



Managing with Aloha

Yes! You can too!

continued ▶

by Rosa Say

Do you think that Aloha is all warm and fuzzy, an only-in-paradise experience? Well, it is warm, and it is found very much alive and well in that wonderful paradise called Hawaii, but here's something else you should know: it can turn your corner of the world into paradise too.

This manifesto is about how Aloha can help you reinvent the way you approach your work and your life in business.

Managing with Aloha is an insightful values-driven business philosophy, great for managing people well and in the right way. It is exceptionally conducive to business success.

WHY FOCUS ON MANAGERS AND MANAGEMENT?

Leadership has been the biggest buzzword of our generation: Aspire to be a leader, and not “just” a manager. This premature and faulty condescension disturbs me, for I see the promise of great integrity and nobility required in being a great manager. Further, managers today must be the ones to accept the responsibility for workplace reinvention and immediately take charge in doing so. Leadership and management are two different things, and both are needed in business. However, it is my belief that managing well comes first, so that emerging leaders can learn the empathy needed to lead effectively once they have found new and better paths; they will have established a circle of influence from which to stage their efforts.^A

Insightful leaders see great managers as the glue that holds everything together for them, partners they desperately need. Leaders need not be great managers themselves, but they need to enlist the help of those who are, giving them both freedom and space to work, and supporting their efforts in a strong partnership. So for the purpose of this manifesto, we'll concentrate on managers—great managers who harness their potential using values-centered management with Aloha.

When brought into a business, Aloha centers the company culture on the shared value system of the people involved. The concept of being a values-centered business starts to mean something. Its benefits go right to the bottom line. It unleashes the desire to perform. It creates powerful customer loyalty. Aloha itself is a value, one which celebrates people, their inner drive, and their spirit for working with personal excellence.

But first, why is this relevant to you?

Let me ask you this: **how good do you feel about working in business today?**

Personally, I love the world of business—to be precise, my current world of business.

I have a passion for management, and shaping it into an art form as my daily work-in-progress.

I relish working on myself day-to-day to become a better manager, walking the talk of good management practice.

I love the science of business and the democracy of free enterprise, where ultimately the customer rules.

I love working within business introspectively, but with an ever-constant eye on the fickle, challenging, very human marketplace.

I love studying and benchmarking successfully thriving and self-sustaining companies.

I love the new global possibilities of networking, and I also love seeing how small business networks of entrepreneurs today are reinventing their neighborhood networks closer to home.

I love the possibilities business provides us with, to choose our own destiny and create it in the name of innovation for many and not just ourselves.

I love working through a good business plan, where worthwhile work is done for profit, not a paycheck.

I love being involved in the human drama of business, where we study and talk about things like creativity, courage, excellence, empowerment and transformation.

Or do we? Do you?

At every level of the business you are in right now, how much do people talk about things like personal excellence, meaning, dignity, trust, worth, respect, ethics, integrity, honesty, and (gulp) humanity? How much are these concepts talked about with a thankfulness for actually having them at work, and for living with them?

In a business managed with Aloha we do.

We are in a day and time where people are crying for a reinvention of their workplace, and for a reinvention of work itself.

Oh. You say you're not there yet.

How are your prospects looking? Are you involved in the reinvention, or j-u-s-t w-a-i-t-i-n-g?

YOU'RE NOT ALONE

Unfortunately, most of the businesses we hear about (and work in) today are in need of some reinvention, and their laundry list to work on is pretty long.

Before I got a job in the “executive suite” myself, I never thought too much about overall business plans. Looking back, I’m now pretty mortified that I worked for companies with such blind faith and trust that they had a good plan, and knew what they were doing. I wasn’t

that involved in company strategy, and what's more, I didn't even think about it. I just did my job description plus some, striving to be an exceptional employee, and I assumed my bosses had paid their dues enough to have some credibility.

I found out that as an employee you need to be better informed than that. I found out the hard way — when I got promoted to a position where I had to be the one to fix it. The people at the top are not always right, and they are often mired in too much “other stuff” to even notice any signs that they may be wrong. I like to believe that most of the time they do have good intent; I've learned that I just shouldn't assume they have all the answers just by virtue of being in charge.

