

# 9 SYSTEMS EVERY BUSINESS NEEDS

*How I grew profits 400%  
and transformed my  
business, career, and life.*



Michael Girdley



# **Over 30 years, I've learned that pretty much all business “tastes like chicken”.**

85% of it is the same everywhere.  
15% varies by industry or market.

The result: every business has a lot of the same problems to solve.

We're all trying to figure out:

- Hiring
- Strategy/vision
- Good meetings
- Managing
- Culture
- etc!

Over my career, I saw that every CEO seemed to be tackling the same problems in different ways — often terrible ones!

This made no sense to me. So I went out looking.

## What I found

I spent two years looking at hundreds of “systems” to solve the **universal problems** that every business faces.

And I found the best.

Since I started using them, the results have been magical.

One company has 4x'ed in size *and* profit in 3 years. My hiring has totally transformed. And I rarely have to make things up as I go.

## What I have for you

This guide will walk you through my 9 systems that solve the problems every business has.

The best part: most of these systems can be found in really smart books. That means for an outlay of about twenty bucks, you get a huge amount of material and context. These are not expensive software or subscription fee services\*. **ROI = insane.**

(\* Okay, *two* of them are expensive software. But the ROI is still insane and I'll tell you why.)



# SYSTEM 1: **EOS**

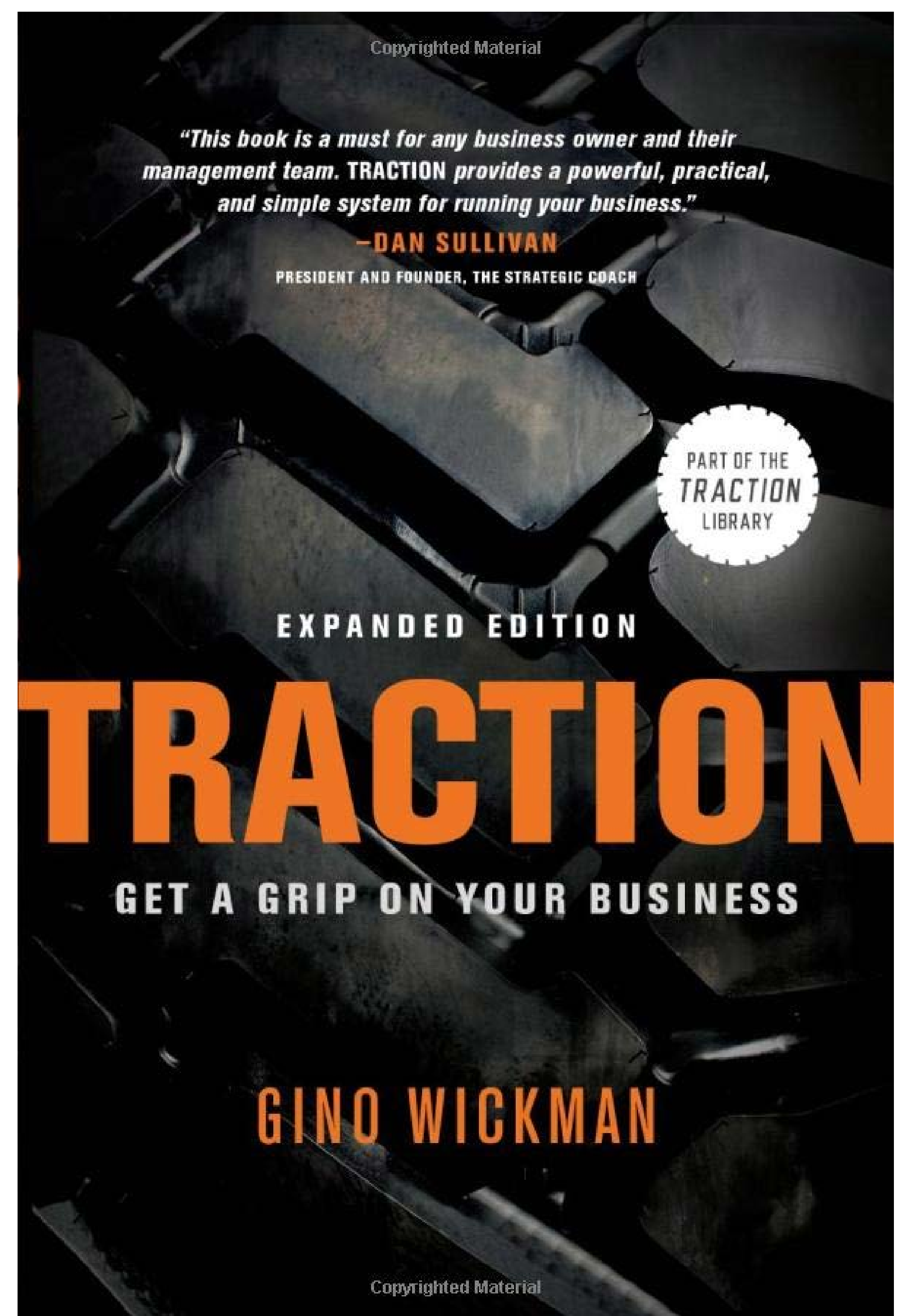
SOLVES FOR:

