



# Mind Your Own Business: A Maverick's Guide to Business, Leadership and Life

*Sidney Harman*

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**“The maverick’s way of conducting business forswears the leader as commanding general; it rejects the practice of top-down, authoritative command. Rather, it proposes the leader as catalyst, conscience, and inspirer . . . The true leader sees his job as setting an environment in which new ideas can emerge that neither he nor any other individual anticipated. That leap of imagination, that moment of genuine creativity, can only be inspired by a leader who encourages exploration and shows a willingness to consider a totally new approach.” --from *Mind Your Own Business***

The corporate misdeeds of self-serving executives during the high-octane economy of the 1990s have forced many people to rethink the qualities that make a strong leader. For sixty years, Sidney Harman, the chairman and CEO of the world’s premier manufacturer of high-end audio equipment, has stood apart from the crowd, building his business the old-fashioned way, by satisfying customers and, in doing so, making a healthy profit. His refreshingly employee-centric, bottoms-up approach to business is the secret of Harman International’s continuing success.

In *Mind Your Own Business*, Harman shares his visionary ideas about leadership, providing a welcome contrast to the bad behavior of business leaders recently dominating the news. Harman focuses on creating a culture of personal responsibility throughout his company. He likens his top management team to a jazz quartet that listens to and improvises with one another to create harmony. He stresses the need to do more for workers at every level because employees are the company’s most valuable asset. At Harman International, he has established in-house classrooms to teach English, basic math, health, and music, and encourages his employees to pursue their potential.

Now a hale and healthy eighty-five, Harman thinks that “an idea a day” is more important than the proverbial apple and that the key to a long life is a restless curiosity. In the bestselling tradition of Max DePree’s *Leadership Is an Art*, *Mind Your Own Business* is a frank, no-nonsense guide for those who want to bring strength, vitality, and values to their businesses—and to their lives.

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