When you **manage with Aloha**, you don't have employees who are **followers**; you work with **like-minded** people who are **business partners**.

In the aha! moment I realized this, I had more than three hundred employees reporting to me, working hard within a business model that was seriously flawed: When I crunched the numbers I knew there was no way the business could succeed and sustain everyone working within it. The changes we had to make were painful, and that kind of crisis management is something I never want to go through again.

The one smart decision I made at the time I discovered that flawed business plan, was that I wasn't going to go it alone. I got my employees to help me, discovering they had some great answers for me. They offered suggestions for solutions I may never have figured out for myself, or as quickly as we did together.

Today, I know better. The first thing I let my new employees in on is my business model. I figure that if they work for me, they have the right to know. I also figure that if they know about it, they'll help me work on it, help me improve it, and help me catch any warning signs that may crop up when we get off track. I hire people I trust and have faith in, who have the desire and capacity to be more tomorrow than they are today.

When you manage with Aloha, you don't have employees who are followers; you work with like-minded people who are business partners.

Let's go back to that flawed business plan I had inherited as an example, for labor reductions were immediately assumed to be a part of the solution we needed. Personnel is generally regarded as the most expensive and potentially troublesome element of any business. In the standard bottom-line management model, the neediness of labor is perceived to be assuaged at the expense of potentially larger profit margins. So the first impulse is to lay people off, and cut labor expenses.

Usually not fun. There had to be a better way; a visionary, values-based Aloha way with good business sensibility designed into it.

Remember that term "human resources?"

With Managing with Aloha harnessed as a business value, I had learned to see the human resources contained within my staff. These were people we had recruited, interviewed, and selected at one time feeling they were winners who could bring much human potential to our business. So we hired them, equipped them with job-specific tools, and invested heavily in them with training and coaching. Over time, their association with us transformed them into our bank of company-specific knowledge currency. Why on earth would I now want to turn them away? Wouldn't it be better to continue on, and simply shift and sharpen the focus on getting them involved in a new and better business model?

THE ROAD TO TAKE IS THE ROAD TRAVELED WITH ALOHA

There are two roads to a healthier bottom line in a business. One, the road most traveled in business today, is cutting costs, with labor and overhead usually being targets one and two. The second road, which takes you on a much more exciting and rewarding journey, is increasing revenues, and funding this increase by tapping into your knowledge currency. On this second road better traveled, Aloha is like using premium, high-grade fuel.

What you want to do is shift the equation from more people working IN a business to more people working ON the business, so you can afford them. Not only is the objective to afford them, you want to tap into what drives them, and stimulate new business growth.

However, the people in this equation are not drained. As they contribute to company growth, they develop an entrepreneurial mindset and they flourish within the environment managers have created. Their energy actually increases. The work they do is also work invested in themselves, and in their own growth.

A NEW BUSINESS MODEL CALLED MANAGING WITH ALOHA

That was to be my new business model. I would employ people much more beneficially, both for business health, and workplace health — surely work would be more enjoyable and satisfying that way too! As much as possible, all work done would be ON the business that had to be healthy enough to sustain us all, and turn a profit.

Now there will always be people working IN a business, and as a baby step, the trick is to think of this in terms of percentages: If 90% of the time you are working in the day-to-day routine, repetitive process, maintenance and service of a business, and only 10% on the strategic planning, sales and marketing, and profit potential of that business, you need a work and management plan in which you can steadily tip the scales the other way.

Managing with Aloha is that “work and management plan” that will help you tip the scales.

In the Managing with Aloha business model, all human potential is mined well, creating human capital, and a healthy, self-sustaining, and thriving business. There is a reinvention of the workplace, and of the very meaning and worth of work itself. The result is a business that can, as the next logical step, now focus outwardly on industry innovation, helping to build thriving communities, and the improvements our society desperately needs.

Business becomes a resource for the rest of humanity.

LET'S TALK A BIT MORE ABOUT ALOHA ITSELF

I cringe each time I hear a Hawaii travelogue intone that Aloha is simply a greeting, a word the visitor to our islands can use to mean both hello and goodbye. Throughout their visit, that is how most visitors hear the word Aloha used, and they will depart believing they understand it, and that they have experienced the Aloha spirit because “Alooooooooha!” was said with such enthusiasm at a lu'au (loo-ow, a feast) or by their tour bus driver.

