Jeff Bezos Leadership Style – An Inspirational Entrepreneur – from a $10,000 investment running his business from a garage, to an $85 billion share value in 23 years...that makes him the second richest man on the plant!

This article is about Jeff Bezos Leadership Style and has been written by Russell Bowyer. Although this article is a little bit more than just about leadership, it’s also about a very successful entrepreneur. Jeff Bezos founded Amazon back in July 1994 in his garage and invested $10,000...

His shares are now worth round $85 billion. This makes him the second richest man on the planet after Bill Gates. That’s equivalent to making $3.7 billion per year! That’s a huge net worth.

Can this be put down to his leadership style? Or could this be simply down to the top entrepreneurial characteristics he possesses? Either way, it’s an amazing achievement and worth an article...

From working out of a garage and investing $10,000, to owning shares in Amazon worth $85 billion in 23 years! An amazing entrepreneur success story.
Jeff Bezos Leadership Style – An Inspirational Entrepreneur

Bezos is known for quoting ‘I knew that if I failed I wouldn’t regret that, but I knew the one thing I might regret is not trying.’ Towards the end of the article is an info-graphic of the 14 leadership principles of Amazon too. Principles that many entrepreneurs could learn from, thanks to Amazon. Bezos is an engineer by trade and spent his youth fixing tractors on his grandfathers farm. He is one of those famous entrepreneurs who began his startup business from his garage. From these early days of a fledgling business, which he planned on his way to Seattle from New York, it has grown into the world’s largest Internet sales company in the world.

*Jeff Bezos Leadership Style Quote:* “One of the only ways to get yourself out of a tight box is to invent your way out”

Starting out as a business which sold just books, but now selling almost anything online. With over 300 million users with a staggering 80% of Amazon customers in the US purchasing at least once per month. 20% of US Amazon customers purchase once per week.

The company produced revenues of nearly $136 billion in 2016, with a net income of $2.4 billion. I remember when it was starting out and making huge losses, and being supported by its backers.

Also Jeff Bezos has become the 2nd richest person on the planet. He has an estimated worth of $75.6 billion (as of March 2017).

Jeff Bezos leadership style is a little unconventional at times. But the leadership style of Jeff Bezos puts him on top. With his number one style of always putting his customers first...

1. **The Customer is King**

   Jeff Bezos leadership style puts his customers at the top. His approach is to put them ahead of his staff and employees. In meetings he has an empty chair, which is for an imagined customer for his managers to focus on. Bezos calls this ‘The Most Important Person in The Room.’

   *Jeff Bezos Leadership Style* “We’re not competitor obsessed, we’re customer obsessed. We start with what the customer needs and we work backwards.”

   Bezos believes that by focusing on customers makes the company more resilient. With millions of customers world-wide he has proven a point.

   Bezos believes in starting with the customer and working backwards.
2. An Element of Fear Driven Leadership

Besoz is known for sending the ‘Question Mark’. Yes that’s right a single ‘?’ on an email to an unsuspecting employee. This type of email from Jeff Besoz sends the recipient employee into panic mode, and is usually sent as a result of a customer complaint or other issue which has hit Bezos’s desk.

This ‘fear provoking’ approach is unusual in today’s work place. However, it does have the desired effect. This type of style is also reflected in his straight talking approach. He is known for a few very belittling comments, such as “Do I need to go down and get the certificate that says I’m CEO of the company to get you to stop challenging me on this?” and another comment Jeff Besoz made “Are you lazy or just incompetent?” He is also known to laugh, which to most would seem like a normal approach. In Bezos’s case the laugh is more of a mocking or a mirthful bray. This laughter usually signifies when someone hasn’t met his high standards. Which leads nicely on to his next leadership style quality...

3. Nothing but Perfection To Achieve 100%
Jeff Bezos Leadership Style – An Inspirational Entrepreneur

Jeff Bezos is a bit of a perfectionist. This perfectionism is born out in his leadership style too.

Back in 2011 and leading up to Christmas he was proud of the 99.9% delivery success for Christmas. However, he said that “We’re not satisfied until it’s 100%.”

Jeff Bezos Leadership Style Quote: “Your brand is what other people say about you when you’re not in the room.”

He’s always striving to keep the Amazon brand at the top. He makes sure through his leadership that his managers and staff know this. He is very much aware of the saying “An unhappy customer in the physical world will tell six friends.” However, in today’s internet world the six friends become 6,000 social media friends.

4. Having a Published List of Leadership Principles

Amazon has 14 leadership principles. As you’d expect the first of this list is ‘Customer Obsession’. A full list is shown on the info-graphic below.

Having an open list displayed in this way, shows that Jeff Bezos’s leadership style includes leading by example. The second principle on this list is about ownership. Leaders are owners and think long-term. This principle is forgotten by many. Most sacrifice the long-term for short-term results.

Reading this list of leadership principles, amazon must be a great place to work. It shows that Jeff Bezos has great vision for his staff. It would appear that his leadership style encourages invention and creativity. His need for perfection and 100% customer focus is borne out in most, if not all of the 14 leadership principles.

5. A Leadership Style Influenced and Helped by Reading Books

Interestingly, Jeff Bezos leadership style was helped through the reading of books. One such book is Built to Last: Successful Habits of Visionary Companies” by Jim Collins. This is a management focused book and explains how companies succeed through building environments where “employees who embrace the central mission flourish.”
Another book he read is by Clayton Christensen: The Innovator’s Dilemma. Christensen argues in his book that companies improve by embracing disruptive innovation, which is akin to the approach that Jeff Bezos has adopted in his famous quote:

*Jeff Bezos* “Entrepreneurs must be willing to be misunderstood for long periods of time.”

One of the most famous innovations that was borne out from Amazon is the Kindle. It is argued that Christensen’s book influenced this creation. Many entrepreneurs are afraid to disrupt using technology for fear of alienating customers. Whereas Jeff Bezos leadership style follows Christensen’s argument that by ignoring potential disruption can be even more costly.

### 6. Unreasonably Demanding? Pushing Employees to the Limit

The [New York Times article on Amazon](https://www.nytimes.com) describes how Amazon employees are pushed. It asks how far the company can push its white-collar workers to get them to achieve its ever-expanding ambitions. In the Amazon working environment, one employee recalled “When they ‘hit the wall’ from the unrelenting pace, there is only one solution: ‘Climb the wall.’” Employees are guided by the 14 principles, which are laminated onto cards for easy reference.

The New York Times report explains how employees are encouraged to ‘tear-apart’ another’s ideas in meetings. They have to work late. Emails that arrive past midnight are not uncommon…and are expected to be answered.

The company even accepts that the standards are *Unreasonably High.*

Jeff Bezos leadership style of perfectionism and drive tests employees. Testing them to see how far they can be pushed, almost as part of an experiment like the company is researching delivery by drone.

### 7. Data Driven Management Style

Bezos’s leadership style is data driven. This was evident when he wanted to stop his grandmother to stop smoking. Instead of using sentiment, he used mathematics. He calculated how many years had been taken off her life through every puff of a cigarette. His leadership style was borne early, he did this when he was just 10 years old.
This management style is incorporated into Amazon's 12th principle: Dive Deep “Leaders operate at all levels, stay connected to the details, audit frequently, and are sceptical when metrics and anecdote differ. No task is beneath them.”

To view the infographic on this article – please visit: https://in-business.org.uk/jeff-bezos-leadership-style-an-inspirational-entrepreneur/