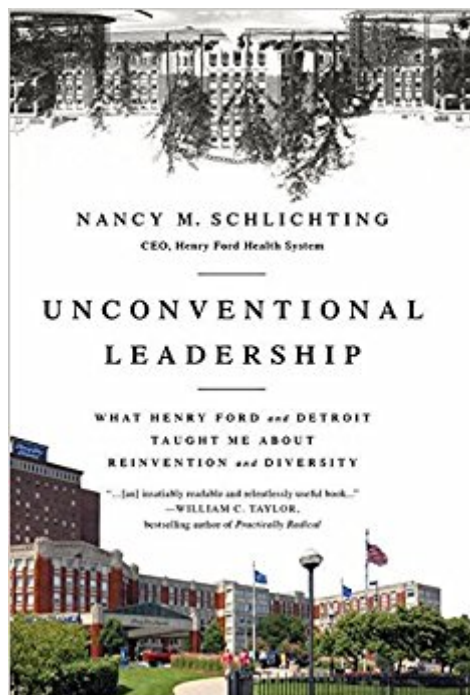




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# Unconventional Leadership: What Henry Ford And Detroit Taught Me About Reinvention And Diversity



## Synopsis

What does it take to lead the successful turnaround of four consecutive organizations? What does it take to run a \$5 billion business in Detroit as the city struggles to emerge from municipal bankruptcy and its worst ongoing crisis ever? What does it take to be a female CEO who has come up against discrimination and personal attack? It takes "Unconventional Leadership," a style of leadership based on confronting reality and leading headlong through adversity. In this inspiring story, innovative LGBT leader Nancy Schlichting, the CEO of Henry Ford Health System, reveals her unique strategies that drive success: maintaining a focus on people, creating a culture of innovation and reinvention, and embracing diversity as a key strategy for growth. The book describes a leadership paradigm that will motivate, inspire, and drive new thinking in today's disruptive business environment where traditional modes of managing are no longer working. In "Unconventional Leadership," Schlichting weaves together three themes that explain how she has become one of the most powerful individuals in healthcare today: (1) deftly conquering the immense challenges within the healthcare industry itself—consolidation, new models of delivery and financing, increasing government regulation and oversight, changing customer expectations, and pressures on cost and quality (2) the exciting and panoramic backdrop of Henry Ford and Detroit—Ford's legacy of invention and innovation combined with ongoing attempts to restore and renew a city in deep decline; and (3) forging a career path and excelling as an LGBT and female CEO in a world typically dominated by men. An abiding fan of the underdog, Schlichting reveals, above all else, the sheer grit and determination required to lead through adversity and create a successful legacy of leadership."

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Nancy Schlichting is Chief Executive Officer of Henry Ford Health System (HFHS), a nationally recognized \$5 billion health care organization with 23,000 employees and recipient of the 2011 Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award, 2011 John M. Eisenberg Patient Safety Quality Award, and 2004 Foster G. McGaw Award. She is credited with leading the health system through a dramatic financial turnaround and for award-winning patient safety, customer service and diversity initiatives. Schlichting joined Henry Ford Health System in 1998 and in 2003 was named President and CEO. Her vision is to create tremendous clinical excellence, a fabulous patient experience, and a great environment for all health care professionals to advance their careers. Schlichting believes that great people are the key to providing great health care, and therefore, is committed to giving her employees everything they need to become the best possible health care professionals. A hallmark of Schlichting's career is working with community, legislative and business leaders to improve health services while providing affordable care. Nancy serves on numerous community, professional, and corporate boards that reflect both her professional and personal interests. She is a member of The Kresge Foundation Board, Walgreen Boots Alliance Board, Federal Bank of Chicago Board &#150; Detroit Branch, Detroit Regional Chamber Board, Citizen's Research Council of Michigan, Detroit Economic Club Board and Downtown Detroit Partnership Board. Nancy is also a Fellow of the American College of Healthcare Executives and the International Women's Forum. Nancy has an exceptional ability to balance her service to the community with her own exemplary career that has resulted in many forms of recognition over the years. Among her most recent honors: NCHL Gail L. Warden Leadership Excellence award, ACHE Senior-Level Healthcare Executive Regent's Award, AHA/HRET 2014 TRUST Award, Becker's Hospital Review "40 of the Smartest People in Healthcare-2014", Modern Healthcare "100 Most Powerful People in Healthcare-2014" (named for the eighth time), Modern Healthcare "Top 25 Women in Healthcare -2013" (named for the fourth time), Crain's Detroit Business "2012 Newsmaker of the Year", and HealthLeaders Media "20 People Who Make Healthcare Better-2012. Schlichting received her A.B. from Duke University and her M.B.A. from Cornell University. She and her family reside in Bloomfield Township, Michigan. She has also been the recipient of honorary doctoral degrees from Walsh College Central Michigan University and Eastern Michigan University.