Unfortunately most children growing up in Hawaii today believe this is the only definition of Aloha as well, and as much as I hate to admit it now, at one time so did I. To manage with Aloha, I first had to learn and understand that Aloha is a value I had to choose to believe

in, and that when shared with others, my own Aloha spirit would be as real and tangible as something you felt you could physically touch.

When I was a manager for Hualalai Resort at historic Ka'upulehu, a resort community on the Big Island of Hawai'i, this definition of Aloha was shared with me:

Aloha is unconditional love, for it is the outpouring and receiving of the spirit. It is an expression of unconditional kindness, hospitality, spirituality, cooperativeness with humility, unity and graciousness that touches the souls of others.

I'd read these words over and over, and I found I had a need inside to have this statement of Aloha ring true for me. "Aloha is unconditional love, for it is the outpouring and receiving of the spirit."

Aloha is very abundant, and it's found universally, not just in Hawaii. In fact, I'm certain you've got it in you.

Aloha refers to the spirit within; it is the steady breathing of your life, the voice of your soul. Aloha can be literally translated as "the breath of pure life within you." A person's alo (ah-lo) is their presence, and their ha (hah) is their breath while it is still pure, meaning it has not yet been exhaled and mingled with anything else.

One's inner spiritual power taps into this ha as a wellspring. In the Hawaiian culture, Aloha is assumed to be in everyone and it is celebrated.^B Managing with Aloha is about tapping into this pure spirit of good possibility that is inside you — and around you in everyone else. Aloha embraces your intuition and gut-level feelings — it gives you credit for having them, and it encourages you to listen to them.

The most accurate definition for Aloha itself is unconditional love.

ALOHA BRINGS LOVE INTO YOUR LANGUAGE

Love can be an uncomfortable word for many people, for we associate it with sensitivity, raw emotion and other touchy-feely concepts that are not easily discussed openly or with much frequency — certainly not with the people with whom we manage and work! However, ironically, love is probably the most universal of all values, and the one we should be most comfortable with. Love means complete unselfishness and beauty. Welcoming Aloha into your vocabulary and incorporating it into the language of your business — and your life — helps you say it out loud.

That alone is pretty wonderful.

When you say, “I have Aloha for you,” you are saying that you have the utmost respect for the person you are speaking to, and that you hold their inner spirit in the highest possible regard and reverence. You are saying that you sincerely believe they are inherently good by nature, and that you are open to engaging with them as a fellow human being.

Aloha is the love of your own spirit, a spirit that seeks to be involved, challenged and fulfilled in meaningful ways. The Aloha spirit is in every human being on the face of the earth — even in business.

Here’s another way to look at it: in business, Aloha-filled work is good work, and it’s work you feel good and right about doing.

ARE YOU A MANAGER?

If you are, my aloha for you is my unconditional love and acceptance of the spirit that was created within you upon your birth, which has the capacity for greater things. I am challenging

you to manage better than you may be, accept your responsibility for leadership, and be more than you are right now. I wrote *Managing with Aloha* because I want to help you celebrate your own Aloha in your circle of influence as a manager, reinventing work for you and everyone you manage.

I have bigger and better plans for our world of business, in which we are the leaders of the very reinvention of work itself, and I'm inviting you to join me. To accept my invitation, you first make the decision to manage with Aloha.

HOW DO YOU "MANAGE" WITH ALOHA?

We start with your own honesty and personal truth. I ask you to be truthful about why you're a manager in the first place. Why do you do it? What is your purpose and intention?

Within your answer must be a strong desire to see the people you manage succeed.

Great managers believe Aloha lives in everyone

To be a great manager is to celebrate and practice Aloha — unconditional love and respect for a person's dignity and inner spirit. Managers who feel that people inherently need to be worked on and reshaped to their own design are dangerous. They shouldn't be in any aspect of management that affects people at all.

