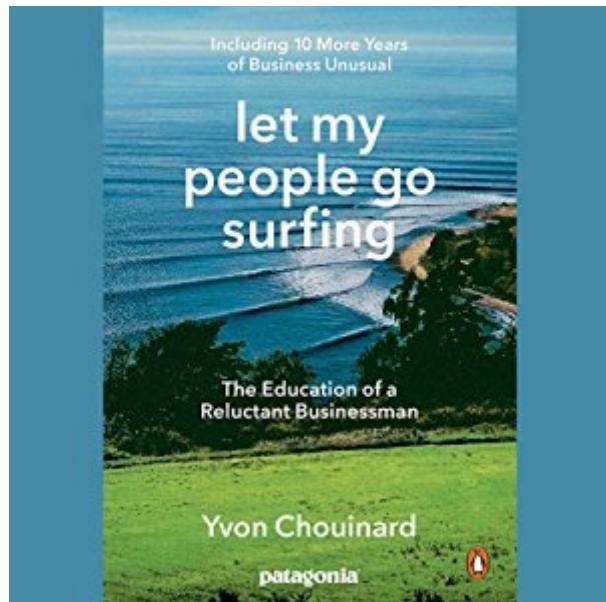


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# Let My People Go Surfing: The Education Of A Reluctant Businessman - Including 10 More Years Of Business Unusual



## **Synopsis**

In his long-awaited memoir, Yvon Chouinard - legendary climber, businessman, environmentalist, and founder of Patagonia, Inc. - shares the persistence and courage that have gone into being head of one of the most respected and environmentally responsible companies on earth. From his youth as the son of a French Canadian blacksmith to the thrilling, ambitious climbing expeditions that inspired his innovative designs for the sport's equipment, *Let My People Go Surfing* is the story of a man who brought doing good and having grand adventures into the heart of his business life - a book that will deeply affect entrepreneurs and outdoor enthusiasts alike. With a preface to the second edition, introduction, and epilogue read by the author.

## **Book Information**

Audible Audio Edition

Listening Length: 8 hours and 4 minutes

Program Type: Audiobook

Version: Unabridged

Publisher: Penguin Audio

Audible.com Release Date: September 6, 2016

Language: English

ASIN: B01KB9LY6I

Best Sellers Rank: #15 in Books > Audible Audiobooks > Biographies & Memoirs > Business Leaders #47 in Books > Biographies & Memoirs > Professionals & Academics > Business #62 in Books > Audible Audiobooks > Biographies & Memoirs > Personal Memoirs

## **Customer Reviews**

This is one of those drop everything books that you want to buy and give to all your friends and relations who will read and gain from it. I don't even know how the book came to my attention to buy it in the first place, it sat in my TBR pile for several weeks until I had the time to read the first chapter and skim the rest, my usual routine with new books as they come into the house. However it is so good, from the first sentence that I just set aside my other reading and finished it. It is about doing good and having an adventure while doing so. Partly biographical, partly a history of the company's beginning, mostly a philosophic discussion of how to interact with an increasingly polluted and destroyed planet in a responsible corporate way. It's a story about a man, from all indications one of those rare individuals who consciously walks through life (perhaps climbing is a better word for his travels) aware of what is around him and how he is responsible for his wake through the world. From

the decision to end pinions and switch to clean climbing chocks to the 1% of sales to progressive environmental activist groups, his philosophy not only interacts with his outdoor activities but with the wider world. This book ought to be required reading for every MBA, every business student in the world. And recommended reading for everyone else. I'm not a very hopeful person, perhaps being in contact with people like the author would turn me around. He is realistic, a little pessimistic but puts his money, his deeds where his words are, in action. An excellent book, just drop everything and get a copy and read it tonight. thanks for reading this short review. if you can offer suggestion like this book, please email [rwilliam2@yahoo.com](mailto:rwilliam2@yahoo.com) subject review.

Yvon Chouinard takes all current and accepted business practices and turns them on their ear! Being involved in the "corporate world" I am witness to all sorts of techniques, behaviours, policies, practices etc. The driving force is always the bottom line. While Chouinard is, and has to be concerned with the bottom line his path to that bottom line is both bold and unique. Clearly this is a very practical guide to a more healthy and sustainable business culture. Chouinard is clearly a wonderful man leading a wonderful charge. Hey, I want my boss to let me go surfing!! A must read!

Yvon Chouinard (YC) breaks the barriers and shatters the models of business not simply by thinking differently, but acting differently. I am a CEO and His honesty about his mistakes, missteps, is completely refreshing and provides an honest assessment of his role as entrepreneur, businessman, and steward of the earth. YC leads with his weaknesses and many failures which is atypical for the successful "how to succeed" book by the entrepreneur of the moment. He challenges everyone to think deeply about how we treat everything from people we employ, to simple things, such as overnight shipping (high cost to the environment) and making shirts that don't require ironing. Do not expect a perfect flow of language--the book is broken up into sections, but more closely represents a free flowing dialogue with interruptions and random comments. His thoughts on the environment fit nicely with a stereotypical environmentalist, and his thoughts on multiple distribution channels could fit nicely when speaking to a Harvard Business School class. YC is an enigma. This book, while sometimes a bit disjointed and sometimes clunky, might very well be regarded in 50 years as THE book that started a new thought pattern in business that has responsibility to be profitable, and yet be responsible to the employees and the earth. The new, responsible Henry Ford of our time? BRILLIANT! GO YC!

I've loosely followed the Patagonia over the years and read the book based on the recommendation

from a colleague as we search new means to "engage" employees. I thoroughly enjoyed the first part of the book and would recommend it as a case study for any business person trying to grow their own business but especially for those confronting their first major crisis after the first success although I am not entirely sure the success of Patagonia has been more because of brilliant management and leadership or just plain luck. Probably a combination of both. The problem I have with the book is Chouinard's preachy bigotry against anyone that doesn't fully subscribe to his philosophy of what makes the world a better place. As an avid outdoor person I accept the need to be wise stewards of our limited natural resources so I don't have a problem and would gladly support responsible organizations that do the same. But Chouinard takes it one step too far by classifying all Christians as evolution denying morons and anyone that drives an SUV as a myopic terrorist against the survival of the world. In Chouinard's world anyone that has more than one child and doesn't bicycle to work or drive a hybrid is deserving of contempt from the all knowing and all wise Zen master himself. And while he derides every form of fossil, hydro, and nuclear energy the best alternative he can come up with is to put a solar panel on his office building. I think this is all hypocritical as he jet sets around the world to bag this peak or that, admire his contributions to nature preserves, and travels from stream to stream to catch and release innocent trout. I wonder if he has done an energy analysis of maintaining a headquarters in Ventura where undoubtedly most of his employees are forced to commute huge distances. Oh, but then if he moved his headquarters to Modesto where his employees could afford to live where they work they couldn't go surfing. And lastly, he is critical of government subsidies for things he is opposed to but thinks its fine to subsidize his solar array on his roof. Yvon, if you want to save the world knock yourself out. I will even join up with you from time to time. The moment you start insulting me, I have no use for you. Chouinard says that people that don't espouse the philosophy he promotes should not work for him. I would follow that up by saying the companies that have contempt for me shouldn't expect my business.

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