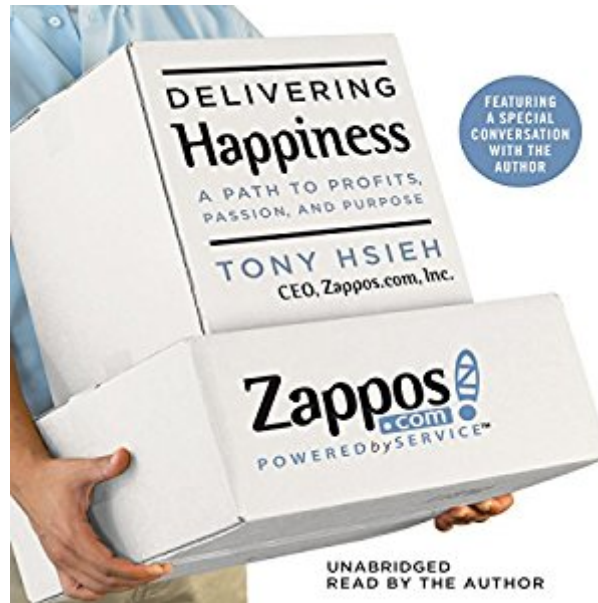


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# Delivering Happiness: A Path To Profits, Passion, And Purpose



## Synopsis

In his first audiobook, Tony Hsieh - the widely-admired CEO of on-line shoe retailer, Zappos, explains how he created a unique culture and commitment to service that aims to improve the lives of its employees, customers, vendors and backers. Using anecdotes and stories from his own experiences and from other companies, Hsieh provides concrete ways that companies can achieve unprecedented success. Even better, he shows how creating happiness and record results go hand-in-hand. He starts with the 'Why' in a section where he narrates his quest to understand the science of happiness. Then he runs through the ten Zappos 'Core Values' such as 'Deliver WOW through Service,' 'Create Fun and A Little Weirdness' and 'Build a Positive Team and Family Spirit' and explains how you and your colleagues should come up with your own. Hsieh then details many of the unique practices at Zappos that have made it the success it is today, such as the philosophy of allocating marketing money into the customer experience, thereby allowing repeat customers and word-of-mouth be their true form of marketing. He also explains why Zappos's main priority is company culture and his belief that once you get the culture right, everything else - great customer service, long-term branding - will happen on its own. Finally, Hsieh explains how Zappos employees actually apply the Core Values to improving their lives outside of work - and to making a difference in their communities and the world --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

## Book Information

Audible Audio Edition

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## Customer Reviews

Delivering Happiness is a bold promise to make in any book, let alone a business book. But Zappos CEO Tony Hsieh makes it. The autobiographical story of Tony's childhood and career at times seems self indulgent and veers into frat boy territory, Harvard style. Hsieh is open about the fact that the writing is all his and that it's not literary genius. However, he's clearly an innovative man with a ton of brain power. It is a fun and entertaining read, especially for the genre. The book's stand-out quote: "Without conscious and deliberate effort, inertia always wins" I am not sure the book delivers happiness. But here's what it does do, and does very well. It provides an insight into the success of one of America's trendiest and high performing companies as well as the brain of the man behind it. From my work life lens, it also shows an interesting approach to corporate culture that so far is working well for Zappos. I put my hand up to review the book *Delivering Happiness: A Path to Profits, Passion and Purpose* because I'd read so much about Zappos' unique corporate environment. Innovative organizational psyches are right up my alley. Hsieh has a light and enticing story-teller's voice as he shares his youthful business adventures, Harvard stories (mostly about how little work he did and how well he performed doing that), mistakes and spiritual experiences in the rave/party years and climbing Kilimanjaro. Ultimately though, it's a book about relationships, and about how to create an environment where your best friends show up to work with you. You work hard and you play hard and you do it all together. For all it's talk of a bold new paradigm of institutional culture, much of it revolves around getting drunk together, partying and playing golf. It is the way business has always been done. It might be really fun to work at Zappos. And clearly there must be more to it than that or it would not consistently generate the buzz about being such a great place to work that it does. I'd love to know more about how career breaks, care-giving needs and flexible work options to handle work life issues are really handled. There is one beautiful story shared of a woman losing her husband and being given time off and much loving support from her team members. But the story stuck out as unusual compared to other employee experiences. For example, there were no insights into how parenting or elder care needs are handled either informally or through policy. Rather, there were stories of walking away from your entire life with two hours notice and not getting home again for three months. It was, as always, the absolute dedication to the company kind of stories that came through loudest. There was a great deal of discussion about creating a family, creating a group of people who you want to be with every day. This is a wonderful thing in a work environment up to a point, but homogeneity, even the weird and wacky kind, can be stifling over the longer term. As I read stories of bar room and golf course decisions, I did wonder if that self-selects the real Zappos stars as being single and childless, or with a partner at home full time who raises the children or at least has a much less demanding