You must believe that the people you work with are innately good, worthy of the faith you place in them, and capable of great things. Without this core belief to start with, everything else will just be too difficult, and you will fight battles you cannot win: you will be a crusader without a following.

In their groundbreaking book, *First, Break All the Rules, What the World's Greatest Managers do Differently*, Marcus Buckingham and Curt Coffman offered us scientific and statistical proof that the “great managers” are those who capitalize on the innate talents and strengths of others; they don't try to create something in people that is just not there.^C In *Managing with Aloha*, I offer my own business experience and my culturally-based, values-based belief that love and the Aloha spirit *is* there. This realization can make your work as a manager more satisfying and rewarding for you than it ever has been before.

**“Treat people as if they were what they ought to be,
and you help them to become what they are capable of being.”**

–Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

Great managers believe in the goodness and Aloha of others, and they create safe, challenging business environments where people flourish. In these workplaces, the Aloha within every person erupts to the surface on a daily basis: people learn, participate and collaborate in the initiatives of worthwhile work, and they grow.

When you are a manager, those you work with must be people you believe in and are willing to create a relationship with. Recruit, interview, hire, select, and partner while keeping this relationship-building in mind.^D You must be able to give people your own Aloha, sincerely and completely without reservations.

Managers manage through other people—technicians manage systems and processes. Your own belief that the people you manage are innately good and worthy of sharing your own spirit is the single most important prerequisite to your own success as their manager. They can tell how you feel. You needn't say the words outright that you love them, but they must feel that you do. It becomes pretty easy and it comes much more naturally to say you have Aloha for them.

LET'S GET BACK TO MORE SPECIFIC REALITIES OF BUSINESS FOR A MOMENT

Notice there was no need for me to say “the cold, hard realities of business.”

Aloha embraces a set of Hawaiian values that perfectly align themselves with the requirements of fundamental, universal business principles. Universally, managers are charged with obtaining tangible, profitable results. Managing with Aloha keeps you mission-centered, values-driven, and customer-focused as you achieve those results. For instance:

The values of *Ho'ohana* (hoh-oh-hana, work with purpose) and *'Imi ola* (ee-me-ola, seeking your best life) are in perfect alignment with centering one's business with mission and giving it the focus of vision.

If you are a manager who lives within the value of *Mahalo* (ma-hah-loh, thankfulness), appreciative of what you already have, you are one who constantly takes inventory of the strengths of your team and applies them to the job at hand.

Knowledge of an employee's *Ho'ohana* (hoh-oh-hana, passion for worthwhile work) helps managers dole out very generous portions of meaningful assignments and the authority to effectively get them done.

The value of *Lokahi* (loh-kah-hee, harmony and unity) brings cooperation and collaboration to teamwork. The most effective managers are the ones who do not go it alone: They get everyone involved in ways that are stimulating, challenging and *Kakou* (kah-kou, inclusive, using the language of “we”).

Those who manage with Aloha trust their people because they know them well. *'Ike loa* (ee-kay-loh-ah, to seek knowledge and wisdom) helps them learn from their staff, and they continually seek feedback from those closest to a problem, and hence more intuitive in proposing solutions.

When people understand their personal roles as managers and leaders, they strive to set a good example, and they practice the value of *Ho'ohanohano* (hoh-oh-hano-hano, to conduct oneself with distinction). They accept their *Kuleana* (koo-lay-ah-nah, one's personal sense of responsibility) and are held accountable for the value of *Malama* (mah-lah-mah, the stewardship of all business assets).

Managers become *Alaka'i* (ala-kah-ee, guides and leaders) who excel and innovate, confident in the trust and respect they have gained from their staff. Because they have mentored good relationships through-out their organizations, they find that results are achieved faster, in more nimble ways throughout the company.

In a workplace managed with Aloha, the atmosphere of *Ho'okipa* (hoh-oh-key-pa, warm hospitality) pervades the company. Customers are engaged as valued guests, and they are infected with Aloha as well, becoming both loyal customers and vocal evangelists about the service offered. Business thrives.

The Aloha spirit defines the ultimate in a person's innate intuition about their fellow human beings and their caring for them, and thus, it virtually guarantees the epitome of exceptional customer service. And that's true whether your "customer" is an internal or external one.

