



# Shackleton's Way: Leadership Lessons from the Great Antarctic Explorer

By Margot Morrell, Stephanie Capparell

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**Lead your business to survival and success by following the example of legendary explorer Ernest Shackleton**

Sir Ernest Shackleton has been called "the greatest leader that ever came on God's earth, bar none" for saving the lives of the twenty-seven men stranded with him in the Antarctic for almost two years. Because of his courageous actions, he remains to this day a model for great leadership and masterful crisis management. Now, through anecdotes, the diaries of the men in his crew, and Shackleton's own writing, Shackleton's leadership style and time-honored principles are translated for the modern business world. Written by two veteran business observers and illustrated with ship photographer Frank Hurley's masterpieces and other rarely seen photos, this practical book helps today's leaders follow Shackleton's triumphant example.

"An important addition to any leader's library." -*Seattle Times*

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**Shackleton's Way: Leadership Lessons from the Great Antarctic Explorer** By Margot Morrell, Stephanie Capparell **Bibliography**

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### Editorial Review

#### Amazon.com Review

The explorer Sir Ernest Shackleton has recently become the legendary character at the center of a renewed fascination with the early days of Antarctic exploration. Though not the most renowned explorer of his day, nor even the most successful in terms of stated goals, Shackleton's story of adventurous ambition, incredible endurance, and heroic survival against all odds is indeed the stuff of legend. And now, thanks to the detailed research and helpful insights of Morrell and Capparell, his story is also the meaty material of lessons on how to lead with authority, integrity, humor, and compassion.

A British explorer once summarized the feats of the great Antarctic explorer like this: "For a joint scientific and geographical piece of organization, give me Scott; for a winter journey, give me Wilson, for a dash to the Pole and nothing else, Amundsen; and if I am in the devil of a hole and want to get out of it, give me Shackleton every time." His words set the tone for *Shackleton's Way*, at once both a travel narrative and a handbook of the skills required for effective leadership of diverse groups, especially in times of change and crisis. Shackleton's attempts to reach the South Pole and his two-year fight for the survival of his crew, when their ship is stranded in ice and then sunk, makes for exciting reading. Using this story as the centerpiece of their book, the authors have woven in their interpretation of his success using interviews with exceptional modern leaders such as Mike Dale, Jaguar's former chief of North American operations, and Apollo 13 Commander James Lovell, and by offering useful advice points at the end of each chapter. For example, in the chapter entitled "The Path to Leadership," Shackleton is shown to have been a well-read man, eager to learn and able to mix with varied company. The authors support this by noting that broadening one's horizons and learning to see things from different perspectives will allow for greater flexibility in problem solving. U.S. Secretary of the Navy Richard Danzig agrees that a level of well roundedness is vital in leaders, acknowledging that "one of my prime aims in distributing books is to get people to think outside themselves and to think broadly."

Morrell and Capparell's excellent use of archival material (especially crew diaries) and their intelligent interpretation of what Shackleton's story implies about good leaders makes this book both pleasurable and educational. Throughout the story of the explorer's exploits, the authors have inserted summarizing subtitles that succinctly capture Shackleton's leadership style. Occasionally, this seems a little strained; while the explorer's progressive attitudes and actions deserve praise as leadership lessons par excellence, even some of his misjudgments are referred to with something approaching reverence. For the most part, however, the authors employ a subtle and effective hand in translating the actions of a man at the helm of a dangerous adventure into advice beneficial to leaders in all areas of life. --S. Ketchum

#### From Publishers Weekly

The heroism of British explorer Ernest Shackleton best known for his failed 1914 Antarctic expedition in which he saved his 27-member crew from perishing under harrowing conditions for more than two years has been chronicled in numerous narrative accounts and, most recently, became the inspiration for another book of business nostrums, *Leading at the Edge* (Forecasts, Apr. 3). Although they tread in that book's footsteps, Morrell (a financial expert who has studied Shackleton's life and leadership style for 15 years) and Capparell (a Wall St. Journal business editor) have produced a first-rate business primer. With the help of diaries and other first-hand accounts, they vividly describe Shackleton's expeditions and his powerful leadership style, relating them to today's business world in a streamlined presentation. The authors also include the insights of a handful of modern-day leaders, including James Cramer, who believes that his own

following of Shackleton's example in hiring talented, optimistic people made the difference for him at the TheStreet.com. Morrell and Capparell's book is strongest in its emphasis on leading a team against desperate odds over an extended period of time ("Give your staff an occasional reality check to keep them on course. After a time, people will start to treat a crisis situation as business as usual and lose their focus"). (Jan.) Forecast: With a first serial in the Wall Street Journal and a five-city author tour, this solid book may come from behind to overtake its competition, *Leading at the Edge*. Copyright 2000 Reed Business Information, Inc.

From Library Journal

Overwhelmed by the outbreak of World War I, the incredible story of Sir Ernest Shackleton has now resurfaced in a timely wave of Shackleton mania that reminds us of the importance of learning about heroes. In 1914, after the wreck of their vessel, the *Endurance*, left his crew of 27 men stranded on an ice floe in the Antarctic 1200 miles from civilization, Shackleton led them through a two-year fight for survival. Authors Morrell (financial representative, Fidelity Investments) and Capparell (an editor and writer for the Wall Street Journal) use anecdotes, diary excerpts from the seamen, and Shackleton's own memoirs to present a refreshing and timely business manual on supreme leadership disguised as an adventure story. Their story is linked to modern-day business challenges, emphasizing lessons of leadership that include working cohesively with all sorts of diverse personalities and talent, maintaining morale, creating order out of chaos, hiring good workers, managing crises with limited resources, and, most importantly, leading by example. Thankfully, the authors focus on the revealing words of those directly involved in this most amazing experience. Highly recommended for all libraries, along with works on the actual story, including Alfred Lansing's *Endurance* (Carroll & Graf, 2001), Caroline Alexander's *The Endurance* (LJ 10/15/98), and Shackleton's memoirs, *South* (1970). Dale Farris, Groves, TX  
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**Carrie Grogan:**

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