

# Managing Softly

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Bertrand Jouvenot

2005

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# CONTENTS

## INTRODUCTION

<b>From the end of <i>Management Consensus</i> to <i>Non-Violence Principle (NVP) Management</i></b>	<i>xv</i>
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## PART ONE : THREE EXCEPTIONAL MEN

### **The Unbelievable Success of Buddha, Gandhi and Gracie**

1. Buddha: From Siddhartha to Planetary Buddhism	3
2. Gandhi: Gandhi's March to India's Independence	7
3. Gracie: The Historic Record of Fights with No Defeats	11

## PART TWO: REASONS OF SUCCESS

### **The *Non-Violence Principle* as Common Secret of Buddha, Gandhi and Gracie**

1. The Buddha's Way	17
2. The Gandhi's Road	25
3. The Gracie's Style	33

## PART THREE: *NVP MANAGEMENT'S PRINCIPLES*

### **The Seven Cross Principles of *Non Violence Principle Management***

1. The Three Internal Principles of <i>NVP Management</i>	43
2. The Four External Principles of <i>NVP Management</i>	57
3. The <i>NVP Management</i> Roadmap	69

**PART FOUR: WHAT TO LEARN? What  
to Learn from Buddha, Gandhi and  
Gracie for Tomorrow Management?**

1. The Six Eras of Potential  
*Non Violence Principle* Infusion 75
2. *Non Violence Principle* Infusion  
inside shareholders, people and customers 79
3. *Non Violence Principle* Infusion  
between shareholders, people and customers 85

**PART FIVE: TOMORROW MORNING  
Twenty One Simple Things To Start  
*Non Violence Principle Management in Your Company***

1. The Next Months 93
2. The Next Years 99
3. The Next Decades 105

**CONCLUSION 111**

**Tributes 115**

**Bibliography and materials 117**

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This book :

Portrays new alternative leaders.

Compares these leaders for the first time.

Sets up the principles of a new theory: *NVP Management*.

Presents *NVP Management* as a possible new way of managing organizations, business, value, trade-off, teams and people to start, then corporate governance.

Provides 21 ideas to implement *NVP Management* in companies as soon as tomorrow morning.

Proposes more than 20 new management concepts.

Offers new areas of thinking.

Gives a new way of thinking about the business world.

Makes us realize to what extent we are prisoners of our own mindsets, common beliefs, frameworks, and schemes of thought inherited from the current *Man-agement Consensus*.

Goes beyond this *Management Consensus* offering a real breakthrough.

Thinks out of the usual “Think out of the cubicle” of management literature.

Provides a new run up for tomorrow’s managers and the leaders of a fast changing world.

Bertrand Jouvenot is the France and Asia bestselling author of *Le Journal de BJ au Bureau* (2004), *Mode & Internet* (2009), *The Inside Story of the Web* (2013).

Graduated from the Sorbonne University, he has been nominated in the International Who’s Who 2001-2002 edition, in recognition of his professional achievements.

Besides, he is a teacher and a speaker.

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## INTRODUCTION

From the End of *Management*

*Consensus to Non-Violence Principle*

*(NVP) Management*

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Looking at the history of the world, from ancient ages to now, from a global to a local scale, from groups to individuals, violence principle emerges as a key driver.

Civilizations have been battling against each other, groups of people have been opposing each other, individuals have been competing with each other and so on. It's all the same in the economic world : companies run to win market shares, organizations battle to keep sustainable competitive advantages, employees jockey to gain position inside organizational pyramids, executive committees struggle to convince Wall Street that their strategic orientations are the best and so on.

This violence principle is taken for granted by us from deep within our culture. We have forever been struggling to transform initial English colonies of Virginia in the inspiring



United States of America. By the way, Thomas Jefferson wrote in 1776, “We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights; that among these are Life, Liberty, and pursuit of Happiness.” As a consequence, we obviously admit we have to struggle for life and in life, that success is the result of hard efforts, and that being competitive-minded is both essential and valuable.