NO MORE WAITING. LET'S BEGIN TO REINVENT THE WORKPLACE TODAY

My book, *Managing with Aloha*, is about reinventing work by reinventing the relationship between the manager and the employee. This is the crux of the more far-sighted business plan needed today. We must start with the human element before we can realistically hope to effect much else. But that's where the greatest potential is waiting for you.

Aloha demands that we respect the enormous capacity everyone possesses; physically, emotionally, intellectually, and yes, spiritually. As a business philosophy, managing with Aloha teaches managers and leaders to have a greater sense of responsibility for the effect their managing and leading has on people. In other words, managing with Aloha is about working proactively and not by happenstance.

Managers who manage with Aloha are not babysitters, and they are not drill sergeants. They are mentors, coaches, learners, and business people who engage their staff as business partners.

LET ME TELL YOU THE STORY OF BRUCE AND JAKE

One afternoon I had a manager come to see me about one of his employees, intending to just give me a heads up: he was about to embark down the road of progressive discipline with a stage one verbal warning. He felt the employee's work performance was average to marginal, and in the two weeks prior, there had been the warning signs of attendance problems. He concluded by raising a huge red flag for me, saying, "If I just let things go and document it all, he'll hang himself." Listening to his tone, I suspected the problem was the manager, not the employee.

In this particular case, the manager was relatively new to the department, and I knew the person he spoke of to be a longer-term employee who had done very well for us up to that point. This was a situation that didn't make much sense to me. So since he was so willing to invest in documenting something, I asked the manager to instead conduct a small experiment for me, and asked him, "Have you ever kept a Mahalo log?" *Mahalo* (ma-hah-loh) is a Hawaiian value which teaches us to live in thankfulness.

I had the manager — let's call him Jake — keep a log for me for a week, where each day he wrote down just one thing he noticed about this employee — let's call him Bruce — that was good; it was something small, but it was good. I told him I expected at least one of those entries to be about the Daily Five Minutes he'd given to Bruce.^E

Bruce surprised Jake on the very next day. This was his log:

DAY 1. Not only did Bruce come to work on time today, he was early. And he didn't just stand around, he started early and on his own time.

DAY 2. Bruce got a compliment from one of our guests today. They got lost, and he dropped what he was doing to escort them back to their room.

DAY 3. In my Daily Five Minutes, I thanked Bruce for what he did yesterday, and he said he was surprised I actually had noticed it. Ouch.

DAY 4. A new employee started today, and Bruce was the one who volunteered to work with him.

DAY 5. Bruce skipped his lunch break today. He was getting behind training the new kid, and he didn't want to leave his work for the next shift. The new kid is learning a lot from him.

We had set a follow-up appointment for the end of the week, and Jake showed me his Mahalo Log. Without commenting on it, I asked what else they'd talked about in their Daily Five Minutes. He said Bruce told him he quit his other job — a second job Jake hadn't even known he had — because it made him too tired for the job he had with us; that's why he'd overslept so much and come to work late a few times. He said the money had helped though, so would Jake call on him when someone had to work overtime?

Jake found out that Bruce was in his department's circle of richness, for Bruce brought character and commitment to their department. The Mahalo Log became a new habit for Jake each time he suspected he judged someone too quickly. And right after that Daily Five Minutes with Bruce, he started saying thank you to people a little more often.

Aloha challenges us to create workplace environments where everyone within it can feel welcomed to participate, bringing their own spirit of Aloha to the surface of who they are. And that will set the stage for a work reinvention that will astound us in its future — and amazingly short term — possibilities.

Picture it. Reach for it. Do your part in creating it.

HOW DO YOU GET STARTED?

Managing with Aloha defines a human sensibility for the rewards of worthwhile work, incorporating Hawaiian values into practical everyday work applications. It presents universally translatable nuggets of business wisdom for just about any culture, bringing a language of intention to all kinds of business enterprise. Managing with Aloha helps you attain your best possible life in business.

Getting started, is as easy as learning about these values and incorporating them one by one, little by little, until you have tipped those scales we talked about.

