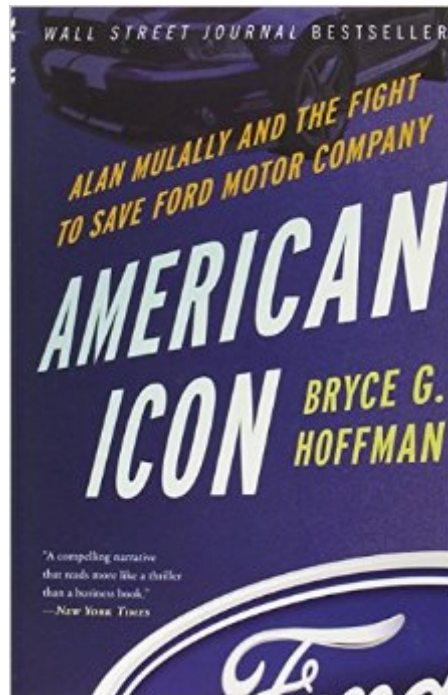


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American Icon: Alan Mulally And The Fight To Save Ford Motor Company



Synopsis

THE INSIDE STORY OF THE EPIC TURNAROUND OF FORD MOTOR COMPANY UNDER THE LEADERSHIP OF CEO ALAN MULALLY. At the end of 2008, Ford Motor Company was just months away from running out of cash. With the auto industry careening toward ruin, Congress offered all three Detroit automakers a bailout. General Motors and Chrysler grabbed the taxpayer lifeline, but Ford decided to save itself. Under the leadership of charismatic CEO Alan Mulally, Ford had already put together a bold plan to unify its divided global operations, transform its lackluster product lineup, and overcome a dysfunctional culture of infighting, backstabbing, and excuses. It was an extraordinary risk, but it was the only way the Ford family's last great industrial dynasty could hold on to their company. Mulally and his team pulled off one of the greatest comebacks in business history. As the rest of Detroit collapsed, Ford went from the brink of bankruptcy to being the most profitable automaker in the world. American Icon is the compelling, behind-the-scenes account of that epic turnaround. On the verge of collapse, Ford went outside the auto industry and recruited Mulally—the man who had already saved Boeing from the deathblow of 9/11—to lead a sweeping restructuring of a company that had been unable to overcome decades of mismanagement and denial. Mulally applied the principles he developed at Boeing to streamline Ford's inefficient operations, force its fractious executives to work together as a team, and spark a product renaissance in Dearborn. He also convinced the United Auto Workers to join his fight for the soul of American manufacturing. Bryce Hoffman reveals the untold story of the covert meetings with UAW leaders that led to a game-changing contract, Bill Ford's battle to hold the Ford family together when many were ready to cash in their stock and write off the company, and the secret alliance with Toyota and Honda that helped prop up the American automotive supply base. In one of the great management narratives of our time, Hoffman puts the reader inside the boardroom as Mulally uses his celebrated Business Plan Review meetings to drive change and force Ford to deal with the painful realities of the American auto industry. Hoffman was granted unprecedented access to Ford's top executives and top-secret company documents. He spent countless hours with Alan Mulally, Bill Ford, the Ford family, former executives, labor leaders, and company directors. In the bestselling tradition of *Too Big to Fail* and *The Big Short*, *American Icon* is narrative nonfiction at its vivid and colorful best.

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Customer Reviews

I highly recommend that you read this book and fully agree with what the other positive reviewers are saying about it. This book itself was not just a good read about a stalwart man, and an incredible company, it is an epic tale of a Great American Manufacturing Dynasty brought back from the brink of extinction. Reading it really inspired me to learn even more about Mulally, The Ford Motor Company, and their products. After reading the book, or while you wait for it to arrive, check out some of the videos and movies about Alan Mulally on the internet. His appearances at local universities, on late night talk shows, and in a documentary done about his work at Boeing all make for really interesting supplements to this book. This book is different from, but every bit as well done as Walter Isaacson's book on Steve Jobs. Both of the biographies are appealing in many of the same ways. You get a history lesson, a solid business book, a solid overview of the automotive industry, a human interest story, and a biography not just of Mulally but also of other key people in the industry. You also get a really fully developed business case study that demonstrates the lessons of teamwork, core competency, strategic management, benchmarking, business ethics, the importance of liquidity among many other concepts. Although Steve Jobs and Alan Mulally are as different as two men can be, I see similarities in their importance, vision, and impact on the World. Their biographers and their biographies are also very different, but again similar in quality and importance. The factual accuracy of this book seems to be very good. Bryce Hoffman has a lot of credibility in this part of the country and it doesn't seem that he has any agenda except to tell the story and write a good book.

Simply put, this book is a page-turner. And that's not what you'd normally expect from a business book. But there's a great story here, well told, that excites the mind. There hasn't really been a

bigger story in the last half-decade than the economy, and along with the banking and housing sectors, America's "big three" automotive manufacturers have been key players in that story. But amid an economy in decline and two cross-town rivals falling toward default, Ford managed to plot a different course. This book is the story of that startling rebirth. It briefly chronicles the history of Ford, appraising its ups and downs and the resulting corporate culture its history had created. And it looks at the trouble it was facing (along with the rest of the auto industry) in the mid 2000s. But things took a decisive change for Ford when Bill Ford Jr. volunteered to step aside as CEO and bring in outside help. And the person he tapped for that responsibility was Alan Mullaly, a top executive who had just led a resurgence at Boeing. American Icon is really three books in one: It is an interesting piece of modern American history, chronicling the inside workings of a key economic player in the midst of historic economic troubles throughout the country and the world. It is also a business book, with thoughtful and inspiring ideas for rethinking corporate culture, business workflows, and entrenched mindsets with cross-functional teams, openness, responsibility, and a carefully focused but always updating plan. And third, it is an interesting biography of both Bill Ford Jr. and Alan Mullaly, giving insight into their personalities and approaches to business.

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