

Praise for *You Lead*

‘In *You Lead*, Minter Dial has written a refreshingly original and necessary book on leadership. By helping leaders be themselves – and better versions of themselves, at that – this form of new leadership will help drive not just better engagement, performance and business results; it will also help towards improving another important issue, which is mental health and wellbeing in the workplace. A must-read.’ SUKI THOMPSON, FOUNDER AND CEO, LET’S RESET, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, XEIM AND CHAIR, OYSTERCATCHERS

‘*You Lead* is a STOP PRESS MUST-READ. As Minter Dial points out, the great leaders of tomorrow will be those who know how to be themselves consistently throughout the day, whether it’s with the cashier at the local grocer or one’s spouse, friend, client, distributor or colleague. This book draws out a practical way to be such a leader, all the while keenly delivering on results. *You Lead* is a complete leadership guide.’ NICOLAS BORDAS, VICE-PRESIDENT INTERNATIONAL, TBWA/WORLDWIDE AND BOARD MEMBER, OMNICOM EUROPE

‘A great read, a real guide for evolving your leadership skills and style using proven strategies while incorporating the new realities of today’s rapidly changing business environment. It is especially helpful in understanding the impact of the digital revolution and how to master those skills as part of the *You Lead* philosophy. I highly recommend this to leaders both seasoned and those developing leaders of tomorrow!’ PAT PARENTY, FORMER PRESIDENT, L’ORÉAL PROFESSIONAL PRODUCTS DIVISION USA

‘I met Minter Dial over a decade ago, during his time at L’Oréal. Over the years, I have met thousands of executives. I’ve only

maintained a friendship with a small few. Minter is one of the few. This book explains why. He is a leader – through and through. Mostly, because he leads himself with excellence. He has humility, courage, a deep sense of empathy for himself, his team members and the customer. Most importantly, he is curious. These are just some of the ingredients that make him great. Those are just some of the ingredients in his excellent new book, *You Lead*, that will make you great. Times are crazy. They are going to get crazier. You lead!’ MITCH JOEL, AUTHOR OF *SIX PIXELS OF SEPARATION* AND *CTRL ALT DELETE*

‘Minter Dial brings his considerable professional experience and personal skills to delineate the core principles of management. Excellent counsel as to how to move from intention to execution. A worthy read.’ ALAN TREFLER, FOUNDER AND CEO, PEGASYSTEMS

‘Shakespeare said: “To be or not to be, that is the question”. Gordon Sumner (Sting) answered him a few centuries later: “Be yourself, no matter what they say”. Minter Dial is an overarching combination between Shakespeare and Sting, a writer and a musician. And you should read that book for sure, *and* listen to that book, one of the most practical and musical I have had in my hands for a decade.’ LAURENT CHOAIN, CHIEF OF PEOPLE, EDUCATION AND CULTURE, MAZARS GROUP

‘What am I doing that matters? The answer lies within according to Minter Dial in this inspirational book.’ MARK SCHAEFER, AUTHOR OF *MARKETING REBELLION*

‘A thoughtful, honest and well-researched reminder of how important it is to be yourself in business. Both customers and employees gravitate towards those who feel genuine passion about their brand, because it really does show. As Minter Dial says, it is in every business leader’s interests to focus on making

the world around you a better place, rather than simply thinking about making yourself better off. I couldn't have put it better myself.' ANNE BODEN, FOUNDER AND CEO, STARLING BANK

'If Peter Thiel wrote *Zero to One* for entrepreneurs, Minter Dial has written the *Zero to One* for leaders. In *You Lead*, he makes a most compelling case for why we should bring our entire selves to work, lead from within and do things that matter.' SOPHIE DEVONSHIRE, AUTHOR OF *SUPERFAST* AND CEO, THE MARKETING SOCIETY

'When we radiate our passions to the world, the relationship we build with our customers becomes more important than the products and services we sell them. You will find these and other often surprising ideas in this little book of big ideas where Minter Dial shares the essence of how to lead both small and large organizations.' DAVID MEERMAN SCOTT, *WALL STREET JOURNAL* BESTSELLING AUTHOR OF *FANOCRACY*

““Lead” is a better verb than it is a noun. Minter Dial's book gives you an actionable blueprint for a new way of looking at leading, starting with yourself.' ANN HANDLEY, *WALL STREET JOURNAL* BESTSELLING AUTHOR AND CHIEF CONTENT OFFICER, MARKETINGPROFS