This is one of my all-time favorite quotes:

**“You must be the change you wish to see in the world.”
–Mahatma Gandhi**

Most of the Hawaiian values really speak to personal endeavors, and the concept that all starts from within you. We are responsible for our own attitudes, our own choices, our own happiness and our own success.

Start with you, and start with your language. Then walk your talk.

The surest way to change your own work behavior for the better is to speak the words that will force you to make it so. You have to walk your talk if you are to internalize new learning, build your confidence and grow your credibility and integrity with others.

A LANGUAGE OF INTENTION

There is one thing I have gotten much more assertive about since my book *Managing with Aloha* was published seven months ago: learn to speak the language of these values.

In the work I do as a management coach teaching the managing with Aloha philosophy, I see this work wonders time and time again, whether you live in Hawaii or somewhere else: values must be inculcated into the language of your business culture if they are to impact significant change.

As a value, the value to start with, Aloha teaches us to love and respect people, revering their inner spirit, and treating them with the dignity they *will* seek to earn from us. As a manager,

you mentor, coach, and guide their behavior by creating an atmosphere in which the business values you incorporate into the company culture drive the behavior you believe will help your business thrive.

GOOD VALUES = BETTER BEHAVIOR = CONSISTENT HIGH LEVEL PRODUCTIVITY = BUSINESS SUCCESS.

As I have said, I fervently believe we are in a day and time where people are crying for a reinvention of their workplace, and for a reinvention of work itself.

Be a part of the reinvention. Be more than a part of it: be a leader in it.

You too can manage with Aloha, and simultaneously find you are in the ranks of the business elite who are innovators, mavericks, and visionaries fulfilling these needs. Yet you will stand apart, a shining example of how you can achieve business success today and feel absolutely wonderful about it because you have been true to who you are, and what you believe in. You will have been intellectually honest about working within your own personal value system. Not only will you prove that you have what it takes to succeed, you will have defined it by living it.

And thus, this may be the very best thing about managing with Aloha: Aloha produces a lifetime of meaningful, worthwhile productivity that is colored with integrity.

Management is about getting things done through other people; it doesn't get any more basic than that. You will best get things done through others by incorporating the values you share with them, values that embrace collaboration, and values that also are fundamental good practices in the business environment.

And Aloha is the most universal value of them all. Sharing your own Aloha is a great beginning.

KEIA MANAWA

Keia manawa (kay-ee-ah mah-na-va) is a Hawaiian concept which I can best describe as meaning “Right now.” This is the time. This is it. This is the here and now of today’s best opportunity.

There was a fitting football analogy that a mentor of mine, Billy Mitchell, shared with my working team when he felt we needed more trust in ourselves and in the positive certainty of Kala hiki ola (kah-lah-hee-kee-oh-lah), a Hawaiian value that translates to “the dawning of a new day.” He’d point out that once the game is in play, it becomes time for everything you’ve practiced for. It’s time to perform. Once the quarterback calls the play in the huddle and you take your place on the line, you had better be ready to go, to perform magnificently. Billy would open his arms wide and bellow out at us: “The blackboard is not coming on the field!” In the quiet seconds that followed and he leveled his gaze at each of us, we knew his unspoken words were, “So what are you waiting for?”

And you don’t focus on the obstacles. If you are the running back that gets the handoff, you set your sights on the goal line, not on the monster tacklers trying to stop you; you look for an opening. Who they are doesn’t matter; who you are does — you are the one with possession of the ball! Everything starts and ends with you. You have choices, and you will be the one to create your own destiny and make it happen. You will be the one to cross the goal line or find you’ve fallen short.

So, keia manawa, this is the time.

You have the Aloha. I’m giving you the ball. Run with it.

THE 19 BUSINESS VALUES OF MANAGING WITH ALOHA

Aloha (Ah-loh-hah)

Aloha is a value, one of unconditional love. Aloha literally translates to “being in the presence of the life’s spirit,” and it is a sharing which is therefore thought of as the outpouring and receiving of a person’s inner spirit.

Ho’ohana (Hoh-oh-hana)

Ho’ohana is the value of worthwhile work. When you ho’ohana, you are working with passion, with full intention and with definitive purpose. You work to bring meaning to the life you lead.

