

The Carpenter



*A Story About the Greatest
Success Strategies of All*

JON GORDON

Bestselling author of *The Energy Bus*

Foreword by Ken Blanchard

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***A Story About the Greatest Success
Strategies of All***

JON GORDON

WILEY

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For Kathryn, who stood right beside me as we built a life, a family, and a mission together.

Foreword

In my sessions with managers around the world, I often begin by asking, “How many of you think you are leaders? Please raise your hands if you do.” I’m always amazed that less than 20 percent raise their hands. Why is it that these managers—whose jobs are defined by leading others—do not think they are leaders?

The answer is that most people, managers included, believe leadership is defined by the title and position they hold. The managers who don’t raise their hands believe they don’t have titles that are fancy enough or positions that are high enough to call themselves leaders.

These managers probably didn’t have a father like mine. A highly decorated admiral of the Navy, my dad taught me priceless lessons about leadership. I’ll never forget when I was elected president of my seventh-grade class. When I came home from school all pumped up and proud, Dad said, “Congratulations, Ken. But now that you are president, don’t ever use your position. Great leaders are great because people trust and respect them, not because they have power.”

That’s the message of Jon Gordon’s wonderful new book, *The Carpenter*. I encourage you to think of the main character as a mentor. He will teach you that any human being who loves, serves, and cares is a leader.

If you’re a businessperson, shift your focus from “winning”—whatever that means to you—to using your business to love, serve, and build up others. If you do this, you will succeed and your business will grow in ways you never imagined.

You'll also learn that to achieve genuine success, you must help others. Your first job in life is not to judge and evaluate people, but to help them succeed in whatever they're doing. In other words, success is meant to be shared.

I am excited that you have decided to read this book. *The Carpenter* can change your life for the better. And you, in turn, can change the lives of the people around you—who in turn can change the lives of those they touch. And just maybe, one person at a time, we can change the world.

—Ken Blanchard,
coauthor of *The One Minute Manager®* and *Leading at a Higher Level*

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Most of all I thank God for the Carpenter who saved me in 2006 and transformed my life, heart, and soul forever.

Chapter 1

Collapse

The last thing Michael remembered before waking up in the hospital was running through the city streets and thinking about ways to build his company. Now he was lying on his back with wires and machines connected to his body as his wife, Sarah, sat by his side and a nurse stood over him.

"What am I doing here?" he asked groggily. "Did I get hit by a car or something?"

"You passed out on your run," answered Sarah, who was crying and shaking. In all the years she had known him, she couldn't recall him having more than a cold, never mind being in the hospital.

"How? Why?" he asked.

"That's what the doctor is trying to figure out right now. He's reviewing your tests and should be in shortly," the nurse said.

"I hope I'm okay," Michael said as he looked around the room and then at Sarah. She tried to smile and be reassuring but she couldn't. She was scared and expecting bad news.

Michael lifted his arm and felt a bandage and lump on his head. "How did I get here?"

"The ambulance brought you. Your head hit the ground pretty hard. The EMTs told us that a man saw you collapse and helped you. He used his shirt to stop the bleeding and called 911. He just might have saved your life."

"Who was it?"

“They didn’t get his name. He just gave them that card sitting on your table.”

Sarah picked up the card and showed it to Michael. It was a simple plain white card with only the word *Carpenter* and a phone number in black, bold ink.

“Not much of a marketer,” Michael said, coming to his senses and regaining his usual humor.

Sarah’s nervousness turned to laughter as she shook her head. Even while in the hospital he was thinking about business. She was thankful, at least, that he was feeling more normal.

In that moment the doctor walked in and stood over Michael’s bed. “Well, the good news is that you didn’t have a heart attack like I had feared,” he said as he shook Michael’s hand.

“Heart attack!” Michael exclaimed. “I’m too young to have a heart attack!”

“Not necessarily,” the doctor countered. “In fact, your body is warning you that you better slow down and manage your stress or you’ll experience the real thing before too long. Have you been under a lot of stress lately?”

Michael and Sarah looked at each other. “We own a business,” Sarah said. “We’ve been building it together, and with two kids, it’s been a whirlwind.”

“Well I advise you to slow down,” the doctor said as he made eye contact with Michael. “No business or success is worth your health and life. I want you to rest for a few weeks before heading back to work. It will do your heart and your head some good. You have a minor concussion as well. Nothing major or serious but we want your head to heal, too.”