**Process, strategy, vision, organizational design**

The Entrepreneurial Operating System (EOS) is a practical guide that gives your SMB a roadmap.

Think of it as “business by worksheet”.

This system will guide you all the way from a 10-year vision down to what you’re doing each week.



**Buy the book:** [Traction by Gino Wickman](#)

**Read more:** [eosworldwide.com](http://eosworldwide.com)



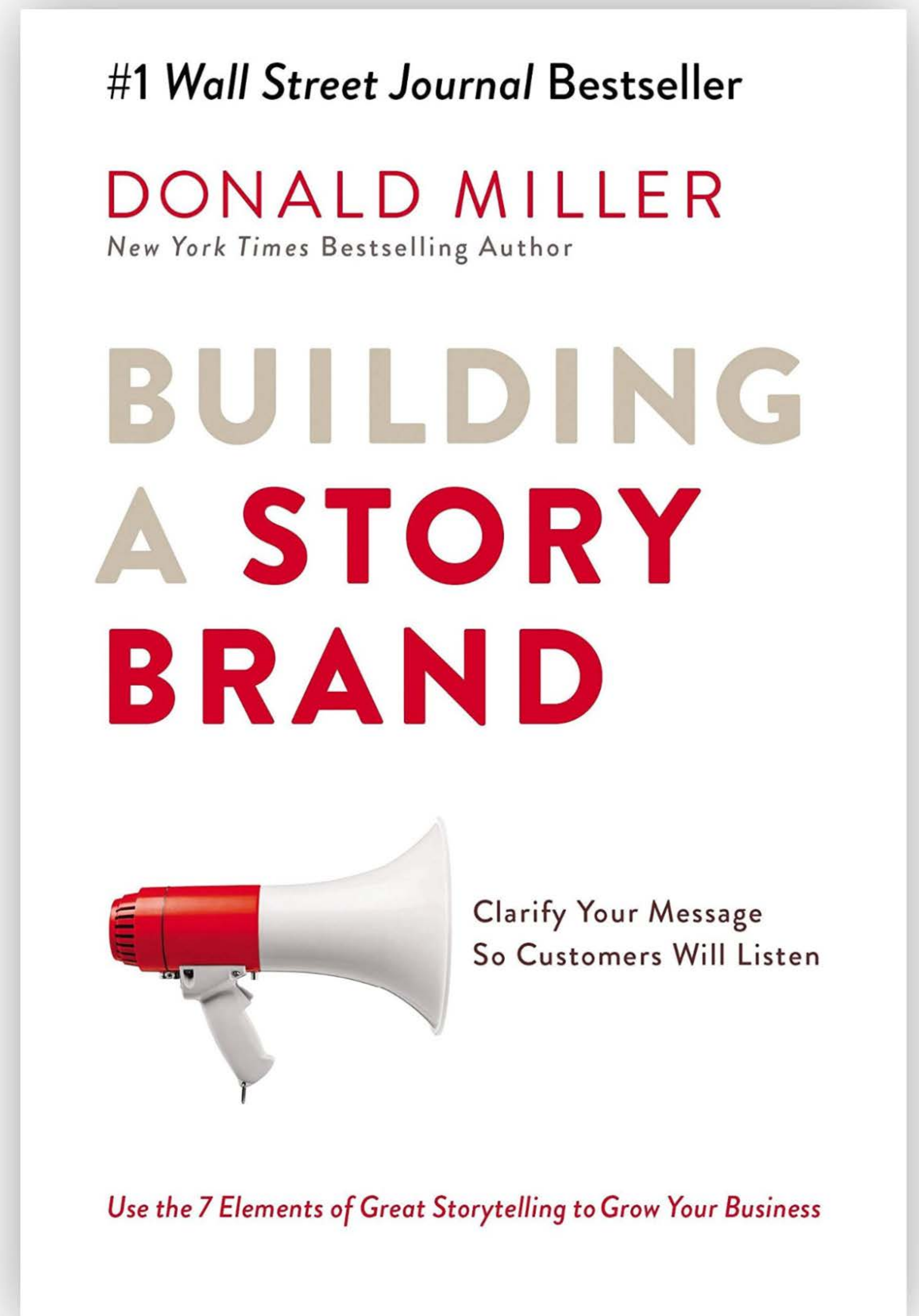
# SYSTEM 2: **Storybrand**

## SOLVES FOR: **Marketing**

What EOS does for its areas,  
Storybrand does for marketing.

Think of it as “marketing by  
worksheet”. (Seeing the pattern  
here?)

It uses the same Hero’s Journey that  
resonates with everyone (think Star  
Wars), then turns that into highly  
effective marketing.



**Buy the book:** [Building a Story Brand by Donald Miller](#)  
**Read more:** [storybrand.com](http://storybrand.com)



# SYSTEM 3: **Net Promoter Score (NPS)**

SOLVES FOR:

