

# The Education of an Accidental CEO: My Journey from the Trailer Park to the Corner Office

David Novak, John Boswell



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David Novak—one of today's most engaging, unconventional, and successful business leaders—lived in thirty-two trailer parks in twenty-three states by the time he reached the seventh grade. He sold encyclopedias door to door, worked as a hotel night clerk, and took a job as a \$7,200-a-year advertising copywriter with the hopes of maybe one day becoming a creative director. Instead, he became head of the world's largest restaurant company at the ripe old age of forty-seven.

While David never went to business school, he did learn from the greatest of teachers—experience—and plenty of other very smart people as well: Magic Johnson on the secret to teamwork, Warren Buffett on what he looks for in the companies he buys, John Wooden on ego, and Jack Welch on one thing he'd do over. Now he wants to share with you what he discovered about getting ahead and getting noticed; motivating people and turning businesses around; building winning teams and running a global company of nearly one million people; and always staying true to yourself.

The Education of an Accidental CEO is filled with David Novak's street-smart wisdom:

From his formative years...

- Walking through your anxieties
- Avoiding the poison of stereotypes
- Staying "right-sized"
- Breaking through the clutter

From his years as an ad executive and chief marketing officer ...

- How not to roll over like Fluffy the dog
- Seeing yourself as a brand
- When to pull the plug on the Super Bowl

As the COO of Pepsi Cola and then as president of KFC and Pizza Hut ...

- Why a gold watch can have less value than a floppy rubber chicken
- Knowing when "the answers are in the building"
- Knowing when to do nothing
- What it takes to revitalze a company

And as CEO of Yum! Brands, Inc. ...

- How to "shock the system"
- How to avoid the slow-no's
- Managing two up and two down

David Novak's ideas for building an entire culture around reward and recognition—getting everyone from division presidents to dishwashers to buy into recognizing the achievements of others—is studied by other companies and discussed here in great detail. Whether you are the CEO of a global conglomerate or a

budding entrepreneur, there is something here that will help you get where you want to go.

From the Hardcover edition.

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