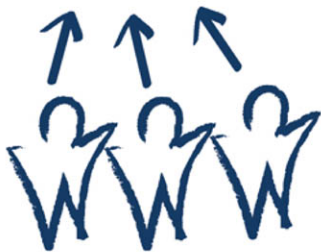


Foreword by Ken Blanchard

# THE GREATER GOAL

CONNECTING PURPOSE  
AND PERFORMANCE



How to Align Your Entire Organization for Shared Success

**KEN JENNINGS**

Bestselling coauthor of *The Serving Leader*

and **HEATHER HYDE**

An Excerpt From

***The Greater Goal:  
Connecting Purpose and Performance***

by Ken Jennings and Heather Hyde  
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# Foreword by Ken Blanchard

I have found that over the years, without a Greater Goal to serve, the only thing people have to serve is themselves—and we have all seen the negative effect of self-serving leadership in every segment of our society. That’s why I’m excited about this book.

Wouldn’t you love to come home from work every night knowing that you gave your very best for a worthy cause? How would it be if you shared in setting the most important goals at work, even if you’re not the company president? And what would it be like if you knew exactly how your efforts at work were part of creating a community capable of outstanding performance? My friends Ken Jennings and Heather Hyde invite you to imagine your work life this way as they show you what it takes to create high performance based on high purpose. Welcome to *The Greater Goal: Connecting Purpose and Performance*, a wonderful expedition into how people, teams, and organizations create shared purpose for the greater good and achieve outstanding organizational results. It’s a story, a road map, and a journey with a very special purpose.

For over a decade my colleagues and I have been speaking about how organizational high performance is achieved by focusing on the “triple bottom line”—being the employer of choice, the provider of choice, and the investment of choice. Over time, we learned that high-performing organizations have leadership that influences people by unleashing their power and potential to impact the greater good. But it’s not just about setting and achieving more and more difficult goals. Leaders who can create, with others, the organization’s shared Greater Goal *and* show how people can align their best efforts to it show the way to high performance.

Ken and Heather have chosen to illustrate the power of having a Greater Goal through the story of Alex Beckley, your average troubled leader. I love the business fable format, and I believe readers do too—especially when they get a new insight into a simple, time-tested truth. Books like the one you are holding can cut straight to the heart of how you think and feel about life at work by tapping into your own truth—your experiences, memories, perceptions—while at the same time offering new ways of seeing. Stories like this allow readers to suspend their skepticism and consider the power of personal narrative. Those of us who have been around the block a time or two know that our narratives become so deeply rooted that they can run our lives—even determine our destiny.

In *The Greater Goal*, Ken and Heather invite you to listen to one leader’s story and to look at your own. The facts and figures of your accomplishments are not the whole picture. Wherever we contribute in our organizations and communities, each of us leaves behind a legacy—a story of what’s possible. This book encourages you to form your legacy around

a Greater Goal and connect your high purpose with high performance.

Imagine that life's most stubborn obstacles—the reasons why you fall short of your potential for greater good—can be left behind with the next decision you make. You don't need to have a life-threatening wake-up call (like the hero of this tale) to give yourself a second chance. Transformational change can also take place in the small, everyday choices we make.

Seeking the greater good, and seeking it together, is truly a worthy Greater Goal.

Ken Blanchard  
January 2012

# Introduction

In this new book, the coauthor of the bestselling *The Serving Leader* provides a road map that all leaders can use to create top performance by aligning the entire organization, at all levels, with the higher purposes of the organization.

Ken Jennings teams with his longtime collaborator Heather Hyde to provide an inspiring and practical guide to succeeding at today's top leadership priorities:

- Articulating the higher purposes of organizations
- Creating shared goals among all stakeholders
- Aligning all functions around the shared goals and higher purposes
- Driving higher organizational performance

Like *The Serving Leader*, this new book is a short, easy-to-read narrative that offers powerful ideas and practical strategies through an engaging fictional story. It is the story of Alex Beckley, the new president of a medical products company, who receives a wake-up call that inspires him to live and lead



differently. Alex learns the Star Model of high purpose and high performance and uses this model to change his strategies and behavior and thereby dramatically raise his leadership effectiveness and the performance of his organization.