Let's start with full disclosure, I read the book because I have the privilege of knowing Nancy and seeing her leadership in a variety of situations. Frankly, I was curious to understand more about her experiences in Detroit and what happened with the aborted Beaumont merger. Over the years, I have found that reading the stories of renowned leaders can be instructive—sometimes providing good examples to follow and sometimes providing example never to be followed. I suspected that Nancy would provide the former and I was not disappointed. I have now referred the book to others not because I know Nancy but because of the great lessons the book holds for aspiring and veteran leaders alike. Her story is personal, authentic and inspiring. I particularly like the chapter around finding the disruptors and the building of West Bloomfield. Too often the search for experience results in more of the same in business. Her story and use of the Ford quote "It is not easy to get away from tradition. That is why all our new operations are always directed by men who have had no previous experience of the subject and therefore have not had a chance to get on really familiar terms with the impossible" is timely as we look to add more diversity to leadership the world over (though a modern interpretation of the quote would jettison the gender bias). Thank you, Nancy, for taking the time and being brave enough to share your true story.

Amazing explanation of their inside issues, and how appropriate leadership helped HFHS to survive such a hard time . Thanks Nancy

A thoughtful, insightful view of this CEO's struggles and accomplishments in today's world. She is, indeed, unconventional. Well written and interesting read.

This is a fantastic author!

Love this story.

I had heard good things, and read the reviews, but was sorely disappointed when I got the book and started to read. It's all "I", "me", "myself", and every other conceivable word that can give praise to one's self. Also inserted was her view on being treated differently because she was a lesbian, and how she overcame, and how others who are gay and lesbian can too. This is good, and I don't mind it, but that isn't overtly advertised as being a major part of the book. In the end, nothing new here, just how wonderful Ms. Schlichting is, and how fortunate all the companies are to have her in

charge.

People always tell me how awful Detroit is. As far as I am concerned though, the Motor City has always been a place of great memories since my childhood. From the Detroit Lions, Meeting Mr. Barry Sanders, Mr. Herman Moore, The Jacksons (remember 1983?) Mosque#1, the auto show, Ford Field, Beverly Hills Cop I, all those places to eat, Mowtown holds a special place for me. No matter where you go there are reminders of the Ford Motor Industry in the form of old buildings, factories, and other structures. While the focus of this work is to discuss leadership reform in America, I found the contents to bring back many wonderful memories of my trips to the Motor City. I believe this work should be a point of reference for all those attempting to rebuild aspects of inner-city life in America. An equally important aspect of "Unconventional Leadership," is the emphasis on diversity in the workforce, which needs to be cited in light of the year 2016. There are many incredible insights given by the author which are of value. Looking forward to the day the Motor City becomes new again and when that happens Ms. Schlichting will be there. "We do not make changes for the sake of making them, but we never fail to make a change once it is demonstrated that the new way is better than the old way. we hold it as our duty to permit nothing to stand in the way of progress." "Our invariable reply to "It can't be done" is "Go do it." "One's own workers ought to be one's own best customers." "In conclusion, I will state that it is my intention to go forward with plans for complete and credible hospital for the benefit of Detroit."

I am always interested in new voices on issues of leadership. As a long time student of leadership herself, Schlichting intertwines her life experiences as a female chief executive (currently as CEO of Henry Ford Health System) with lessons from inventor and innovator Ford himself. Given the years she has spent working in Detroit during turbulent times, the juxtaposition is an intriguing one. Under Schlichting, HFHS won the coveted Baldrige Quality Award for performance excellence, with its national recognition for innovation, improvement, and visionary leadership. The seven-year journey her team undertook, from top executives to janitorial staff, is a model of patience, perseverance, and the use of continuous feedback that led HFHS to growth in efficiency, workforce satisfaction, and customer service.

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