‘Imi ola (Ee-mee-ola)

The translation of ‘Imi ola is “to seek life.” As a value, ‘Imi ola teaches us that our purpose in life is to seek its highest possible form. In managing with Aloha, ‘Imi ola helps us craft our best possible life in business.

Ho’omau (Hoh-oh-mow)

Ho’omau is the Hawaiian value of perseverance and persistence. To Ho’omau is also to continue, and to perpetuate in a way that causes the good to last. Those who ho’omau do not give up, and they consider mistakes and failure temporary conditions from which to learn.

Kulia i ka nu'u (Koo-lee-a ee ka noo-oo)

Kālia i ka nu’u is the value of achievement. The literal translation for Kālia i ka nu’u is “strive to reach the summit.” Those who have this value continually pursue personal excellence.

Ho’okipa (Hoh-oh-key-pa)

The value of Hawaiian-style hospitality, in which guests and strangers alike are welcomed with your spirit of Aloha. There is complete generosity in Ho’okipa, and those who aspire to

the best practice of this value are highly empathetic, and very perceptive in anticipating the needs of others.

'Ohana (Oh-hana)

In an 'Ohana are those who are family, and those you choose to call your family. 'Ohana is a human circle of complete Aloha, and in managing with Aloha, 'Ohana is recognized as the best possible form for the association of all stakeholders in a business.

Lokahi (Loh-kah-hee)

Teaching collaboration and cooperation, Lōkahi is often referred to as the value of teamwork. The word itself translates to “harmony and unity.” People who work together can achieve more in an organization, and Lōkahi teaches us to pursue workplace harmony where individual strengths are recognized, and people value both cohesive similarities and appreciate characteristic differences.

Kakou (Kah-koh)

Kakou is the Hawaiian value of inclusiveness, and means “all of us.” We are in this together. Kakou is very unifying when applied to language, and all are taught to learn, speak, and practice “the language of we.” Coupled with the value of Lokahi, Kakou promotes synergy as a habit of creation which seeks additional solutions and alternatives.

Kuleana (Koo-lay-ah-nah)

Kuleana is one's personal sense of responsibility. A person high in this value will be quick to say, “I accept my responsibilities, and I will be held accountable.” As a value Kuleana speaks the workplace language of self-motivation, effective delegation, ownership, empowerment, and personal transformation.

'Ike loa (Ee-kay loh-ah)

As a value, 'Ike loa urges us to know our business and our people well. The literal translation of 'Ike loa is “to seek knowledge and wisdom.” Therefore, 'Ike loa is normally thought of as

the value of learning and of continuous improvement, where lifelong learning and the seeking of more knowledge is an ongoing passion.

Ha'aha'a (Hah-ah hah-ah)

Ha'aha'a is the value of humility. It urges us to be humble, be modest, and be more open-minded. However, Ha'aha'a does not promote reticence or a lack of assertiveness. The Hawaiian people have two different words for pride: ha'aheo (ha-ah-hay-oh) and ho'okano (ho-oh-kah-noh). Ha'aha'a does encompass pride in your accomplishments, recognizing that there is merit in feeling proud of the good things you have done — this is ha'aheo. Ho'okano is the unfavorable pride of arrogance and condescension, haughtiness and conceit.

Ho'ohanohano (Hoh-oh-hano-hano)

Ho'ohanohano is thought of as the value of respect, for it teaches us to honor the dignity of others, while we conduct ourselves with distinction, honor, and integrity as well. We honor the intelligence of others, and we seek to learn from them. We ourselves aspire to be trustworthy.

Alaka'i (Ala-kah-ee)

Alaka'i is the Hawaiian value of leadership, and it is a quality for both managers and leaders, for it includes coaching, guiding and mentoring others. Those who are Alaka'i lead with caring for others, courage and initiative, and with their good example. They understand that they shall be the guide for others only when they have gained their trust and respect.

Malama (Mah-lah-mah)

To Malama is to take care of, to serve and to honor, to protect and watch over. Thus Malama is thought of as the benevolent value of stewardship. In business it refers to the utmost care of all business assets, with particular caring for the human assets. Acts of caring drive us to high performance levels in our work with others; we give and become unselfish.