Please join us for a look inside the Star Model and experience how alignment to your Greater Goals will unleash one of the most powerful forces on earth.



A Greater Goal has three specific dimensions. First, the goal is great in the sense that it aims for a greater good—hugely positive outcomes for many. Second, it is great because it requires the combined and aligned best efforts of everyone in the whole company. And third, it calls each of us individually to greatness, to give our very best and to become part of something greater than ourselves.



An organization aligned, individual-by-individual and team-by-team, to a shared Greater Goal is one of the most powerful forces for good on earth.

# 1. Hard Drive

At 5:30 a.m., with late summer thunder rumbling in his ears, Alexander Beckley slumped in his chair, staring at his computer screen. Every now and then, lightning flickered across his face. The monitor glowed in the dark, highlighting the divot in Alex's nose—a souvenir of his college boxing career. Another flash of lightning revealed the worry lines and a little gray in his short blond hair. Alex didn't blink. His head felt hot, his stomach felt cold, and his heart was somewhere north of his Adam's apple. All he could see were the words glaring back at him:

From: Dan Meyers [mailto:dmeyers@beckleymedical.com]  
Sent: Tuesday, April 19, 2011 11:52 PM  
To: Alex Beckley [mailto:abeckley@beckleymedical.com]  
Subject: Board meeting follow-up

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Alex,  
Hearing strong feedback from the board on last night's call.  
They know you are working hard, but frustration levels are rising.  
Call me to talk.

It was signed by the board chair and acting CEO, Dan Myers. Alex knew he was now in danger of losing the support of the company his father had founded. *I will fail him even in this*, he thought, watching light flash across the room.

With a click of his mouse, Alex switched screens from his e-mail to his schedule. If he could close the deal for the company's new line of products with University Health System, it would be the company's biggest deal ever, and maybe that would impress the board enough to forget about his recent poor performance. Today he was back in selling mode, showing University Health that his company, Beckley Medical Products, was the perfect partner. UHS was huge and strategically influential in this town. Today Beckley's president himself would win the work and show his critics the talent they would lose if they let him go.

Alex moved around his house like he moved around life—fast. As he dressed for the day, he reviewed what he knew of UHS, a complex integrated healthcare delivery system and the largest employer in the region. He mentally ticked through his presentation, reciting his sales pitch. He would run through it again in the conference room before anyone else arrived.

The meeting was downtown, and if he didn't want to be stuck in tunnel traffic he would have to take Bigelow Boulevard, a shortcut that would shoot him out right next to the old U.S. Steel Building. The monolithic black structure ruled the Pittsburgh skyline and housed the captains of Pittsburgh's steel industry. Now those offices were also occupied by the administration of UHS—one of the largest health systems in the world. But people still called the building “the Steel Tower.”

Just before he closed his calendar, Alex saw the small note in his evening agenda: “Rachel: Hunter-Jumper Competition.” He sighed, knowing he wouldn’t make it to his daughter’s contest once again. As he passed through the kitchen on his way to the car, he found his mother, Annie, and his daughter, Rachel, at the kitchen table. They were watching an early-morning news show with the volume low. His mother still wore the same style housecoat she wore when he was a kid.

“You’re up early,” she said when he appeared.

“You too,” he replied. “Storm wake you up?” he asked Rachel.

She nodded. “It sounded like the tree outside my window exploded.”

He kissed the tops of their heads. “Well,” he said, “I’m off.”

“You don’t want any coffee?” his mother asked as Alex pulled on his raincoat. He could hear the torrents coming down outside.

“No, thanks, Mom,” he said, fastening the buttons quickly and adjusting his sleeves.

Rachel watched him with a worried look. “Sure hope the weather clears up before tonight. You remember that I am riding tonight, Dad . . . You’ll be there, right?”

