



## Leading By Design: The Ikea Story

By Ingvar Kamprad, Bertil Torekull

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Based on exclusive interviews with the legendary founder of IKEA, Ingvar Kamprad, *Leading by Design* tells the inside story of Kamprad's humble roots and of the visionary concepts and innovative strategies that turned a small, Swedish mail-order company into a worldwide commercial giant.

When in 1943 at age seventeen Ingvar Kamprad founded IKEA, he had no way of knowing that IKEA would come to represent dedication to quality, a distinct design style, and convenience to the harried modern consumer. Today, more than 195 million people worldwide frequent his 150 stores in thirty countries, and almost 100 million catalogs are printed each year.

As the grandson of German immigrants who went to Sweden in search of a better life, Ingvar Kamprad grew up on a farm in a rural village. But he was no farmer. Early in his life, he discovered his natural affinity for business. From cigarette lighters and fish to Christmas cards and pens, young Ingvar devoted himself to importing and selling anything he thought he could make a profit on. Furniture was just one item in a long and fairly undistinguished list until, in an effort to best his main competitor, he took a chance on an armless nursing chair he called Ruth. It quickly sold out. Adding a coffee table and then a sofa bed and then a chandelier, Kamprad was astonished by how quickly the merchandise moved.

The rest is business history. In *Leading by Design*, Bertil Torekull, a well-known Swedish journalist, reveals the genius and the secrets behind IKEA's extraordinary success. With candor and detail, he offers insights into Kamprad's cutting-edge management strategies, his enthusiasm to embrace innovative methods (such as producing ready-to-assemble merchandise and using a car door factory to produce affordable products with universal appeal), and the tools he used to grow the IKEA brand into a veritable industry unto itself.

More than a standard business history *Leading by Design* captures the essence of Kamprad himself. It is a testament to the inspiration, the ideas, and the innovations that make a good business great.

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## **Leading By Design: The Ikea Story** By Ingvar Kamprad, Bertil Torekull Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #958833 in Books
- Published on: 1999-09-01
- Released on: 1999-08-18
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 9.25" h x .89" w x 6.13" l,
- Binding: Hardcover
- 256 pages

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### Editorial Review

#### Amazon.com Review

*Leading by Design* is really, of course, the story of Ingvar Kamprad, the Swedish furniture retailer who turned Ikea into a company that now has 41,000 workers at 150 stores in 30 countries who annually distribute 100 million catalogs and sell \$6.25 billion in goods. And what a story it is. Based on extensive conversations with the subject, 100 additional interviews, and various documents both public and private, business journalist Bertil Torekull employs an unusual mixture of blunt first-person recollections and narrative overviews delivered with literary flair to peel away the intricacies of Kamprad's life. Along the way, Torekull reveals the creative forces that propelled Kamprad's distinctive entrepreneurial drive and fashioned a successful company. "Imagine one of the coldest little countries in the world. Think of the most barren part of that country. See in front of you a godforsaken place deep in the wild spruce forests," Torekull begins. "This book is about a man who grew up in that harsh environment, which was to mark his whole life and fundamentally color the philosophy with which he built his vast empire." Delving into a fascinating career that began taking shape at the unlikely age of 5, Torekull presents this tale in a way that entertains as well as educates. --Howard Rothman

#### From Publishers Weekly

Like IKEA's mass market-priced beds and dressers, this authorized history of the Swedish furniture company is accessible. Unfortunately, Torekull, a prominent Swedish financial journalist, is all too willing to downplay messy details as he charts the company's evolution from founder Ingvar Kamprad's first sales of cheap fountain pens in 1943 to the present-day behemoth, which boasts 150 stores in 30 countries on four continents with 41,000 employees. Emerging from the interviews with Kamprad and others is a flattering portrait of an entrepreneur with drive and vision who has been responsive to every opportunity to reduce costs. In a demonstration of quick reflexes in the face of changing market conditions, Kamprad sought out sources in Poland and other Eastern European countries as soon as local Swedish suppliers became too expensive. Over time, Kamprad's bold responses to challenges have undeniably been successful. Yet Torekull indicates that IKEA's future may not be as rosy as its past: Kamprad's sons tend to sit in silent obedience when their father is in the room, and new IKEA projects still invariably originate with Kamprad himself. The iron fist of the founder is also evident in the wall of disingenuousness that Torekull confronted in his attempts to investigate Kamprad's past associations with Hitler supporters and Swedish neo-Fascist political groups. Readers might suspect that Torekull would have relished writing an unauthorized history of IKEA. Confronted with the hagiographical excesses here, they will surely wish he had. Illustrations not seen by PW. (Sept.)

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#### From Library Journal

Torekull, an editor and founder of *Dagens Industri*, an economic newspaper in Sweden, provides a picturesque and insightful view of Swedish entrepreneur Ingvar Kamprad, the founder of IKEA, who was born in 1926. A descendant of merchants and traders, Kamprad started his own mail-order firm (IKEA) at 17, selling fountain pens, Christmas cards, and other sundries. Years later, he was the first to develop the idea, commercially, of selling furniture unassembled in easily transported flat boxes. Drawing on personal interviews, extensive research, and meetings with Kamprad, the author eloquently describes the company, its founder, and his business philosophy. Kamprad's reputation was tarnished when in 1994 it was discovered that from ages 16 to 25 he had contacts with a pro-Nazi activist, who was favored by his stern German grandmother and German father. Kamprad explains how he was indoctrinated and regrets this time in his

life, but he asks, "When is an old man to be forgiven for the sins of his youth?" Recommended for business collections. ABellinda Wise, Nassau Community Coll. Lib., Garden City, NY  
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## **Users Review**

### **From reader reviews:**

#### **Jack Young:**

This Leading By Design: The Ikea Story book is not ordinary book, you have after that it the world is in your hands. The benefit you obtain by reading this book is information inside this e-book incredible fresh, you will get information which is getting deeper anyone read a lot of information you will get. This Leading By Design: The Ikea Story without we realize teach the one who looking at it become critical in imagining and analyzing. Don't possibly be worry Leading By Design: The Ikea Story can bring once you are and not make your handbag space or bookshelves' turn out to be full because you can have it inside your lovely laptop even cell phone. This Leading By Design: The Ikea Story having good arrangement in word and layout, so you will not truly feel uninterested in reading.

#### **Phyllis Richards:**

The feeling that you get from Leading By Design: The Ikea Story may be the more deep you looking the information that hide inside words the more you get interested in reading it. It doesn't mean that this book is hard to understand but Leading By Design: The Ikea Story giving you excitement feeling of reading. The article writer conveys their point in a number of way that can be understood by simply anyone who read this because the author of this reserve is well-known enough. This specific book also makes your personal vocabulary increase well. Making it easy to understand then can go together with you, both in printed or e-book style are available. We suggest you for having this particular Leading By Design: The Ikea Story instantly.

#### **Glenn Pryor:**

A lot of people always spent their free time to vacation or perhaps go to the outside with them household or their friend. Were you aware? Many a lot of people spent that they free time just watching TV, or perhaps playing video games all day long. If you need to try to find a new activity this is look different you can read any book. It is really fun for you. If you enjoy the book which you read you can spent all day every day to reading a e-book. The book Leading By Design: The Ikea Story it is very good to read. There are a lot of folks that recommended this book. We were holding enjoying reading this book. If you did not have enough space bringing this book you can buy the actual e-book. You can m0ore effortlessly to read this book from the smart phone. The price is not too costly but this book has high quality.

#### **Mark Mata:**

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