



## Jim Collins

**Built to Last**  
**ISBN13: 9780060516406**

**Note from Jim Collins and Jerry Porras,**  
**authors of *Built to Last***

As we sat down to write this author's note for the HarperBusiness Essentials edition, *Built to Last* celebrated its sixth year on the Business Week bestseller list. Far beyond what we would have dared to imagine, *Built to Last* has lived up to its own name.

Ironically, we can claim no credit for the title. Creativity often sprouts from frustration, and our editors in 1994 were frustrated in the extreme. We had inserted a clause into our publishing contract that gave us final right of approval, and as the publication date neared, we just kept vetoing titles. In all, something on the order of 127 different options fell by the wayside, from "You are the Competition" to "Research Results on Visionary Companies."

The situation finally escalated to the executive editor for HarperCollins, who went home for the weekend and returned on Monday morning with an idea. "Here," he said, throwing a three by five note card on our editor's desk, "see if they'll go for this." On it he'd written the simple phrase "Built to Last."

And we had our title.

In retrospect, *Built to Last* is a great title, but it is also the wrong title. Not from a marketing standpoint (don't get us wrong, we'd still keep it), but from the standpoint of what this book is really all about. *Built to Last*, it turns out, is not fundamentally about building to last. It is about building something that is worthy of lasting -- about building a company of such intrinsic excellence that the world would lose something important if that organization ceased to exist. Implicit on every page is a simple question: Why on Earth would you settle for creating something mediocre that does little more than make money, when you can create something outstanding that makes a lasting contribution as well? And in the end, as the evidence from our research showed, those who make a lasting contribution make more money over the long run anyway.

If we were rewriting *Built to Last* today, we would not overturn any of the basic concepts; they are timeless principles. We certainly know more about great companies than we did in 1994, and there is certainly much that we could add, but our faith in the fundamental findings has not faded. Indeed, we are more convinced than ever that building an enduring great company -- one that is truly worthy of lasting -- is a noble cause.

Jim Collins and Jerry Porras

March 31, 2002