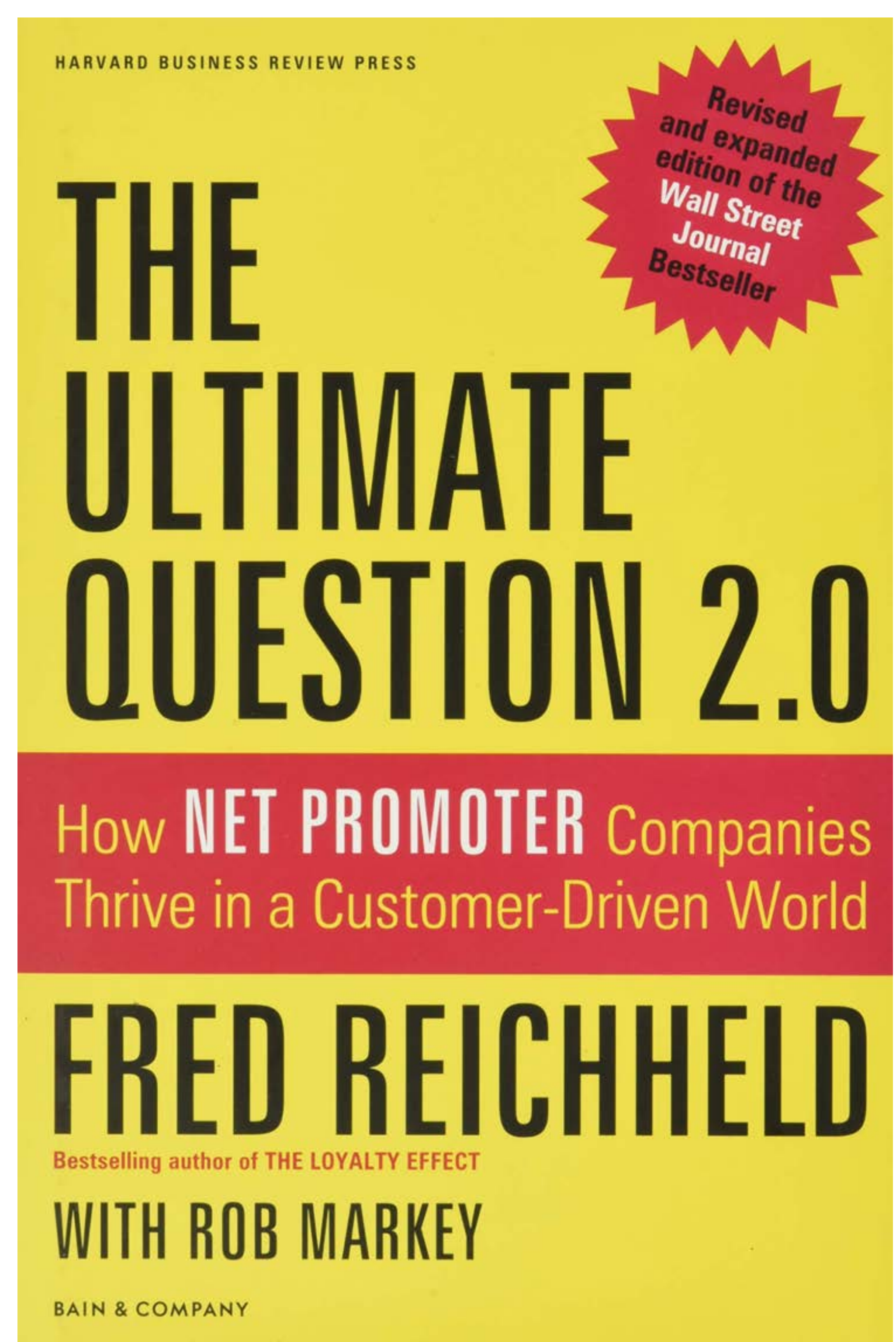
## **Customer Satisfaction Measurement**

All the customer satisfaction systems are broken. NPS is just the least broken one.

The good news is that it's gotten really easy to implement with all the SaaS systems out there. Many are free.

It's a powerful tool in determining how viable your business is, especially for software.

Plus, once you've nailed a high NPS, your customers start doing your marketing for you.