“I have a long day and a dinner meeting, Rach,” he said, avoiding her eyes by fumbling unnecessarily with his coat collar. “I don’t think I’ll be there. I’m sorry, sweetie. But you and Grandma can tell me all about it later.”

Rachel’s eyes misted over with an expression of hurt and then resignation that became a frozen stare at the television. His mother’s lips pursed and her eyes narrowed. “You work very hard, Alex. Just like your father.”

“No, Mom,” he said, “not just like him.” *For one thing, I’m not succeeding like Dad did*, he thought. The comment touched Alex’s sore memory of never quite getting enough of his father’s attention to confirm that he measured up. Without waiting for a reply, Alex vanished out the back door into the rain. He didn’t like disappointing Rachel yet again, but he didn’t see how he had a choice. He was irritated that his mother compared him to his father. Of all people, she should know that he wasn’t like *him*. Surely she could see he wanted to give more of himself to the family, even if he couldn’t find the time.

It was true that Alex wanted to be successful—like his father—but he wanted to do it his way. In the back of his head, though, a little voice nagged that he *was* just like his father. He didn’t have time for his kid either. Alex was disappointing Rachel, and her face this morning told him that he was, indeed, acting just like his old man. But didn’t his father have pressure from his company’s board of directors and major sales to make too?

He sat in his car for a minute before starting it. How did he get here, back in his boyhood home with his mother and back at the company his father had built?

Alex left Pittsburgh after grad school to get far away from the family business—to make a name for himself, on his own, and in his own style. Growing up as the son of a busy and driven entrepreneur left an enduring image of what it meant to be successful and how to get there. Time and distance from his father did not result in Alex’s being any less driven or busy than his dad, Russ Beckley, had been. Alex’s way was full of drive and determination, and those qualities had gotten him the recognition he wanted. In the fifteen years he spent away

from Pittsburgh, he had become the executive vice president of a successful company and was on the verge of taking the top position with a firm that competed with his dad's company.

But then, while he was busy making other plans, "life happened." His father sickened and passed away from an aggressive illness, coincidentally on Alex's birthday, forever changing how he would feel on that day. Alex never really got to say good-bye or to sort out his deep feelings for his dad. Just as unexpectedly, the board of Russ Beckley's firm recruited Alex back home to Pittsburgh to take the number-two spot—president—at Beckley. He took the job, reporting to the CEO, Dan Myers, his dad's oldest friend. Dan was seventy years old and would not stay in the CEO role for much longer. That top job *could* be Alex's. But so far, in the two years since he had come on board, the company was not exactly following his lead. Competition in the industry was fierce, Beckley's product innovation had slowed down, some of the company's better talent was restless, and a few recent hires had quit unexpectedly. If Alex didn't figure out how to fix the company soon, he would not succeed his father as CEO.

Alex shook his doubtful circumstances out of his head. Through glimpses of clarity between the rapidly swishing windshield wipers, he navigated across Pittsburgh's wet, hilly backbone. The storm was not letting up. His front right wheel hit a pothole covered by rainwater, and the impact tugged the steering wheel out of his fingers. He cringed. The tires wobbled. Alex groaned. *Hopefully the car was just thrown out of alignment. Not too serious.*

His black BMW sprayed water out from both sides like a speedboat. The rain was heavy now, and through its curtain he could barely see the Pittsburgh skyline ahead. The city

teemed with education, medicine, and new high-tech companies. And Beckley was a player on the scene, at least for the moment.

Alex knew in his heart that it had been right to come to Beckley. His wife had died during the same year as his dad, setting up the worst period of his life. Rachel was now approaching twelve years old. She was with her grandmother, and his mother was not alone. Faced with all of the life changes he could not control, he thought at least running Beckley would be in his power. But in the two years since he had returned to Pittsburgh and Beckley Medical, it seemed that his aggressive style of bottom-line, results-driven leadership was making things worse.

