

PART I

THE NORDSTROM WAY

WHAT MANAGERS CAN DO TO CREATE NORDSTROM-STYLE SERVICE

Part I, “What Managers Can Do,” examines the influence of the people who create, maintain, and support the corporate service culture.

All employees, but especially managers, need to have an appreciation and awareness of the company’s history and culture, which includes the guiding principles on which the organization was founded, as well as the trials and tribulations, successes and accomplishments that the company has experienced over the years.

In this part, we recognize the value of consciously spreading a culture of service throughout the organization, including among new hires. This part also explores how you and your colleagues can provide your customers with more choices, which will give your customers more reasons to do business with your organization.

Nordstrom is a company whose managers constantly reinforce its history, its culture, its reason for being, and its unwavering dedication to *think like the customer*. This is the essence of a great customer-service company.



The Nordstrom Story

*How a Century of Family Leadership
Created a Culture of Entrepreneurship,
Consensus, and Service*

I know that the people who run the company are going to work as hard or harder than me. The same principles that were here before I got here will be in place after I retire. That's encouraging. I really like that.

You can't teach culture. You have to live it. You have to experience it. You have to share it. You have to show it.

—Brent Harris,
Nordstrom's national merchandise manager for shoes



Arriving at the lobby of the Nordstrom corporate offices, which is connected to the flagship store in downtown Seattle, a visitor is greeted first by the Nordstrom history and culture. On the walls adjacent to the elevators is a grainy, 100-year-old picture of founder John W. Nordstrom and his original partner, Carl F. Wallin, proudly standing outside their first tiny shoe store; and another shot, circa 1910, of the interior of the store, where mustachioed salesmen in ruffled suits are dwarfed by stacks and stacks of shoe boxes that are collected along the walls and piled high up to the ceiling.

New employees attend orientation on the fifth floor of this building, which contains the John W. Nordstrom room, where the company holds its annual shareholders meeting, customer events, staff meetings, and pep rallies. All around are pictures of stores, various generations of Nordstroms, and numerous other reminders of the rich Nordstrom heritage and culture. An appreciation of what Nordstrom is all about cannot be fully grasped without an understanding of the company's culture. That's why the importance and the value of the culture are emphasized from the moment new employees come to work for the company.

On one particular day, a dozen well-groomed and neatly dressed men and women are seated behind a horseshoe configuration of gray tables in a meeting room on the fifth floor of the

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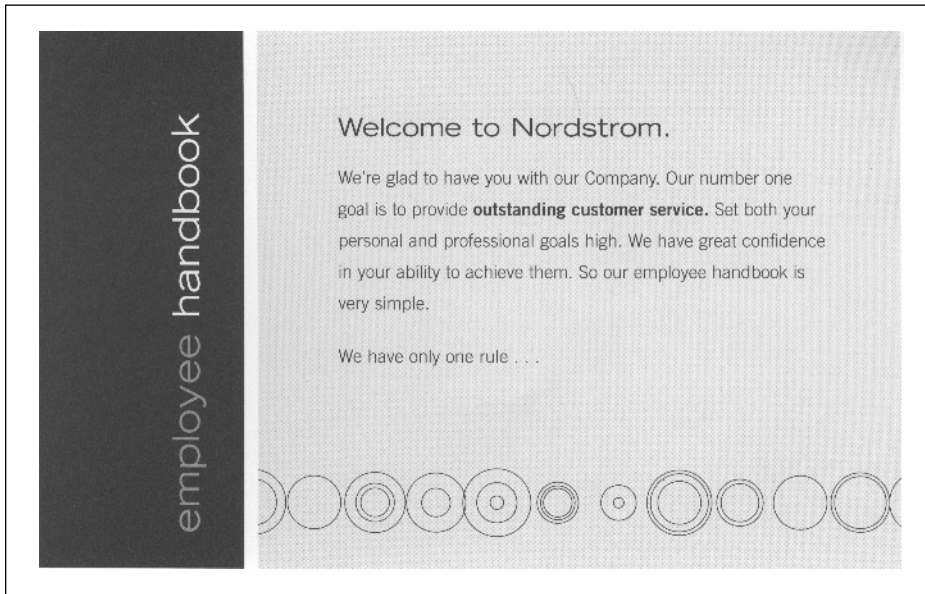
corporate offices. They are a racially diverse group; most are under the age of 30, a couple are closer to 50. What they have in common is that they are all new employees, awaiting the start of the one-day employee orientation that kicks off their career at Nordstrom. In front of each one of them is a half-inch-thick blue folder. The one word on the cover is “Welcome.”