'In *You Lead*, Minter Dial adroitly pulls together how you can bring your full self to work and deliver on results.' CHARLENE LI, *NEW YORK TIMES* BESTSELLING AUTHOR OF *THE DISRUPTION MINDSET* AND SENIOR ANALYST, ALTIMETER

'The specific, intertwined skills, behaviours and talents to become a more successful leader are described as actionable insights in this idea-packed book to support us in our work. They include apt use of technology, messaging, speed learning, customer-centricity and considerably more. Clearly the author

has first-hand knowledge of what he advocates, making it a credible, valuable read.’ KARE ANDERSON, TED SPEAKER AND AUTHOR

‘It’s about time this book was written. In *You Lead*, Minter Dial vividly captures a dynamic change in today’s society – that our business, government, and educational leaders need to stand up for doing what is right before it becomes an issue. That to be a successful leader in today’s world it requires courageously bringing our whole selves to the table: professionally and personally. The result is a passionate call to arms, urging all of us to get in touch with who we are so that we can lead in a way that is true to our life experiences, ethics and values. This new book is undoubtedly one of the most important books written for our times. You’ll need two copies!’ CHARLENE LAIDLEY, FOUNDER, FUTUREPROOF: CREATING A GENDER EQUAL WORLD, UN WOMEN GLOBAL CHAMPION FOR CHANGE, AND LONDON TECH WEEK 30 CHANGE MAKER’S TO WATCH

‘Minter Dial has a way of getting right to the heart of the biggest issues a business leader faces today. He writes in a way that is thought-provoking and challenging. Be warned – when you read *You Lead* you are going to feel uncomfortable about changes you should have made already. But you’ll also be inspired to rethink and adjust your approach. It’s one of the few leadership books I’ve read that refers to the customer as much as the team and the leader themselves.’ DIANE YOUNG, CO-FOUNDER AND CEO, THE DRUM

‘When someone asks you to read another leadership book mine tends to be an allergic reaction expecting another lecture on who you should be and little recognition of who you are. So when I saw the fly sheet of *You Lead* and read “How being yourself makes you a better leader” I was not just pleasantly surprised but intrigued. *You Lead* is a compelling read for those like me

who believe leadership is personal and authenticity is the gateway to discovering the leader in each of us. Read it and you might just learn about yourself on your journey to leadership.’ RONAN DUNNE, CEO, VERIZON CONSUMER GROUP

‘*You Lead* delivers actionable concepts and useful examples of the leadership skills you need to advance in the coming years. Study this valuable book and apply these formulas to supercharge your own leadership practice. Well worth your time!’ CHRIS BROGAN, *NEW YORK TIMES* AND *WALL STREET JOURNAL* BESTSELLING AUTHOR AND FOUNDER, STORYLEADER™

You Lead

*How being yourself makes you
a better leader*

Minter Dial



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FOREWORD

Whether you're leading at the top of a conglomerate, a start-up or a small team within a larger organization, there's no doubt that leadership needs to do a major step change to adapt to the new world order of constant commotion. I've had the good fortune to work with some of the very top leaders in the world, including Sir Richard Branson, Steve Jobs and Charles Schwab, as well as the founders of some of the most exciting and enterprising start-ups, including LYFT CEO and co-founder Logan Green and Pinterest co-founder Evan Sharp. What I've observed from these standout leaders is that great leadership is a journey. No one is born a leader. It is a quality you craft, hone and earn over time. More than ever before, to be a great leader is a journey where the personal and professional ambitions and qualities must find a harmony, if not merge together. As I wrote about in my last book, *Admired*, there's a very personal nature to gaining respect and admiration for your Most Valuable People (MVP) in your life and work.

In his latest book, *You Lead*, Minter Dial draws out a cogent path for leaders like yourself to evolve by allowing if not exhorting you to lean in on your personal values, develop a greater self-awareness and make sure that what you do matters, for you and those around you, including your circle of MVPs. It's a personal journey that Minter leads you on, filled with stories and missteps from which to learn. Like myself, Minter loves music and leads by example in talking about how his personal passions contributed to developing his personality, impacting his sense of self and informing his leadership style. As I like to say, you can only grow and scale your business as fast as you grow and scale yourself.

