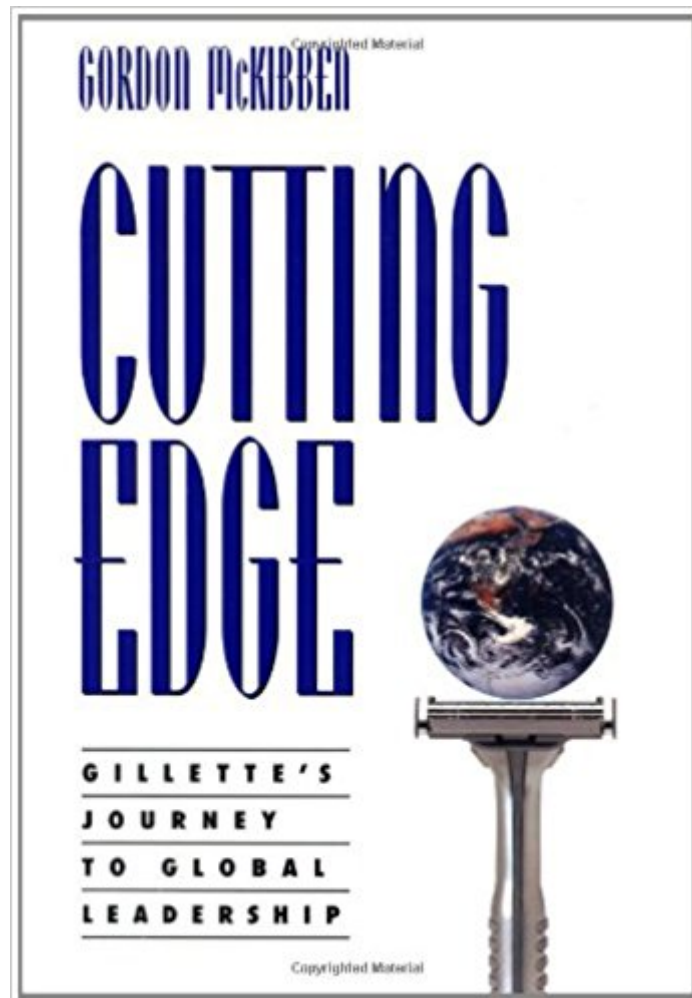




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Cutting Edge: Gillette's Journey To Global Leadership



Synopsis

The Gillette Company has literally defined, as well as led, the world shaving market since the founding days of the enterprise in 1901. But more than that, Gillette--as revealed in McKibben's colorful history--has become a world leading manufacturer and marketer of consumer goods in men's and women's grooming products, writing instruments, and alkaline batteries. The modern-day Gillette serves as a shining example for today's managers of how to maintain a commitment to innovation, how to advertise creatively against competitors, and above all, how to translate a consistent vision of global growth into superior results in a competitive world marketplace. Based on extensive interviews with Gillette insiders, Cutting Edge chronicles the successes, failures, and watershed moments in the evolution of a global powerhouse. McKibben's rich portrait serves as an enduring lesson for all competitors who aspire to be truly on the cutting edge. "At a time when many American companies are touting their commitment to marketing and manufacturing in a global environment, Cutting Edge is a useful reminder that some have been doing it for decades."

--Washington Post Book World, March 15, 1998

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Customer Reviews

Ever since a forward-thinking bottle-cap salesman named King Camp Gillette first grew tired of shaving with a dull razor more than 100 years ago, the company he then founded has prospered impressively--despite ongoing threats of hostile takeovers and downsizing--by continuing to explore new geographic markets and introduce fresh consumer products. Cutting Edge: Gillette's Journey to

Global Leadership, by long-time business journalist Gordon McKibben, is a scrupulous, behind-the-scenes examination of the firm's history with an emphasis on the modern period that began around 1975 and solidified Gillette's deserved reputation as a worldwide powerhouse.

"At a time when many American companies are touting their commitment to marketing and manufacturing in a global environment, CUTTING EDGE is a useful reminder that some have been doing it for decades." -- Washington Post Book World, March 15, 1998

This is a competent corporate success story book with good coverage of the people who made Gillette so great. It's somewhat of a bittersweet story -- covering the death of a influential CEO, and the repeated struggles to keep the company independent. Of course, now Gillette has been swallowed up by Procter and Gamble. That merger may be fine, but so much of the book tells of the boardroom efforts to keep Gillette the independent wonder that it has been since its founding. After reading the book, I was saddened by the merger. If you come at this as someone interested in their shaving brand building, there is good information, but not enough of it. Then too, I know some people mentioned in the book and they are mischaracterized. Maybe length constraints prevented a clearer narrative, I don't know. Because the author is a veteran Wall Street Journal reporter and Boston Globe business editor, I really expected "the best a man can get" here. Still this is worthwhile read, both as a corporate Horatio Alger story and as answers to a shaver's questions about the company behind all those shaving products.

This book is essential for anyone who wants to understand how a company builds brand image and then maintains that image for years and even decades. This book, while some times dry, dramatically demonstrates how Gillette never rested, but constantly sought to improve its products. Gillette's constant R&D have paid dividends not just to employees and stock holders, but also to our late 20th century society. This book is great!!!

I enjoy reading books about successful companies, their founders and the principle people in the company history. I have read many books of this type and found this one on Gillette to be well worth adding to my library. The author does an excellent job of telling the history of Gillette in an interesting way. He also does a good job of describing the men who were influential in the company's direction. Well worth reading!

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