On the inside, a separate sheet of paper contains these words:

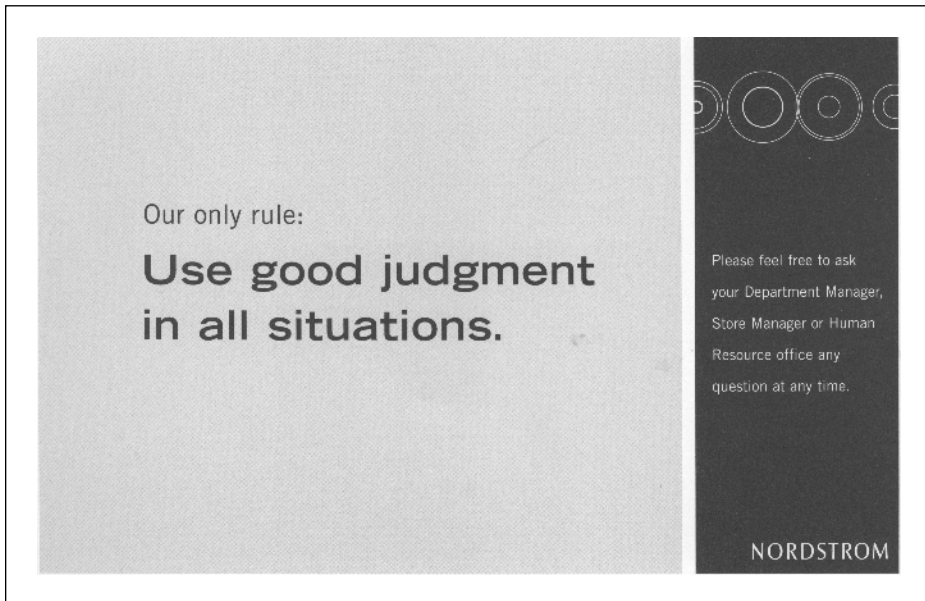
As we travel along the road of **life**, we encounter paths that lead to a great opportunity for **growth**. To recognize the doors that open to a bright **future** is the key. Once inside, we crave **support** from our colleagues. We know that the **health** of our relationships is paramount to our own **success**, and that the **joy** of sharing ideas leads to a **diversity** of options. Our reward is access to a **wealth** of knowledge that we would have otherwise overlooked. **Welcome** to Nordstrom. Our door is open.

Inside the packet are separate folders containing information on the company, employee guidelines, compensation program, safety program, and employee benefits. There is also a 5½-inch by 7½-inch card—the *Nordstrom Employee Handbook*. One side of the card says:

The Nordstrom Story



(Turning over the card)



For some of these men and women, this day marks the birth of a long-term relationship that will bring them financial rewards and professional and personal fulfillment. For others, it is the beginning of the end. They will eventually leave Nordstrom because of what they will perceive as unreasonable demands, persistent pressure to reach a ceaseless series of sales goals, and relentless emphasis on providing the kind of all-encompassing customer service that has fed the Nordstrom mystique. But the future is for later. On this orientation day, these men and women are here to immerse themselves in that culture and its history.

The History of Nordstrom: After the Gold Rush, a Store Is Born

Johan W. Nordstrom, like the founders of most of America's retail dynasties, was an immigrant. The middle child of five, Nordstrom was born February 15, 1871, in the town of Lulea, in the northernmost part of Sweden, 60 miles below the Arctic Circle. His father, a blacksmith, wagon maker, and part-time farmer, passed away when Johan was eight years old. By the time he was 11, his mother had taken him out of school so he could work on the family farm.

His life in Sweden, by his own admission, was an unhappy one. As he got older, "my mother seemed to think I was a man, and often remarked that at my age my brother [10 years his senior] could do nearly anything and why couldn't I," he wrote. "I often cried when I had trouble doing things she expected me to do and couldn't, and felt very helpless."