Mahalo (Ma-hah-loh)

Mahalo means “thank you” and as a value Mahalo is appreciation and gratitude as a way of living. We live in thankfulness for the richness that makes life so precious at work and at home. Mahalo is the opposite of indifference and apathy, for it is the life perspective of giving thanks for what you have by using your gifts — and all of your gifts — in the best possible way.

Nana i ke kumu (Nah-nah ee kay koo-moo)

Literally translated, Nana i ke kumu means “look to your source.” Seek authenticity, and be true to who you are. Keep your aloha at the surface of what you do daily, and celebrate those things that define your personal truths. In the Hawaiian culture, sense of place factors very deeply into this value, sense of place being defined as both the feel *of* a place, and the feel *for* a place.

Pono (Poh-noh)

Pono is the personal and organizational value of rightness and balance. When a person is “Pono” they have the feeling of contentment when all is good and all is right in their life. Pono teaches the attitude of positivity and optimism. Life itself excites a person who is “Pono,” and he or she is full of hope, seeing that the future can only get better.

Kala hiki ola (Kah-lah hee-kee oh-lah)

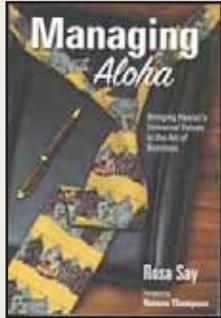
Kala hiki ola translates to “the dawning of a new day.” This is the value of hope and promise in which we are reminded that there will always be the dawning of another day — life affords us many different opportunities, and it is up to us to grab hold of them, and make this day our day, and the best day ever.

For more about *Managing with Aloha*, please visit <http://www.ManagingWithAloha.com>. We invite you to participate in online book discussions at [Talking Story™](#). To buy a copy of Rosa’s book *Managing with Aloha, Bringing Hawaii’s Universal Values to the Art of Business*, [click here](#).

ENDNOTES

- A This leadership versus management discussion is one I discuss more comprehensively in my book, *Managing with Aloha, Bringing Hawaii's Universal Values to the Art of Business*. It is found in Chapter 14 on *Alaka'i* (ala-kah-ee), the Hawaiian value of leadership.
- B As I have been taught, the Hawaiian culture names three different things that make up the entirety of a human being. They are your *kino* (kee-no), your physical body and health; your *mana'o* (mah-nah-o), your mind and beliefs; and your *'uhane* (oo-hah-nay), your soul and spirit. All three of these components must be brought to their best health, so they are in balance, and one is not stronger at the expense of the other. The ancient Hawaiians believed that ultimately the spirit will always be stronger, but even the *'uhane*, the soul and spirit, must be good, and it must come to *pono* (poh-noh, the Hawaiian value of rightness and balance) to not be hurtful for one's physical well-being, nor overly influence one's mindfulness.
- C *First, Break All the Rules, What the World's Greatest Managers do Differently*, Marcus Buckingham and Curt Coffman, Simon & Schuster, New York, New York 1999.
- D *Soar with your Strengths*, by Donald O. Clifton and Paula Nelson, Dell Publishing, New York, New York 1996 is a great resource for reframing the way you might think about building business relationships: Read and study their "Nine Principles for Managing Relationships." Your own strengths as a manager are best built within the relationships you have with others.
- E The Daily Five Minutes is a workplace practice taught to managers within the Hawaiian value of *'Ike loa* (ee-kay-loh-ah, to seek knowledge and wisdom), helping them get to know their staff better. An excerpt from *Managing with Aloha* about the Daily Five Minutes, can be found on *Talking Story*: [Link](#).

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Rosa Say, founder and head coach of Say Leadership Coaching™, has dedicated her company to bringing nobility to the art of management, asking the questions of forward-thinking leadership, and mentoring our next generation of managers and leaders. Rosa is the author of *Managing with Aloha, Bringing Hawaii's Universal Values to the Art of Business*, recently released in November 2004. She also authors [Talking Story™](#) a business blog serving as the forum for needed workplace reinvention, and as an online community supporting emerging managers and leaders. Rosa welcomes you to visit her there. Rosa lives, writes, and coaches on the Big Island of Hawai'i.

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