career? Certainly the book makes it evident that a non-drinker like myself would not be progressing very far! Zappos - can you help me understand more? Things that most impressed me about Hsieh's story and the Zappos culture. The Pipeline - how most recruiting is done at entry level with incredible on-going training and continual internal promotion opportunities. He is very clear about the kind of person he wants to work with every day, knows how to find them and wants to make sure they have a trajectory. I also thoroughly enjoyed his cheekiness and regular rule breaking, his loving poke at Asian parental pressure stereotypes and his deep hunger for a community. Hsieh and his team have certainly created something unusual in corporate America. I take my hat off to what this daring 36 year old has built so far and will watch with interest as to what comes next. My heretical closing thought. As his people get tired of partying and look for their higher purpose outside of the Zappos family, I do wonder how sustainable the culture will be over the longer term. I too have created a family of people I want to be with every day and it's called my husband and children. He talks a lot about work being a calling, not a job. I'm not sure free pizza and shaving your head days are gonna cut it in 20 years time. Then again, they might not need to.

"Delivering Happiness" has become the trade phrase for Zappos. In this hard-to-put-down book, Tony Hsieh (CEO of Zappos) tells the story of how his life became entangled with the life of Zappos. Starting with his childhood, Tony tells how he has always had an entrepreneurial spirit: he tried to raise earthworms when he was 9, he held garage sales and sold lemonade, he had a newspaper route (and decided it was just a way for newspapers to avoid child labor laws:), he wrote a newsletter of jokes he tried to sell to friends, he sold Christmas cards, he made custom photo buttons. Then in high school he discovered computers and began learning. He got a job testing video games, then became a programmer. The little jobs continued throughout college, where he tried to find the easiest path through his classwork. When he graduated college, he took a job at Oracle just because they offered the most money. And he found a way to do as little work as possible there too. Because he was bored, Tony and his roommate created LinkExchange which they eventually sold to Microsoft for \$265 million. Bored again, this is where Zappos enters his life. Much of the rest of the book is a fascinating history of how Zappos evolved and grew from nothing to \$1 billion in gross sales in less than 10 years. Along the way, Tony explains how he learned business lessons from a summer fling with playing poker in Vegas. One of those lessons was to figure out what he really wanted to get out of life. He dabbled in investing and day-trading but found them unfulfilling. He dabbled in angel funding (Zappos being one of the companies he funded). He realized he was passionate about building a company, and the beneficiary of his

passion happened to be Zappos. He poured a lot of his own money into keeping Zappos alive and learned lessons about inventory, warehousing, and outsourcing. About half way through the book is where I started highlighting and folding down page corners. Tony talks about company culture and how he lead Zappos to invest their time, money and resources into 3 areas: customer services, culture, and employee training. Tony lists a great "Top 10 ways to instill customer services into your company" and explains (in great detail) the 10 core values of Zappos culture. He gives examples of interview questions that they ask to see how the person will fit into the company culture. He lists some of the course titles that are offered to employees that choose to learn new skills in order to advance their title. He lists the "Top 10 questions to ask when looking for investors and board members." And then Tony tells the story of how Zappos became a "marriage partner" to .The final section of the book is about applying the science of happiness. This was an outstanding section and the entire book is worth the price just for this section alone. Tony mentions several books (The Happiness Hypothesis: Finding Modern Truth in Ancient Wisdom and Happier: Learn the Secrets to Daily Joy and Lasting Fulfillment) that formed the foundation of his research into happiness along with books that taught him about company culture (Good To Great: Why Some Companies Make The Leap...and Others Don't and Tribal Leadership: Leveraging Natural Groups to Build a Thriving Organization). Tony also recommends Peak: How Great Companies Get Their Mojo from Maslow (J-B US non-Franchise Leadership) to learn how Maslow's Hierarchy of needs can be applied to business, customers, employees and investors. Overall a highly enjoyable book, very nicely written in an informal style, with a great story and good pointers to further resources. Highly recommended. This review was written based on an Advance Reading Copy of uncorrected page proofs.

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