The winter he turned 16, Johan decided to leave home and cast his lot in America. With 450 crowns (about \$112) of his

modest inheritance, given to him by his guardian, he bought a suit of clothes. “The first clothes I had ever had on my back that were not homespun and hand woven.” His eventual destination was the Pacific Northwest of America, where thousands of Swedes thrived as fishermen, loggers, blacksmiths, shipwrights, and millwrights in a climate and landscape similar to their homeland. Others helped finish the transcontinental railroad. “Give me enough Swedes,” proclaimed James J. Hill, the driving force behind the Great Northern Railroad, “and I’ll build a railroad right through hell.”

There were no railroads in northern Sweden, so Johan and two young friends began their odyssey with a two-day boat trip to Stockholm, followed by a three-day voyage across Sweden, through the Gota Canal, to Gothenburg, then on to Hull, in northeast England. The first train ride of Johan’s life brought him to Liverpool, where he took steerage passage for the 10-day voyage to Ellis Island, New York. From there, Nordstrom and his friends, unable to speak a word of English, took a train to Stambaugh, Michigan, where he had a cousin and prospects for work.

When he arrived in Michigan, Nordstrom, with five dollars in his pocket, took a job hauling iron ore with a wheelbarrow, carting it about a hundred feet to a platform and dumping it into railroad cars. For the next five years, his strong back and fierce determination carried him westward through a series of hard-scrabble manual labor jobs: logging in Michigan, digging coal in Iowa, mining gold and silver in Colorado, loading railroad ties and carting brick in Mendocino County, California, and Douglas fir trees in Washington state. By the summer of 1896, Nordstrom had saved enough money to buy 20 acres of bottom land for potato farming in the Swedish immigrant enclave of Arlington, Washington, about 50 miles north of Seattle.

Seattle: City of Opportunity

Seattle in the 1890s was “young, raw, and crude,” wrote Roger Sale in *Seattle, Past to Present*. White settlers first reached the region in 1852. In 1860, a group of about 150 pioneers settled there. (By way of comparison, New York City in the 1850s already had paved streets and a store named R. H. Macy.) “They didn’t come looking for paradise,” said one wag. “They came for cheap real estate.” From 1879 to 1890, population rocketed from 1,107 to 43,487, fueled by constant rumors that Seattle would be the terminus of the transcontinental railroad. The nascent city provided equal opportunity for God-fearing pioneers, entrepreneurial visionaries, scam artists, and ladies of the evening. The essence of the “Seattle Spirit” was “enlightened self-interest,” wrote William C. Speidel, the city’s iconoclastic historian, in his irreverent account, *Sons of the Profits*.

The mood was feverish. With Seattle about to be connected by rail via the Great Northern Railroad to the rest of North America, making money was on everyone’s mind. A leading banker of that era, N. B. Coffman, described the 1890s as one “of adventure and wildcat speculation . . . such can never again be witnessed.” Norman H. Clark wrote in *Washington: A Bicentennial History*: “There had been nothing like it in the American history since the opening of the Louisiana Territory—golden years where no personal ambition, however grandiose, seemed at all unreasonable, when it seemed that every venture might prosper and every family might share in the nobility of wealth because of the democracy of profit.”

At breakfast, on Sunday morning, July 18, 1897, Johan Nordstrom picked up a copy of the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer* to see splashed across the front page, in huge capital letters, the magic

word: “GOLD!” Coarse gold had been found in the fields of the Klondike, in Canada’s Yukon Territory. Five thousand people greeted the steamer *Portland* when it arrived on July 17 at the Seattle waterfront with a much-ballyhooed cargo—“a ton of gold.” Coupled with the arrival in San Francisco of the *Excelsior*, with another heavy cargo of gold, the news ignited the world.

Johan (who Anglicized his name to John) read the story “over and over again . . . discussing this big news,” he recalled in his memoir. “Finally I slammed the paper down on the table and said, ‘I’m going to Alaska!’” Nordstrom gathered his belongings and “what little money I had and by four o’clock that afternoon I was on the train bound for Seattle and a new adventure.” Arriving at the Seattle waterfront early the following morning, he found a virtually endless line of people waiting to buy tickets for Alaska. When the coal freighter *Willamette* steamed out of Elliott Bay, Seattle, heading north for the Inland Passage, it was burdened with 1,200 men, 600 horses, 600 mules, and John Nordstrom. Because he had second-class passage, Nordstrom slept with the mules.