But today was a new day. He would be the hero, the super sales rep, and close this deal with UHS. His belt began to buzz as his BlackBerry vibrated with a message. He fiddled with the magnetic strap that held the phone in place and tapped the e-mail icon. It was from Nate Strayer, Beckley's chief financial officer. He shifted his eyes from the road to the message.

HOOOOOONNNNK!!!!!!

Adrenaline bolted through his body as he looked up. He had drifted out of his lane and was cutting off a truck behind him. Alex jammed his steering wheel over, a hard left—so hard he hit the divider in the middle of the road. His car bounced sideways, the wheels caught and tripped, and the car flipped. He was tumbling over and over until even the stout BMW roof began to crumple, straining against physics to protect its driver. Windows cracked into a thousand shards but held together like sparkling sheets. Something large hit Alex in the chest, and as the car came to rest upside down, he could barely

breathe. Smoke from the airbags billowed around him, filling his lungs with a burning sensation.

“Please, God,” he choked, “don’t let me die.” He didn’t recognize his words. His voice sounded strange to his ringing ears. Fumbling for the seat belt, he found he couldn’t move his arms, and even if he could, he was hanging upside down. Or maybe he was pinned against the steering wheel—he wasn’t sure. He couldn’t feel anything, or at least anything he recognized. “God,” he said again, “help me?”

Immediately, he heard a voice. It didn’t sound like God.

“He’s alive!” Alex heard someone say.

“Hey, buddy,” said another voice. A hand touched his shoulder. Alex saw a blurry, bearded face, inches from his own, from which came the words “Buddy, you’re gonna be alright. They’re already comin’ to get you. You hang tough.” Then he heard the same voice mutter to someone, “I guess all he can really *do* is hang.”

Another voice from further away said, “That guy is messed up!”

“God,” Alex groaned for the last time. As he descended into welcome unconsciousness, he heard the sirens. This was not how he was supposed to get to UHS.



When Alex opened his eyes again, all he saw was white. *Am I dead?* No answer. *Yup, I’m dead.* But even as he wondered, machines and tubes started coming into focus in front of him. And then they were gone as he slipped back into unconsciousness.



Over the next few days, Alex was in and out of awareness—and pain. Sometimes he came to and felt as if he were floating. At other points he came to and felt excruciating pressure.

Rachel was there each time he awoke. Sitting next to his bed, she looked so much like her mother with the little worry line in the middle of her forehead. Her chocolate-brown hair was always falling haphazardly out of her ponytail. *Rachel*. He didn't notice when he started saying her name out loud.

“Daddy?” The sweet, anxious face appeared closer. “I'm right here, Dad.”

Then she was gone. When she came back, he found he could say more than one word this time.

“Hey, Dad,” she said.

Alex thought she looked like an angel. “Hey, sweetie,” he said. “How long?”

“You've been out for a few days, Dad. You had surgery. I was scared.”

Alex smiled weakly.

Rachel's eyebrows squeezed a line of worry between them. “They're gonna keep you here for a while. The doctor said it could have been worse—and you should see the car!” She sighed and smiled at Alex. “I'm so glad you're alive, Dad. You are all I have.”

Rachel touched her father's forearm, careful not to disturb the IV tubing taped there. “You know I said I would never come into a hospital again, not after Mom.”

Alex heard only half of what she said. Stronger than one of those dreams that he sometimes remembered in the middle of the day, Alex saw the accident flying through his mind with crystal-clear vision. He remembered the storm, the truck, the BlackBerry—and the appointment at UHS.

“I . . . I . . . remember,” he said, his eyes staring at the ceiling. “I had a meeting and . . . my phone. Where’s my phone? I need my phone,” Alex said urgently.

Rachel stared at him, her mouth dropping open. A sickness in her stomach became a darkness in her face. “Your BlackBerry? You want your phone?”

“I need to call, to find out, to reschedule . . . “

Her eyes filled with tears. “You’re really screwed up, Dad.” She wiped the tears on her sleeve. “You just care about work.” She wiped her eyes again and picked up her backpack. “I’ll see you later, Dad.”

“Rachel, I . . . ” He couldn’t follow.