**Buy the book:** [The Ultimate Question 2.0 by Fred Reichheld](#)

**Read more:** [Hubspot's NPS breakdown](#)



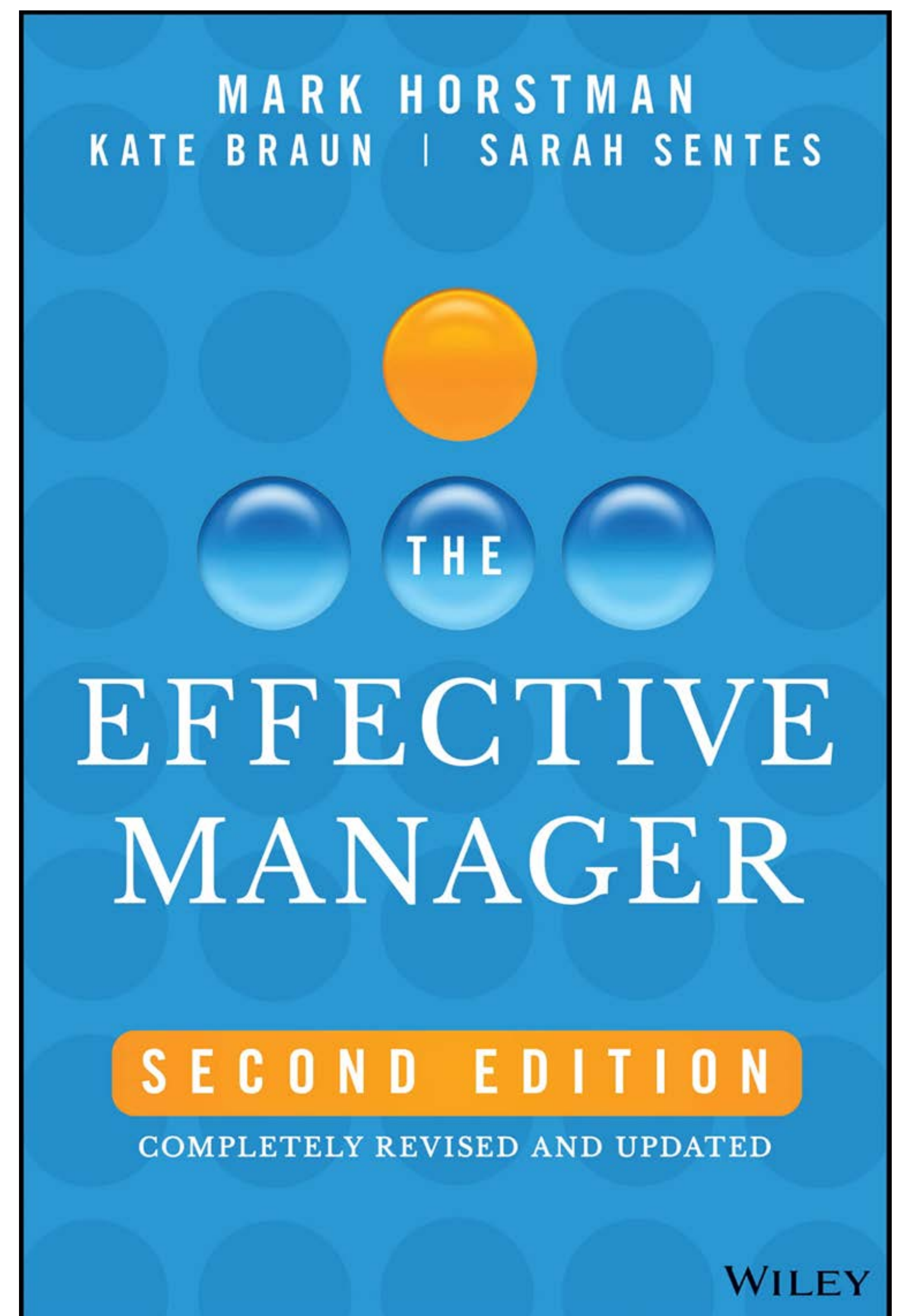
# SYSTEM 4: **The Effective Manager**

## SOLVES FOR: **Management**

What EOS is to running your business, The Effective Manager is to managing people.

It delivers a set of principles to be a great manager, and follows up with detailed steps on how to live those principles.

This is a must for every first time manager (and most experienced ones).