Reaching Port Valdez, Alaska, in Prince William Sound that summer, was merely the beginning of Nordstrom’s thousand-mile adventure to his ultimate destination: Dawson, the frontier town in the heart of the gold fields. He battled cold, snow, rain, storms, and wind—mostly on foot, because his horse died along the way and had to be butchered for food. From Skagway, he walked over the frozen solid Klondike River into tiny Dawson, only a year old, but “as lively a little place as you’d ever see,” he recalled. “There were many saloons, dance halls, and gambling houses, all waiting for the poor miner to spend his hard-earned gold.”

For the next two years, Nordstrom struggled in the gold fields, taking a series of jobs to keep going. Finally, his luck

changed: He struck gold. After Nordstrom staked his claim on the strike, another miner challenged it. The Canadian Gold Commission settled claim disputes but, unfortunately for Nordstrom, the man who made the competing claim was “a government man and a possible friend of the Gold Commissioner,” Nordstrom wrote in his memoir. (Corruption was not unknown in the Yukon.) Nordstrom’s friends advised him to sell his claim to the other man, rather than hold out and possibly wind up with nothing. After paying his legal expenses, Nordstrom ended up with \$13,000 (more than \$250,000 in today’s dollars), which “looked like a lot of money to me, so I decided that I had had enough of Alaska and returned to Seattle,” Nordstrom recalled. [The gold strike eventually netted the other man a reported \$5 million.]

A booming Seattle was roaring into the twentieth century, fueled by the financial windfall of an unprecedented rush of new arrivals and the Klondike gold rush. “There was a swagger in its walk, a boldness in its vision,” a historian wrote about Seattle. “Out here, on the edge of the continent, the great Pacific lapping at the front door, all things seemed possible.”

In Seattle, John Nordstrom moved in with his sister. Sometime later, he renewed his acquaintance with Hilda Carlson, a Swedish girl he had taken out a few times before going to Alaska. Soon after, in May 1900, he married Hilda. They honeymooned in Sweden where they visited each other’s homes, which were 24 miles apart.

“Looking around for some small business to get into,” Nordstrom wrote in his privately published 1950 memoir, *The Immigrant in 1887*, he often visited an old Klondike pal, Carl F. Wallin, a shoemaker with a bushy walrus moustache, who had set up a little 10-foot-wide shoe repair shop on Fourth Avenue and Pike Street. Wallin suggested that he and Nordstrom form a partnership in a shoe store that would be established on the site of the

repair shop. Nordstrom agreed, putting up \$5,000; Wallin added \$1,000. Some of the money was used to fix up the store, which was immediately expanded to 20 feet. With \$3,500, they bought an inventory of shoes and opened their doors to customers in 1901. The store was named Wallin & Nordstrom.

Imagine Nordstrom, a 30-year-old man who had just purchased his first high-quality wool suit, ill fitting, no doubt, with fabric bunched up at the knees and elbows. He spoke only broken English and knew nothing about shoes or about selling. What he *did* know was that hard work and tenacity had always paid off for him. In his memoir, Nordstrom recalled the very first day of business:

I had never fitted a pair of shoes or sold anything in my life, but I was depending on Mr. Wallin's meager knowledge of shoe salesmanship to help me out. Well, this opening day we had not had a customer by noon, so my partner went to lunch. He had not been gone but a few minutes when our first customer, a woman, came in for a pair of shoes she had seen in the window. I was nervous and could not find the style she had picked out in our stock. I was just about ready to give up when I decided to try on the pair from the window, the only pair we had of that style. I'll never know if it was the right size, but the customer bought them anyway.

Opening day sales totaled \$12.50.

The next day, Saturday, the store stayed open from eight o'clock in the morning until midnight; receipts were \$47. By the end of that first summer, Saturday sales sometimes were as high as \$100. "We both allowed ourselves a salary of \$75 a month and got along fine on this amount," Nordstrom wrote.

What is important about the story of Wallin & Nordstrom's first sale is that John Nordstrom, without even realizing it, hit

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on one of the foundations of *The Nordstrom Way*: “Do whatever it takes to take care of the customer, and do whatever it takes to make sure the customer doesn’t leave the store without buying something.” More than a century later, the same principle still applies.

