Michael Boyd is an Associate Professor of Entrepreneurship in the College of Business at Western Carolina University. For previously reviewed books, visit our Web site at www.wcu.edu/cob/.