A nurse walked in and picked up his chart. “We’re awake, are we, Mr. Beckley?” She glanced at a machine and wrote something on the chart. “How do you feel?”

“Hurts,” Alex said, staring at the chair where Rachel had been sitting.

The nurse injected something into his IV. It wasn’t long before Alex didn’t feel anything at all.



Alex’s next visitor was Kevin Jordan, his chief operating officer. Kevin was a former professional football player, and he looked like he belonged in a uniform rather than his business suit. When Alex came around, Kevin was standing at the foot of his bed smiling—the creases in his skin seemed to wrap around his shaved head.

“I see that you did make it to a UHS hospital after all. Nice work. But you are now officially on the injured reserve list.”

Alex grinned. “Funny, Kevin. I’m glad you’re here.” In his transition to leading Beckley Medical, Kevin had been his main guide. But Kevin often disagreed with Alex’s approach to leading the company, saying things like, “That’s not the way things work here.” Still, Kevin did his best to help Alex, and the two had become friends of sorts.

Kevin told Alex that his responsibilities had been delegated. Even so, he had brought with him a new cell phone for Alex, a shining new BlackBerry, all programmed and ready to go. “Use this carefully,” he joked.

Then his tone became serious. “You know, Alex, you are going to have to come back slowly.” He paused. “Dan and I have been talking. Don’t worry—I wasn’t going over your head. We have a suggestion.”

Alex felt both confused and apprehensive. “Go on.”

“Dan and I have a good friend who is also a consultant. Well, he’s more than that. He used to be one of your dad’s key advisors. We got to know him during the time you were working back east, so you missed meeting him.”

Alex stiffened. He didn’t need a consultant. *Probably some old-school guy who quotes business-school case studies.* Kevin waited quietly as minutes went by. Alex thought of his performance struggles at work and of Rachel stomping out. He supposed he should take the offer of help with the business and wondered how he would ever improve life at home. Alex nodded. “Call him for me? I guess I could use the help. Thank you, Kevin.”

Kevin picked up Alex’s new phone to call Quinn McDougall. He hit the speakerphone button. Alex noticed that Kevin smiled as he heard Quinn’s voice. It was a happy voice—and maybe Scottish? Alex wasn’t sure.

“Quinn,” Kevin said, “Meet my boss, Alex. He’s Russ Beckley’s son, you know.”

The accented voice over the speakerphone said, “It’s a pleasure to meet you, Alex. Your father told me so much about your accomplishments. He was proud. How can I help?”

Alex replayed his accident and reported the board’s unhappiness, and he even mentioned his concern about his daughter. Unexpected words poured out of Alex. Kevin took his leave. When he had concluded his emotional monologue, Alex paused to say, “Do you think you could help me?”

Quinn let the silence linger for a moment. “Perhaps,” he replied slowly, suggesting more was left unsaid. “Why don’t we get together and discuss it?”

“You will have to come to me,” Alex said, looking at his leg cast.

“Sure,” Quinn said. “In the meantime, I’d like you to consider exactly what you will do with this second chance.”



When Kevin left the hospital, he drove straight to Dan Myers’s office. Dan’s assistant announced him to her boss. The CEO’s office was lined floor to ceiling with bookshelves surrounding an amazing ancient fireplace. Dan himself sat behind an old-fashioned executive desk that had belonged to the company founder, Russ Beckley. His blue eyes pierced Kevin’s as he looked over the silver rims of his glasses.

“Thanks for seeing me, Dan,” Kevin said. “I think there’s hope for Alex.”

Dan’s eyebrows raised and he folded his arms, leaning back in his chair. “You really think so?” Dan asked.

“I believe so. I just left Alex talking with Quinn. Give him a second chance, Dan. He can change.”

Dan polished his glasses. “I’ll think about it, Kevin. But if working with Quinn doesn’t help him, I don’t think anyone could do better. For now, I’ll believe with you . . .” Dan said, looking as if he were addressing someone not in the room.

this material has been excerpted from

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