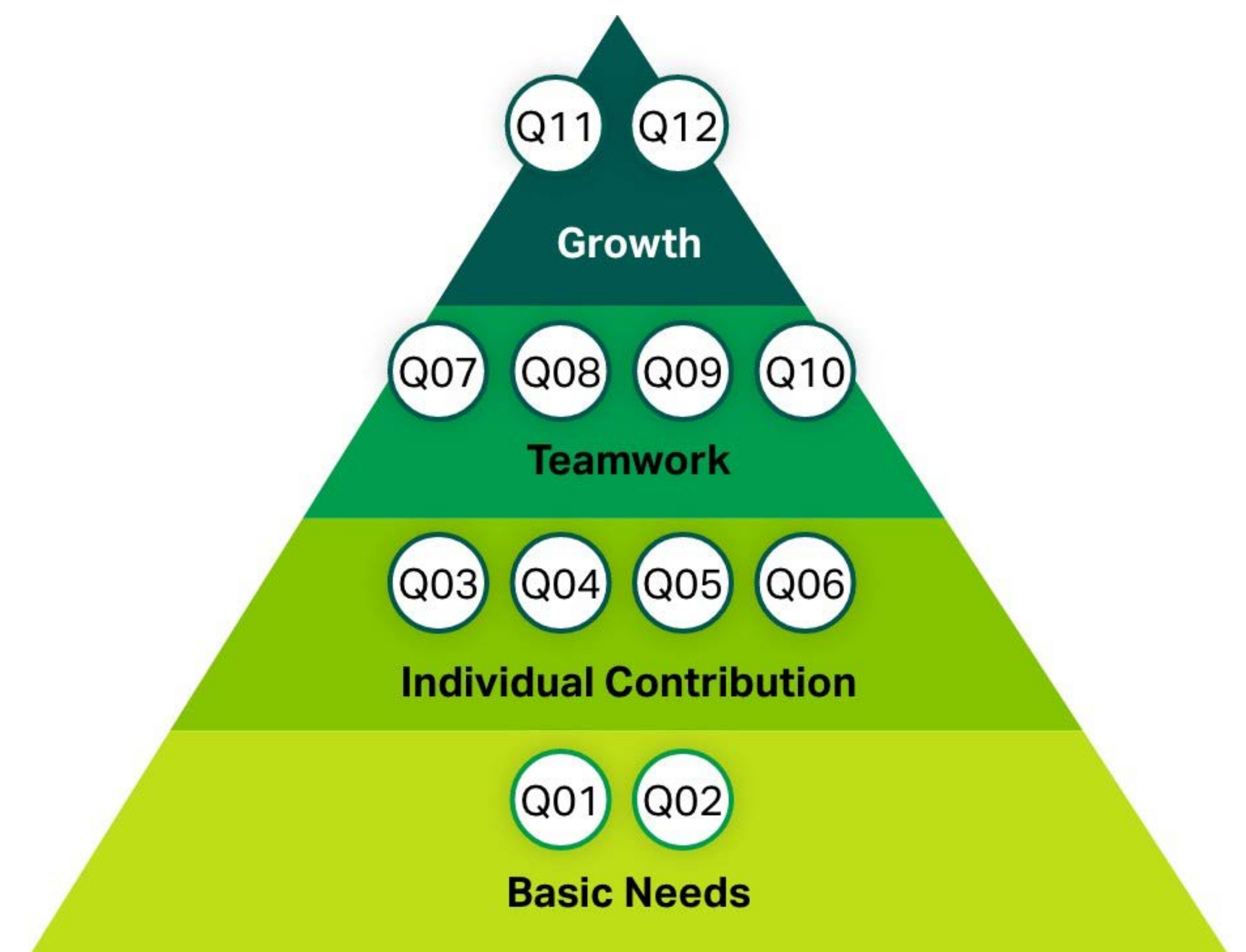
**Buy the book:** The Effective Manager by Mark Horstman

**Read more:** [manager-tools.com](http://manager-tools.com)



# SYSTEM 5: **Q12**

## SOLVES FOR: **Employee Engagement**



Engaged workforces produce outsized performance.

Gallup (the polling people) studied the characteristics of these high-performing teams, and created a 12-statement survey that runs regularly.

Then leaders can address problem areas directly.

Here's the survey:

1. I know what is expected of me at work.
2. I have the materials and equipment I need to do my work right.
3. At work, I have the opportunity to do what I do best every day.
4. In the last seven days, I have received recognition or praise for doing good work.
5. My supervisor, or someone at work, seems to care about me as a person.
6. There is someone at work who encourages my development.
7. At work, my opinions seem to count.
8. The mission or purpose of my company makes me feel my job is important.
9. My associates or fellow employees are committed to doing quality work.
10. I have a best friend at work.
11. In the last six months, someone at work has talked to me about my progress.
12. This last year, I have had opportunities at work to learn and grow.