Wallin & Nordstrom steadily grew their business, periodically moving to larger spaces in downtown Seattle. Eventually, John’s eldest sons, Everett W., born in 1903, and Elmer J., born a year later, began working in the store when each of them reached the age of 12, establishing a Nordstrom family tradition that has continued to this day across four generations. In the late 1920s, after gaining experience working for other retailers, Everett and Elmer bought out their father and Carl Wallin, and took ownership of the business, which comprised a couple of stores, employing about a dozen clerks. They soon changed the name of the store from Wallin & Nordstrom to “Nordstrom’s.” They would eventually settle on “Nordstrom.” Years later, when friends asked John if he hadn’t taken a big risk by putting virtually his entire net worth into the hands of his relatively inexperienced sons, he replied, “I only went through the sixth grade in grammar school in Sweden. My boys are college graduates. They must be a lot smarter than I ever was.”

Elmer and Everett, who were later joined by their younger brother Lloyd, built Nordstrom’s into the biggest independent shoe retailer in the United States. The company expanded into women’s apparel in 1963, with the acquisition of a Seattle specialty shop called Best’s Apparel, Inc., a fashionable downtown Seattle retailer, with a second store in downtown Portland, and renamed the company “Nordstrom Best.” (John and Hilda’s other children were daughters Esther and Mabel [who passed away in 1919], The daughters were not in the business.)

One of the reasons Nordstrom moved into apparel was to offer more opportunities for the third generation of Nordstroms, then in their thirties, including Everett's son, Bruce A.; Elmer's two sons, James F. and John N.; and John "Jack" McMillan, who was married to Lloyd's daughter, Loyal. All four were University of Washington graduates, with degrees in business. Like their fathers, the three younger Nordstroms began working in the store as children and continued to sell shoes throughout high school and college; McMillan also started working for the store while an undergraduate. Trained on the sales floor, the third generation was literally and figuratively "raised kneeling in front of the customer," said Bruce. In fact, they toiled for years in the stockroom before their fathers "ever allowed us near a foot."

In 1968, the brothers, whose net worth and only source of income was the corporation, wanted their estates to have a market value that could be readily established for the purpose of estate taxes. Their alternatives were to either sell the chain to the next generation or to an established retailer. Because the younger Nordstroms lacked the capital, the first option was not viable; but the second option was not only viable, it was preferable because it would make the brothers wealthy. Everett, Elmer, and Lloyd notified the third generation that they intended to sell the company, and soon three of the most prominent department store chains of that era—Associated Dry Goods, Dayton-Hudson, and Broadway-Hale Stores (the company later known as Carter Hawley Hale)—emerged as the prominent suitors. Jack McMillan recalled that as the offers began coming in, he and the young Nordstroms were forced to ask themselves whether they wanted to work for one of those three retail giants and, "the more we thought about it, we didn't."

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Broadway-Hale made the most financially appealing offer: a million shares of Broadway-Hale stock at approximately \$24 a share. The third generation, who would become significant Broadway-Hale stockholders, would continue to run the Nordstrom operation as a division of Broadway-Hale. For Jim Nordstrom, the most “sobering” experience came when he and his contemporaries were having lunch with Ed Carter, chairman of Broadway-Hale, who told the young Nordstroms how much he liked their stores and that they had done well through tough times in Seattle. He asked each of them how they were able to accomplish that. They explained that they used a decentralized management system. “John talked about the men’s shoes business; Bruce about ladies’ shoes; Jack and I talked about apparel,” Jim Nordstrom recalled. “After we got all through [talking about the company’s decentralized approach and decision-by-consensus style], Ed Carter said, ‘You can’t run a business like that.’ I think we then all realized our job security was in jeopardy.”

Before the senior Nordstroms entered into an agreement with Broadway-Hale, the younger Nordstroms came up with an alternative plan. They told their fathers that they could do a better job of running the company than any outside organization. Presenting Everett, Elmer, and Lloyd with a detailed business plan, they made the case that they could successfully steer the business. Part of their plan entailed paying for the transaction by issuing stock and taking the company public, which would be an extraordinary move for a firm that prided itself on its low profile and the fact that it had financed expansion solely out of earnings.

