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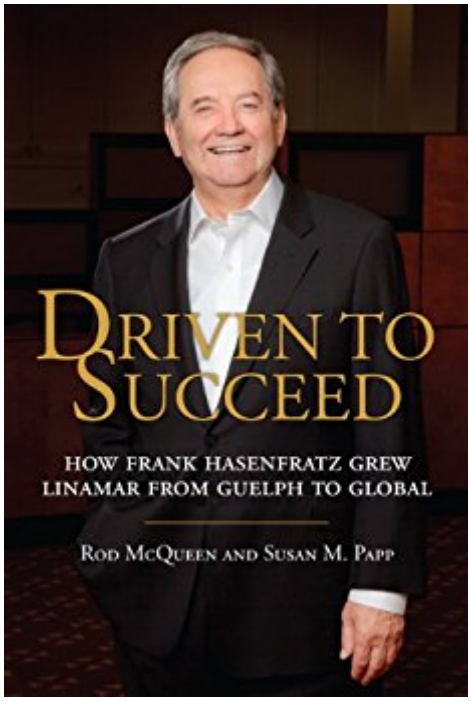
Driven To Succeed: How Frank Hasenfratz Grew Linamar From Guelph To Global



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Synopsis

The story of what one daring entrepreneur with dreams and determination can achieve. Frank Hasenfratz grew up in Hungary learning to dodge bullets and avoid land mines during the Second World War. When the 1956 revolution erupted, he and his army unit joined the insurgents. After the revolution was crushed, he fled to Guelph, Ontario, where he gambled everything on a one-man operation making oil pumps for Ford. The company he founded, Linamar, today has 15,000 employees in eight countries and is the second-largest maker of auto parts in Canada. To create this global empire, Hasenfratz stayed ahead of competitors through hard work, visionary leadership, a cost-conscious regimen, and a skilled workforce.In 1990, Hasenfratz designated his daughter, Linda, to succeed him as chief executive officer but first put her through a prolonged apprenticeship that took her from the plant floor to head office. Driven to Succeed is the story of what one daring entrepreneur with dreams and determination can achieve.

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Customer Reviews

I just finished Frank Hasenfratz’s biography - Driven to Succeed. It is gripping.The story starts in Hungary and tells of Frank (called Farec then) hiding while Russians overrun his village - stealing

everything in sight and worse. He is then forced to leave his family home with only what they can carry and being re-settled in a much tinier house in an area they did not know.I am thankful for where I was born and raised that I had such a relatively easy life - especially by comparison.Frank escaped from Hungary after WW II and made his way to Canada with no money. He tool a job in a metal shop and eventually had a falling out with his boss over how to make parts efficiently. So he made a deal. He would buy a lathe and put it in his basement and make the parts and sell them to his former employer.He then added an oven to heat treat. He added more machines and built a shed to house some of the machines. He hired a few people. Then a few more.And over 35 years grew to $2 Billion in sales and thousands of employees. (His original vision was to "grow to perhaps 20-30 people).There is certainly a large focus on family business (sort of like Now Foods - supplement manufacturer, distributor of stevia etc.). There is a section how Linda worked her way into and up in the business and the hopeful note that one of her children might someday join the business.I know many of the characters in the book like Jim Jarrel, Bob Young, Linda Hasenfratz etc.I also have spoken one of the authors, Rod McQueen when he was writing a book on Blackberry. McQueen is well known for writing Canadian business books. He is an excellent writer. I like his general positivity and objectivity.It is a great - must read book.

Great book!

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