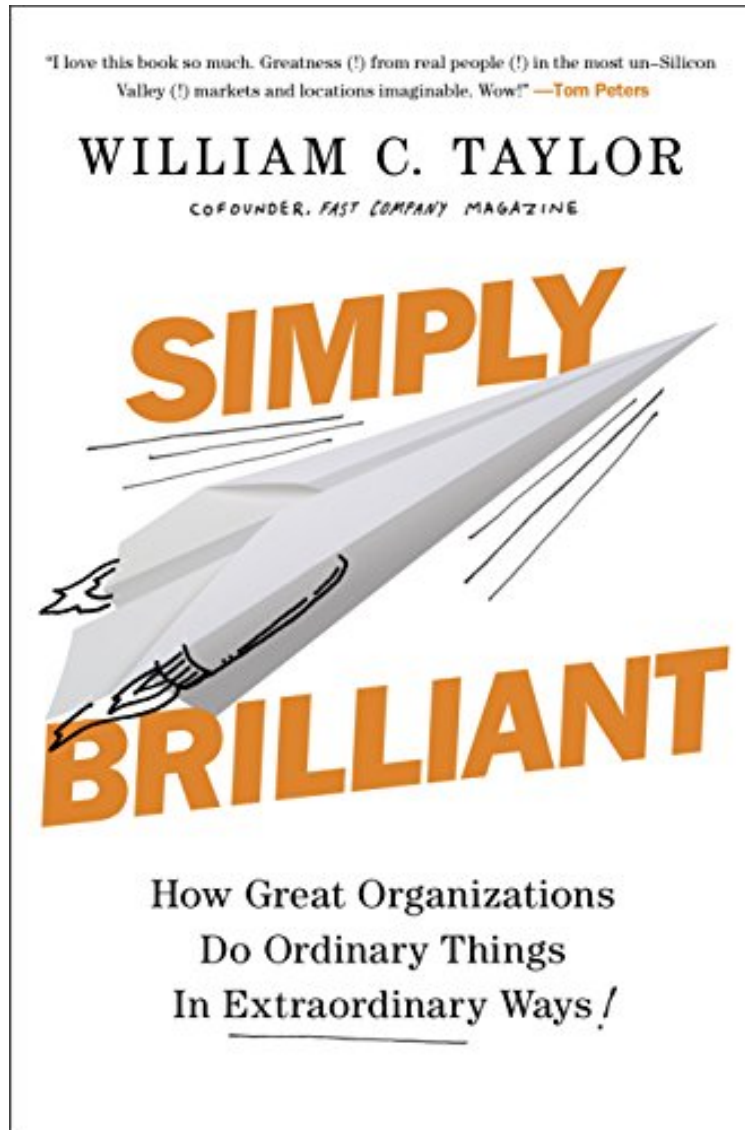


# Simply Brilliant: How Great Organizations Do Ordinary Things in Extraordinary Ways

William C. Taylor

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Cofounder of Fast Company magazine and bestselling author of *Mavericks at Work* and *Practically Radical* shows how true business innovation can spring from the unlikeliest places. Far away from Silicon Valley, in familiar, traditional, even unglamorous fields, ordinary people are unleashing extraordinary advances that amaze customers, energize employees, and create huge economic value. Their secret? They understand that the work of inventing the future doesn't just belong to geeks designing mobile apps and virtual-reality headsets, or to social-media entrepreneurs hoping to launch the next Facebook. Some of today's most compelling organizations are doing brilliant things in simple settings such as retail banks, office cleaning companies, department stores, small hospitals, and auto dealerships. William C. Taylor, cofounder of Fast Company and best-selling author of *Practically Radical*, traveled thousands of miles to visit these hotbeds of simple brilliance and unearth the principles and practices behind their success. He offers fascinating case studies and powerful lessons that you can apply to do ordinary things in extraordinary ways, regardless of your industry or profession. Consider, for instance, how... Miami Beach's dazzling 1111 Lincoln Road reimaged the humble parking garage as a high-profile public space that hosts weddings, yoga classes, and celebrity gatherings. USAA, the financial-services giant that provides soldiers and their families with insurance and banking products, inspires frontline employees to deliver legendary service by immersing them in military culture. Pal's Sudden Service, a fast-food chain with a cult following, serves up burgers and fries with such speed and accuracy that companies from other industries pay to learn from its astonishing discipline. Lincoln Electric, a manufacturer based in Euclid, Ohio, dominates its ultracompetitive markets with a fierce devotion to quality and productivity. But the key to its prosperity is a share-the-wealth model that gives everybody a sense of security and a piece of the action. It has maintained a strict no-layoff pledge since 1958. As Taylor writes: "The story of this book, its message for leaders who aim to do something important and build something great, is both simple and subversive: In a time of wrenching disruptions and exhilarating advances, of unrelenting turmoil and unlimited promise, the future is open to everybody. The thrill of breakthrough creativity and breakaway performance . . . can be summoned in all sorts of industries and all walks of life, if leaders can reimagine what's possible in their fields." Simply Brilliant shows you how. From the Hardcover edition.

Simply Brilliant offers transformative messages for leaders in all walks of life. This book will challenge you to look at yourself, your work, and the world around you with fresh eyes and a more open mind. -- Sir Ken Robinson \* educator, author of *CREATIVE SCHOOLS* \* Bill Taylor has done it again. This book is going to change your business forever-when you read it, you'll understand. -- Seth Godin \* author of *Linchpin* \* I love this book so much. Greatness (!) from real people (!) in the most un-Silicon Valley (!) markets and locations imaginable. Wow! -- Tom Peters \* coauthor of *In Search of Excellence* \* A fascinating look inside companies that are rewriting the rules of success. If you've ever wondered whether imagination beats knowledge and passion overcomes ambition, drop what you're doing and read this book. -- Adam Grant \* Wharton professor and author of *Originals* and *Give and Take* \* About the Author William C. Taylor is co-founder and founding editor of Fast Company and the bestselling author of *Practically Radical* and *Mavericks at Work*. He writes a popular blog for the Harvard Business and was a columnist for The New York Times and the Guardian.