

Cheryl Bachelder

Speech Description

How can leaders get breakthrough results? Cheryl Bachelder tells how she and her team engineered the extraordinary turnaround of Popeye Louisiana Kitchen by making a tough but rewarding decision to lead through service.

Cheryl Bachelder joined an ailing restaurant chain and turned it into the darling of the industry—by daring to serve the people in her organization well.

When Bachelder was named CEO of Popeyes in the fall of 2007, guest visits had been declining for years, restaurant sales and profit trends were negative, and the company stock price had dropped from \$34 in 2002 to \$13. The brand was stagnant, and relations between the company and its franchise owners were strained.

By 2014, average restaurant sales were up 25 percent, and profits were up 40 percent. Popeyes' market share had grown from 14 percent to 21 percent, and the stock price was over \$40. The franchisees were so pleased with the turnaround that they began reinvesting in the brand, rapidly remodeling restaurants, and building new units around the world.

The difference maker, Bachelder says, was a conscious decision to lead in a new way. She and her team created a workplace where people were treated with respect and dignity yet challenged to perform at the highest level. Silos and self were set aside in favor of collaboration and team play. And the results were measured with rigor and discipline. Servant leadership is sometimes derided as soft or ineffective, but this book shows that it's actually challenging and tough minded—a daring path. Bachelder takes you firsthand through the transformation of Popeyes and shows how a leader at any level can become a Dare-to-Serve leader.