

# **THE BATTLE TO DO GOOD**

Praise for *The Battle To Do Good*:

Bob Langert is a pioneer of the sustainability field and an artful storyteller. *The Battle To Do Good* is a compelling narrative about an iconic company's journey to be the best it can be for society and its shareowners. It is a new type of business book for leaders in the twenty-first century marketplace. The book is overflowing with great stories from the frontlines in sustainability and activism, as well as the back rooms of one of the most influential companies on the planet. A fun and informative read!

**Dave Stangis**, VP, Corporate Responsibility and Chief Sustainability Officer, Campbell Soup Company

The collaboration between McDonald's and EDF 30 years ago changed the corporate sustainability landscape. Bob was there, and he stayed with the company for another quarter century, leading them through many sustainability initiatives. In *The Battle To Do Good*, he provides a first-hand account of the most interesting and impactful of those episodes in what amounts to a series of well-told stories interspersed with pithy take-aways and principles. Bob's insights into the complex interactions with internal and external stakeholders are especially compelling. Anyone curious about the messy reality of leading meaningful change in corporations will find this fascinating, and because the stories amount to a series of real-world case studies, it is also ideal for college classes in sustainability.

**Jonathan Johnson**, Walton College Professor of Sustainability, Sam M. Walton College of Business, University of Arkansas; Founder and Chairman of the Board, The Sustainability Consortium

Transforming the world's largest fast-food chain into a sustainability leader is not for the faint of heart, but Bob Langert embraced it wholeheartedly. His remarkable story is not just a great read about an enviable career, but a hero's journey through the history of sustainable business and what it takes to be a leader, sometimes against the greatest of odds. Business students and corporate leaders alike should study and heed the lessons contained in these pages.

**Joel Makower**, Chairman and Executive Editor, GreenBiz Group

*The Battle To Do Good* really deserves attention and recognition considering how important corporate social responsibility is for businesses today. Utilizing this book provides the processes to manage such a daunting task. Bob Langert details step by step the journey he took. I loved this book!

**Jan Fields**, former President of McDonald's USA

Having been a vegetarian since the 1970s, and having been sued (unsuccessfully) by McDonald's because of our 1988 book *The Green Consumer Guide*, I loved slogans like "McCruelty" and "McSpotlight." Plus, the high drama of the "McLibel" trial. But Bob Langert does us all a service by explaining the journey McDonald's has been on as a result. Hard-Knock Nuggets indeed!

**John Elkington**, called the "Godfather of Sustainability," co-founded SustainAbility in 1987, collided with McDonald's in 1989, and is now Chairman and Chief Pollinator at Volans

Bob Langert is a true sustainability pioneer. *The Battle To Do Good* is a must-read account of how Bob led many changes that helped McDonald's address big issues that leveraged its brand and market presence to achieve big results. Bob's story has much to teach any sustainable business leader looking to make real change on crucial and complex questions ranging from beef, to animal welfare, water, and global labor conditions.

**Aron Cramer**, President and CEO, Business for Social Responsibility

*The Battle To Do Good* is an informative and insightful behind-the-scenes look at McDonalds' incredible sustainability journey over the past several decades. Bob Langert provides us with a detailed and compelling narrative of how the company struggled and ultimately succeeded in partnering with NGOs and experts to dramatically improve environmental practices, animal welfare, and more. Langert weaves concrete lessons learned and helpful tips into each chapter, making this a perfect playbook for any student or corporate professional aspiring to help their company's sustainability efforts. I recommend this book highly.

**Liz Maw**, CEO, Net Impact

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# THE BATTLE TO DO GOOD

Inside McDonald's  
Sustainability Journey

BY

**BOB LANGERT**



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# About the Author



(Photo courtesy of Stan Cottle)

**Bob Langert** led McDonald's CSR and Sustainability efforts from the late 1980s until 2015, when he retired. Currently he is editor-at-large for the GreenBiz Group, the senior sustainability advisor for The Context Network, and president of Mainstream Sustainability, his consultancy practice.

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\* I interviewed 51 people who are directly part of this book. I also interviewed others for context and background, including Cynthia Scott, Dean Danilson, Mike Siemens, Paul Shapiro, Heidi Glunz, Jason Saul, and Matt Sutton-Vermeulen.

and tomorrow: mainstreaming sustainability as fundamental to business success.

Most importantly, I am blessed with a great spouse, friend, and partner, Diane, who gave me the time and space to write this book, in addition to being a helpful first reviewer. To my daughters, Jenny and Laura, and their husbands, Greg and Michael, who give me such a fulfilling family life. And to my six grandchildren, who I hope live in a cleaner, brighter, safer, more sustainable society due in large part to corporate social responsibility and sustainability actions from companies large and small.