

Testimonials for *The Real Deal on People: Straight Talk on How the CHRO Creates Business Value*

Les has had an incredible career in multiple companies and roles. This book offers an exceptional synthesis of his experiences in ways that will edify the next generation of HR professionals. He shares specific experiences, but offers broad principles and practices that are grounded in reality, but will nurture future HR professionals. With his insights and lessons drawn from the best CHROs and CEOs, this book is a treasure trove of insights, tools, and actions that move the HR profession to a new standard.

Dave Ulrich, Professor, Ross School of Business, University of Michigan & Partner, The RBL Group

“This book has brought together many voices to describe how the CHRO can add great value in an organization. Les has been the quarterback in driving the HR strategy along with the cheerleader for his HR team in their execution. A great read for current and aspiring CHRO’s and some great insights for CEO’s.”

Bill Conaty, former SVP, Corporate Human Resources at General Electric, and author of the book *The Talent Masters: Why Smart Business Leaders Put People Before Numbers*

“In *The Real Deal on People*, Les distills complex interpersonal and business challenges to craft a clear and concise guidebook for professionals at all levels, providing a better understanding of how a strong CHRO can significantly benefit a company. His entertaining anecdotes and real-world experiences provide countless helpful tips and direction for aspiring CHROs and seasoned executives alike.”

John Brock, Chairman & CEO, Coca-Cola Enterprises

"Les has combined first class HR practice with years of experience to create a comprehensive must read for CEO's, Corporate Boards and their HR Committees, and all those involved with the HR function. From total rewards to talent management, Les looks at the most senior HR role from every angle to create sage advice that is business driven and people focused. A great contribution to the HR field."

Stephen Wetmore, President & CEO, Canadian Tire Corporation

"In any company there are many business drivers that determine success. Strategy in general and people strategy in particular also play a key role to how a company performs. People can be your number one competitive advantage, they can be the differentiator. The CHRO plays a vital role as a business partner to the CEO in helping to develop a people strategy and Les articulately describes throughout his book with real life examples how the CHRO is a major contributor to it. A must read for CEO's, CHRO's and Boards."

John Sullivan, Chief Executive Officer, The Cadillac Fairview Corporation Limited

"This is an excellent book, not only because it provides an internal perspective of what an effective CHRO should look like, but it also gives real life examples of how a CHRO should behave, and is perceived by their colleagues, CEO and Board members. It is very inspirational and instructive! Congratulations Les!"

Renée Légaré, SVP, Human Resources, Vice Présidente Principale, RH The Ottawa Hospital, L'Hopital d'Ottawa

"*The Real Deal on People*" is a thoughtful practitioner's guide to the extensive challenges and huge responsibilities held by today's CHRO. Written by an accomplished CHRO himself, who shares both solid advice and practical experiences. The book covers the vast expanse of CHRO duties and is a useful reference for anyone in business – whether you're a CHRO today, aspire to be one or frankly, for any executive in any function who wants to better understand how a top-flight CHRO can help his or her organization."

"Les Dakens' knowledge and insights abound in this book – worth a read and delivered in an easy to digest format. As a CHRO, from "sounding board" to the CEO to developer of talent to ambassador to the Board, this book has good lessons for all about the ever increasing critical role of the CHRO."

Doug Tough
Chairman and CEO, International Flavors and Fragrances

"Les has done a brilliant job of capturing the essence of a high-performing Chief Human Resources Officer, and it's all the more credible because of his personal track record. This is a must-read for HR professionals and business leaders alike."

Dean A. Connor, President and Chief Executive Officer, Sun Life Financial

"While big strides have been made in all areas of Human Resources Management, there is more to be done. CHROs and all practitioners must strategically integrate their initiatives, processes and advice, and truly lead at the top, with measurable value and impact, to business success. Through his stories and insights, Les Dakens provides a deep, "insiders' view" of how tomorrow's HR leaders can achieve that impact."

Rose Patten, Special Advisor to CEO, BMO Financial Group

"As the former CEO of a large company, Les' insights really resonated with me and my experience in leading a successful company with great employees. Les captures the essence of the CHRO as business strategist, not just people strategist, which is absolutely key as people are the business. The content is real, practical and no-nonsense and offers great insights into the use of HR technology, which Les notes is really about managing information and not about the technology itself. The Real Deal is a must-read for executives as well as HR committee directors."

Laura Formusa, former CEO, Hydro One & Board Director

"A true wealth of experience distilled into one book."

"I found myself nodding in agreement so many times. *The Real Deal on People* is the candid advice and observations of an HR pro. Early in your career it will inspire and guide. Later in your career it will remind you of what it takes. Through out it deals with the myriad of challenges and complexity of the top HR job in a breadth, depth and honesty I have not seen before."

Peter Edwards, VP Human Resources & Labour Relations, Canadian Pacific

"In a matter of fact, conversational way, Les delivers a powerful and practical guide in sharing his 30+ years of experience in the human resources field - as valuable to current CHROs as those aspiring to the position."

John Silverthorn, Senior Vice President, Human Resources, CIBC

"Les has assembled a very practical, comprehensive playbook for leaders who care deeply about talent and its impact on business. This book is filled with terrific insights and great advice on how to manage all facets of the employee life cycle from hire to retire. This is an invaluable toolkit."

Julie Murphy, CHRO Direct Energy Business

"*The Real Deal on People* is exactly that. Les Dakens has pulled together insights and experiences from some of the most challenging business environments in North America, and turned them into lessons that would serve every aspiring CHRO. His practical insights are borne of experiential learning that jumps off every page. Put it on your bookshelf, because you will want to use it as a reference when facing your next tough human resources challenge."

Bill Morneau, Executive Chairman, Morneau Shepell