



How to Castrate a Bull: Unexpected Lessons on Risk, Growth, and Success in Business

By Dave Hitz

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How to Castrate a Bull: Unexpected Lessons on Risk, Growth, and Success in Business By Dave Hitz

Dave Hitz likes to solve fun problems. He didn't set out to be a Silicon Valley icon, a business visionary, or even a billionaire. But he became all three. It turns out that business is a mosaic of interesting puzzles like managing risk, developing and reversing strategies, and looking into the future by deconstructing the past.

As a founder of NetApp, a data storage firm that began as an idea scribbled on a placemat and now takes in \$4 billion a year, Hitz has seen his company go through every major cycle in business—from the Jack-of-All-Trades mentality of a start-up, through the tumultuous period of the IPO and the dot-com bust, and finally to a mature enterprise company. NetApp is one of the fastest-growing computer companies ever, and for six years in a row it has been on *Fortune* magazine's list of Best Companies to Work For. Not bad for a high school dropout who began his business career selling his blood for money and typing the names of diseases onto index cards.

With colorful examples and anecdotes, *How to Castrate a Bull* is a story for everyone interested in understanding business, the reasons why companies succeed and fail, and how powerful lessons often come from strange and unexpected places.

Dave Hitz co-founded NetApp in 1992 with James Lau and Michael Malcolm. He served as a programmer, marketing evangelist, technical architect, and vice president of engineering. Presently, he is responsible for future strategy and direction for the company. Before his career in Silicon Valley, Dave worked as a cowboy, where he got valuable management experience by herding, branding, and castrating cattle.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Silicon Valley success story Hitz, co-founder of tech consulting company NetApp, takes readers through the three stages of a developing business in this "memoir of a company and of a man," with lessons. Hitz's well-organized chronology outlines the net start-up's 1990s childhood, dot-bust adolescence and triumphant adulthood, centered around three easy-to-grasp themes: risk, growth and success, consecutively. Breezy and entertaining throughout, Hitz's text is also graced with efficient sidebars and a succinct, well-considered time-out capping each chapter. Chapters on his team's struggle to raise funds, find the right CEO for the job and go public are complemented by lessons from ancient Egyptians on data storage and NetApp president Tom Mendoza on public speaking. Though there aren't any lessons here that can't be found in other books, Hitz's personal and professional story encompasses solid business values, common mistakes, a bit of insider lore and some decent outta-left-field jokes (says the engineer to the frog princess: "Who has time for a girlfriend? But a talking frog: that's really cool").

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Review

NetApp Awarded #1 Best Company to Work For 2009 by *Fortune*

A *San Francisco Chronicle* Nonfiction Best-Seller, January 30, 2009

"Readers will gain insight into management styles, different ways to make decisions, alternative approaches to managing people, and the value of dissent within a company. They also will learn why it is better to castrate a bull with a dull knife than a sharp knife. And they may get a few chuckles along the way."—**ByteandSwitch.com**, January 27, 2009

"Hitz spends much of the book discussing what happened after he moved to move Silicon Valley in 1986 and began working at a series of start-ups, and the various business problems he faced and how he approached them. Hitz describes in detail the evolution of NetApp and, of course, does not omit the vendor's sales pitch. But at various points in the 200-page book Hitz takes a break from talking business to focus on some of the humorous passages referenced in Chapter Zero." —**NetworkWorld.com**, January 21, 2009

From the Inside Flap

How to Castrate a Bull

Dave Hitz didn't set out to be a Silicon Valley icon, a business visionary, or even a billionaire, but he became all three. Perhaps it's because he likes to solve fun puzzles. Somewhere along the way, Hitz discovered that business is a mosaic of fascinating puzzles that involve managing risk, developing and reversing strategies, and looking into the future by deconstructing the past.

Filled with colorful examples and anecdotes, Dave Hitz's autobiographical book, *How to Castrate a Bull*, is a story for anyone interested in understanding business, the reasons why companies succeed and fail, and how powerful lessons often come from strange and unexpected places—even from the open range. Before his career in Silicon Valley, Dave worked as a cowboy, where he got valuable management experience by herding, branding, and castrating cattle.

As a founder of NetApp, a data storage and management firm that began as an idea scribbled on a placemat and now takes in \$4 billion a year, Dave has seen his company go through every major cycle in business—from the jack-of-all-trades mentality of a start-up, through the tumultuous period of the dot-com boom and bust, and finally to a mature enterprise. NetApp is one of the fastest-growing computer companies ever, and for six years in a row it has been on Fortune magazine's list of Best Companies to Work For. Not bad for a high school dropout who began his business career selling his blood for money and typing the names of diseases onto index cards.

Written for anyone who wants to know what it takes to succeed in today's volatile marketplace, *How to Castrate a Bull* relates not only what lessons Dave Hitz has learned in the course of his remarkable life but more important how he learned them.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Jack Michaud:

Reading a e-book can be one of a lot of activity that everyone in the world likes. Do you like reading book so. There are a lot of reasons why people enjoy it. First reading a guide will give you a lot of new details. When you read a book you will get new information due to the fact book is one of numerous ways to share the information or even their idea. Second, examining a book will make a person more imaginative. When you studying a book especially hype book the author will bring one to imagine the story how the characters do it anything. Third, you can share your knowledge to other folks. When you read this *How to Castrate a Bull: Unexpected Lessons on Risk, Growth, and Success in Business*, you may tells your family, friends and soon about yours book. Your knowledge can inspire the mediocre, make them reading a publication.

Kevin Blais:

Reading can called imagination hangout, why? Because if you find yourself reading a book mainly book entitled *How to Castrate a Bull: Unexpected Lessons on Risk, Growth, and Success in Business* your thoughts will drift away trough every dimension, wandering in most aspect that maybe unidentified for but surely might be your mind friends. Imaging each and every word written in a reserve then become one web form conclusion and explanation this maybe you never get ahead of. The *How to Castrate a Bull: Unexpected Lessons on Risk, Growth, and Success in Business* giving you an additional experience more than blown away your mind but also giving you useful info for your better life on this era. So now let us present to you the relaxing pattern this is your body and mind will likely be pleased when you are finished looking at it, like winning a game. Do you want to try this extraordinary spending spare time activity?

Michael Kautz:

Is it anyone who having spare time then spend it whole day by simply watching television programs or just telling lies on the bed? Do you need something totally new? This *How to Castrate a Bull: Unexpected Lessons on Risk, Growth, and Success in Business* can be the reply, oh how comes? A fresh book you know. You are so out of date, spending your time by reading in this fresh era is common not a geek activity. So what these books have than the others?

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