Gallup breaks down the science behind each statement, and what the best managers do for each situation.

**Read more:** [gallup.com](https://gallup.com)



# SYSTEM 6: **Culture by Design**

## SOLVES FOR: **Company Culture**

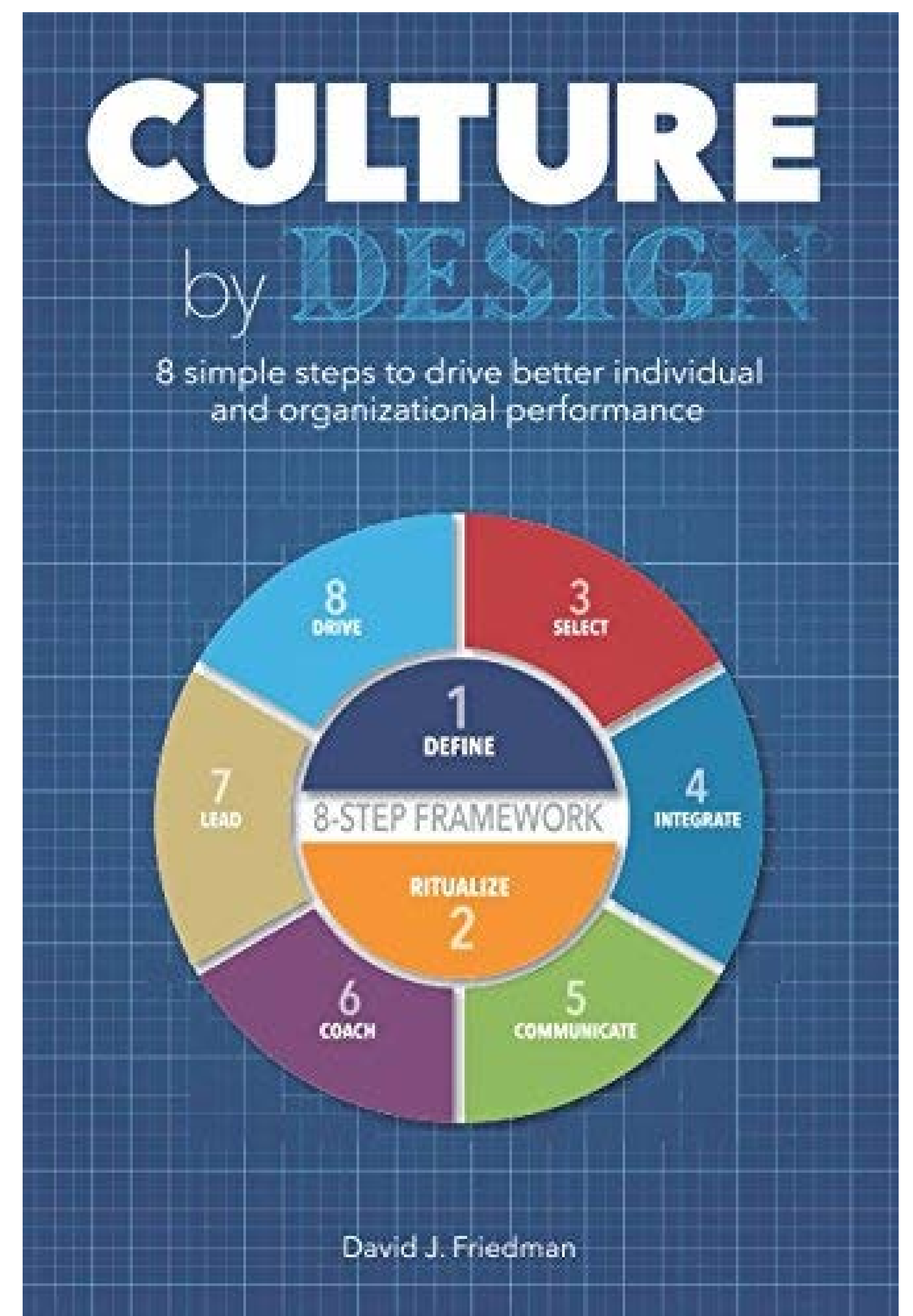
I've been disappointed by so many books about "let's build your company culture".