“We asked them to entrust their fortune to us,” said Bruce. They had their doubts. “They looked at us and they weren’t thrilled with what they saw,” Jim recollected. “So, the idea of

[ensuring their] security and selling it to another company appealed to them.” The brothers believed the main reason they succeeded was their ability to work together as a cohesive unit. They didn’t know if the younger generation, who had always gotten along (but had not had the opportunity to work as a group) could duplicate that solidarity. “And we didn’t want to see them break up into feuding factions trying to,” recalled Elmer.

Despite their misgivings, the brothers, who were encouraged by the four boys’ ability to organize themselves, accepted their proposal. “We were shocked,” said Jim Nordstrom. “We thought they would take the money.”

The pro forma proposal put together by the third generation estimated that Nordstrom would reach \$100 million in sales by 1980. As it turned out, they underestimated that number by almost \$400 million.

In May 1970, Bruce, then 37; John, 34; Jim, 31; and Jack McMillan, 39, assumed operating management. The following year, the three Nordstroms became co-presidents and directors, and drew the same salary. Elmer, Everett, and Lloyd became co-chairmen of the board, “offering encouragement and resisting the temptation to give advice,” wrote Elmer. As the torch was passed, the older brothers emphasized the need for constant diligence, “because from our experience during the war years, we saw how easily a business could fall apart from neglect.” They gave the boys a long list of potential excuses—including the weather, the economy, and the new shopping center down the block. “We told them they might as well give us their excuses by the number, because they didn’t mean a thing. If business was bad, there was nowhere to put the blame but upon themselves.”

Like their predecessors, the third generation emulated the decision-by-consensus approach, and it worked; whatever private

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disagreements they had were never known by anyone outside their inner circle.

In May 1978, Nordstrom, which some were calling the “Bloomingdale’s of the West,” expanded into California, with a 124,000 sq. ft., three-level store at the South Coast Plaza shopping center in Costa Mesa. This store boasted the biggest shoe department in the state of California—10,000 sq. ft. for women’s shoes, 3,000 for men’s, and 2,500 for children’s. Although the Nordstrom name was barely known, the store became an instant success, and quickly became the biggest volume store in the chain.

The third generation grew the company to 61 full-line stores in Washington, Alaska, Oregon, California, Utah, Texas, Minnesota, Indiana, Illinois, Pennsylvania, Virginia, Maryland, New Jersey, and New York; twenty clearance and off-price stores; a Faconnable men’s wear boutique in New York City, and leased shoe departments in 12 department stores in Hawaii and Guam—with total sales of \$4.1 billion and a reputation as America’s Number One customer service company. In 1995, Nordstrom’s third generation of leaders all stepped down as co-chairman, but continued serving on the board of directors and as members of the board’s executive committee.

In 2000, after several difficult years for the company, Bruce’s oldest son, Blake Nordstrom, became president, becoming the first fourth-generation Nordstrom to lead the company.

Clearly, the continuity of family management is one of the most important reasons for Nordstrom’s success. The active presence and involvement of family members is the guarantee that Nordstrom will remain Nordstrom; without them, it would be a different company. The Nordstroms have been involved and instrumental in every aspect of the company. At store openings, the family meets with every new hire.

“It’s so powerful when they come around to talk to our people and remind them that our company is only as good as they are today and every day,” said Len Kuntz, executive vice president and regional manager of the Washington/Alaska region. Decades earlier, Elmer, Lloyd, and Everett used to put on annual summer picnics for employees, their wives, and children at the family’s summer place on Hood Canal on Washington State’s Olympic Peninsula, and Christmas dinner dance parties at Seattle’s stately Olympic Hotel.

The Nordstrom Family: Leading by Example

Within the company and the consuming public, the Nordstroms are approachable and accessible. All of them answer their own phones—and return calls; this has been true through four generations. Tom Peters used to mention this at his seminars, and during a lunch break at one of those seminars, a man decided to test this claim—unbeknownst to Peters. After the lunch break, the man announced to the audience that he had, in fact, just called Bruce Nordstrom. Bruce wasn’t in his office but the call was patched through to him on the sales floor, and they had a 15-minute conversation.

Peters, a big fan of the company, once wrote about a man who wrote a letter describing his difficulty in getting a suit that he had purchased at Nordstrom to fit—despite several visits for alterations. When John N. Nordstrom got the letter, he sent over a new suit to the customer’s office, along with a Nordstrom tailor to make sure the jacket and pants were perfect. When alterations were completed, the suit was delivered at no charge.