If technology has been generally credited with driving the pace of change, we have all experienced in the last year how the forces of disruption can also be different in nature and scope. Whether leading through the pandemic, through the Black Lives Matter social movement or through challenging economic times, we can best adjust the rudder of our ship when we are in touch with ourselves and have an honest relationship with those around us, to do things that matter. As such the ship in leadership will steer a brighter course through the turbulence.

I've known Minter since his days as a senior executive at L'Oréal. He is someone who has always bravely walked the talk. This book is a shining example.

Mark C Thompson

Mark C Thompson is the World's No. 1 Leadership Coach for Transformational Growth, Team Engagement and Driving Change, according to the American Management Association. He is also the author of the *New York Times* bestselling books *Admired: 21 ways to double your value*, *Now Build a Great Business* and *Success Built to Last: Creating a life that matters*.

PREFACE

If writing a book is a labour of love, it seems more and more that reading one is a love of labour. Yet, I want to acknowledge and thank you as you've chosen to read *You Lead*. Where writing for this book started in the autumn of 2019 and continued through the entire first half of 2020, you are reading this at a later time, after the US presidential elections and certainly many other new events that have impacted the world around us. If during the period of writing this book, the context changed in dramatic fashion, it's bound to continue shifting and evolving. In the process of writing through the pandemic and the Black Lives Matter movement, I feel ever more convinced that the content of this book has become even more relevant. We need a new form of leadership up and down society, in government and, most definitely, in business. Whether we're leading within big business, running a start-up or working in a non-governmental organization, we can and should take a hard look at ourselves and our environment, and lean in on what matters. Being yourself takes knowing yourself. By being more in touch with who you are, you'll not only be a better leader, you'll also be a better person. Business can be a force for change for good, all the while competing and performing at the highest level.

Taking a page out of the physics playbook, as the compelling energy and climate expert Jean-Marc Jancovici says, we know that transformation requires energy.¹ In the context of leadership, with the ever-increasing constraints (economic, environmental, social or sanitary), we will need to generate an extra level of energy within ourselves and our organization in order to adapt and transform. The only way to succeed long term is to offer a sense of purpose that taps into our discretionary energy.

It's up to us as leaders to set the example.

As you go through the book, you will find key insights and messages along with actionable points at the end of each chapter. If you go to www.minterdial.com/you-lead (archived at <https://perma.cc/L6CC-9XFM>), you will find further resources, including some exercises, recommended books, podcasts and articles, as well as the detailed results of an exclusive leadership survey that is featured in Chapters 3 and 4. There'll also be a space to start or join a conversation as provoked by what you've read.

Endnote

1. jancovici.com/en/energy-transition/energy-and-us/what-is-energy-actually/ (archived at <https://perma.cc/2M8C-MNKR>)

GRATEFULNESS AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

No man is an island and no published author is truly alone. I want to thank my editor, Géraldine Collard, for her patience, kind encouragement and refined direction throughout the writing, including pulling it all together right after the pandemic lockdown was eased and through the persistent concussion I sustained at the same time.

Among the many people who have influenced me greatly in my life, one stands above them all in so many ways. John Peake was my housemaster for my five years at Eton. He was my teacher, tutor, confidant, sports coach and general morale booster. He exhibited that particular ability to always be himself in all aspects of life and work. He and his wife Sue gave me so many life skills. After school, inevitably, we stayed in touch. As a teacher, he imbued in me the love of history, which I applied in the making of my World War II documentary film and book, *The Last Ring Home*. And in *You Lead*, there is a kernel that was sparked by his example.

For *You Lead*, I was fortunate to be able to interview and draw on many wonderfully talented individuals, several of whom I worked with at Redken. It's lovely to know that the friendships I made at work can endure, even grow, through time and despite the distance. Technology has no doubt helped keep those relationships alive.

The list of advisers and helpers are, in alphabetical order: Chris Baran, Jeremy Basset, Alex Beaussier, Tariq Hassan, Peter Mahoney, Ann Mincey, Pat Parenty, Christine Schuster, Adrian Swinscoe, Phillip Ullmann and Laura Willis.

I have long maintained that I am only as strong as my network. I tend to depend upon some members of my network more than

others, especially when it comes to writing. Then there are the friends and family who are able to cajole and inspire. I am forever grateful for the unconditional love and support of my father, mother and sister. There is no one more important than my incandescently beautiful and smart wife, Yendi. Between coddling and prodding, encouraging and exhorting, and laughing and loving, Yendi has been the guiding rock by my side for 25 years of marriage.