They're all too vague.

I wanted a system to follow that defines and spreads the culture I want. This is it, in very concrete terms.

- Defines behaviors, not values
- Explains a system to roll them out
- Makes it top down (a CEO crafting their culture)

Follow this system, and you'll have a great culture. Simple as that.



**Buy the book:** Culture by Design by David Friedman

**Read more:** [culturewise.com](http://culturewise.com)



## And finally...

The last three systems make up my **Hiring Holy Trinity**.

They cover my counterintuitive hiring pipeline, and the two systems I use to assess candidates.

One's a book. The other two are software, and heads up, they ain't cheap.

But it's *nothing* compared to the money you'll waste by hiring the wrong candidate.

Even at thousands of dollars a year, these systems still provide **ridiculous ROI**.



# SYSTEM 7: **Topgrading**

## SOLVES FOR: **Foolproof Hiring Process**

*Part 1 of my Hiring Holy Trinity*

This is the contrarian's hiring methodology.

It takes all the common, broken ideas in hiring and does the opposite. You get a process that only high performers get through.

Their method has a several hour interview. I've learned that bullshit cannot survive more than 2 hours in this format. Most can't make it an hour.

I use Topgrading and my next system for every hire I make. It's so good I'm tempted to keep it a secret.

(Caveat: The book is not good. But the ideas are like finding business religion.)

**Buy the book:** [Topgrading by Bradford Smart](#)

**Read more:** [topgrading.com](http://topgrading.com)

THE PROVEN HIRING AND  
PROMOTING METHOD THAT  
TURBOCHARGES  
COMPANY PERFORMANCE

FULLY  
REVISED  
AND  
UPDATED

# Topgrading

3RD EDITION

BRADFORD D. SMART, Ph.D.





# SYSTEM 8: **Culture Index**

SOLVES FOR:

**Personality assessments**

*Part 2 of my Hiring Holy Trinity*



Culture Index tells you whether a candidate is really “wired” for the job.

And unlike Meyers-Briggs, DISC, and others, CI is scientifically backed.

**Read more:** [cultureindex.com](http://cultureindex.com)  
**Cost:** Thousands / year (sorry!)



# SYSTEM 9: **Criteria Corp**

## SOLVES FOR: **Skills/Cognitive Assessment**

*Part 3 of my Hiring Holy Trinity*



These are my favorite pre-employment assessments.

I use these to find out:

- Do they have the job skills?
- Are they quick thinkers?

My most successful hires all scored very high on these assessments, and I've seen a correlation to how quickly people can learn new things.

This is a pretty commoditized space now, but of the 20 or so I looked at, Criteria Corp did this best.

**Read more:** [criteriacorp.com](https://criteriacorp.com)

**Cost:** \$1-2k / year



# Recap

These are 9 systems that I now consider essential to my efficiency, growth, and success.

- Process, Strategy, Vision, Organizational Design — [EOS](#)
- Marketing — [Storybrand](#)
- Customer Satisfaction — [NPS](#)
- Management — [The Effective Manager](#)
- Employee Engagement — [Q12](#)
- Company Culture — [Culture by Design](#)
- Hiring Process — [Topgrading](#)
- Personality Assessments — [Culture Index](#)
- Skills/Cognitive Assessment — [Criteria Corp](#)

## Questions? Comments?

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