A woman who worked at Nordstrom in the 1980s, told Robert Spector a story about Bruce Nordstrom walking through

her department one day. Bruce spotted a can of pop on the counter. He picked up the can, deposited it in a wastebasket, and continued on his way. He didn't ask who was responsible for the can being on the counter and he didn't order an employee to take it away. He just did it himself. This woman, who went on to run several of her own successful businesses, never forgot the day that she saw the chairman of the company set an example for her—without his even uttering a word.

Despite their success, the Nordstroms continue to insist on projecting a public image of disarming, small-town modesty that might strike an observer as disingenuous. They say that there is nothing special or magical or difficult about what they do and that the system is embarrassingly simple. “We outservice, not outsmart,” is a typical Nordstromism. They rarely talk about themselves. “We can't afford to boast. If we did, we might start to believe our own stories, get big heads, and stop trying,” Jim Nordstrom once said. When Bruce was selected as *Footwear News* magazine's Man of the Year, he politely declined the award and refused to be interviewed for the article.

“It's not about us,” said Bruce's son, Blake, who described his role and that of his family members as “stewards of the business and the culture. We are here to help everyone achieve his or her goals. Companies that have a strong culture have an asset—a point of difference. We try to create an atmosphere where people feel valued, trusted and respected, and empowered, where they have a proprietary feeling and an entrepreneurial spirit. The magic occurs when all these things come together.”

A Seattle journalist once compared the Nordstrom family to Mount Rainier. “As the mountain symbolizes the beauty and splendor of the Northwest,” wrote Fred Moody in *Seattle Weekly*, “so the Nordstrom name has come to epitomize a

certain Northwestness of character, a set of drives and values that we regard as being unique to our corner of the country.”

With few exceptions, the great stores of America are no longer controlled or operated by the descendants of the clever merchants who created the business and knew what the customer wanted. It’s not that professional managers can’t brilliantly run the Macy’s, Saks, and Neiman Marcuses of the world; it’s just that in an era when top retail executives change department stores as fast as free agents switch baseball teams, continuity is measured by quarterly earnings, not generations. The connection to the founder’s original vision usually vanishes by the second generation.

While tradition and leadership continuity is important, the Nordstrom family is not insulated from non-Nordstrom thinking. The majority of the board of directors is comprised of outside advisors with no vested interest in the company, and the management team is a mix of nonfamily and family members.

Alfred E. Osborne Jr., a long-time Nordstrom director and professor of business economics at UCLA, told Robert Spector that Nordstrom’s entrepreneurial, yet consensus-seeking approach to business has distinct advantages over the typical hierarchical business model “. . . because the world is moving to greater participation, more shared decisions, more decisions at the point of service. Workers at all levels of the organization are empowered by both technology and information, all of which means more collaboration, all of which means shrinking hierarchies. Which means that the old-fashioned Nordstrom approach to management may be what the twenty-first century is all about and is what will be increasingly adopted by a variety of organizations.”

The people attending the employee orientation that started this chapter, like all other Nordstrom employees, will become

steeped in the culture. They will learn the values that the company supports and the atmosphere it tries to create where everyone is in a position to succeed. All of that comes from the top and works its way throughout every part of the organization. What they learn in their careers can be found in the rest of this book.

EXERCISE

What Is Our Company's History?

Most companies and organizations have an interesting history. After all, they were created for specific reasons—filling a void in the market, coming up with a new idea, a new product, and so on.

Appoint an employee to be the official or unofficial company historian. That person will assemble relevant documents, newspaper articles, corporate reports, and so on, and interview the founders or other key executives to get a flavor of the history and, ultimately, the culture.

Ask the following questions:

- Who founded this company?
- Why was the company founded?
- What kind of challenges did the founder face?
- Was there a time when it looked like the company was headed for failure?
- How was the company able to overcome adversity and survive?
- Has the company appreciably changed its business over the years?
- How has the company responded to the market?

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- Once the information is assembled, distribute it to all members of your organization.
- Assign a committee of employees to come up with a Jeopardy-like program that covers your company history.
- Organize an assembly of employees who have studied the material and play the Jeopardy game. This can be fun and educational. Don't forget to include prizes.