Therefore, the economic world we are from now on leading is built around this violence principle and draws to a *Management Consensus* built on three pillars:

- Doers, from CEO super heroes to employees bordering burn out;
- Shareholders, 20% return on obsessed;
- Thinkers, playing the game of the winners.

All the three living, admitting or involved in keeping violence principle as if went without saying.

But a closer look at the history of the world reveals three exceptional men who have been involved in immense battles and have been winning amazing victories using *non-violence principle (NVP)*.

Buddha succeeded in the spiritual era at a worldwide level. He invented an alternative religion (Buddhism), softer than the existing religions of his time, he considered too hard for people. Twenty five centuries later, nearly half the people on earth are declaring themselves Buddhists. *Non Violence Principle* is inherent to Buddhism from the religion itself to the way people came to it.

Gandhi succeeded in the political sphere on a continental scale. He gave battle to English colonialism in the 20th

century. He obtained independence of India following *Non Violence Principle* in the way he politically struggled against his opponents.

Rickson Gracie succeeded in sports at martial arts level. He demonstrated the superiority of his martial art: Gracie jiu jitsu, versus any other martial arts, with an historic undefeated record of 450 fights between two men. *Non Violence Principle* is part of his martial art and is the way he followed to defeat all his opponents.

The purpose of the book is to draw the lesson from those three exceptional men and to establish *Non Violence Principle* as key success factor for tomorrow's management. The thesis of the book is that current management approach must be revisited, enriched and completed for success in next decades.

The book is divided into five parts:

1. The first part is fact orientated and introduces the three men who fought and won huge victories using *Non-Violence Principle (NVP)*: Buddha, Gandhi, Gracie.
2. The second part is analytical and reveals the twenty one characteristics they all have in common to win that way.
3. The third part is theory and set up the seven principles of *Non-Violence Principle Management (NVP Management)*.
4. The fourth part is practice orientated and studies what to learn from Buddha, Gandhi, Gracie for tomorrow's business and management.
5. The fifth part is action orientated and provides twenty one ideas of simple things to start injecting *NVP Management* in your company as early as tomorrow morning.

This book intends to make realize how much a prisoner we are of mindsets, common beliefs, frameworks, schemes of thinking, all part of a *Management Consensus*. It offers alternative thinking, and ideas... freeing us from the *Management Consensus* matrix. It portrays new leaders, overtakes the usual “Think out of the cubicle” scope of the business management field and gives fresh ideas for tomorrow's managers and leaders of a world that will never look like the one we knew in the 20th century.

Our way of thinking is circular rather than linear. So despite a sequential plan for reader convenience, the five parts of this book can be considered as five rolling circles, each one nourishing the next, each one fed by the former.



The first circle (Part 1) portrays Buddha, Gandhi, Gracie rolls and provides the basis for the second circle (Part 2).

The second circle (Part2) studies the shared common secrets of Buddha, Gandhi, Gracie nourishing the third circle (Part 3).

By moving around itself, the third circle (Part 3) establishes the seven cross-principles of *Non-Violence Principle Management (NVP Management)* feeding the fourth circle (Part 4).

The fourth circle (Part 4) providing guidelines for *NVP Management* deployment, rolls nourishing the fifth circle (Part 5) dedicated to ideas for setting up *NVP Management*.

Taken as a whole, it resembles a spiritual breath in and breath out. The first two circles, providing the requested elements to establish *NVP Management*, are the breath in. The third circle corresponds to the short moment between the breath in and the breath out. We explain *NVP Management* during this instant. The last two circles, learning from the three former ones, form the breath out.

So, I suggest to read this short book in one time. This may help the reader's mind stay as a free wheel to fully appreciate what the book offers.

The book is both prospective and prescriptive. It has been written to be clear, concise and to make theory and practice synergize. The book has something of a manifesto for alter-management. It is a call to action.

The connections among disparate fields are particularly favored to reveal truths that wouldn't have been evident otherwise.

The book has intentionally focused itself on organizations such as companies. But the proposed change discussed in this book goes way beyond simple companies, as far as worldwide corporate governance.

In the business world where management has become a commodity, there are far more findings and new input in this book than in piles of others. Even the most familiar with the management field will consider this book as a real breakthrough. Others will see it as something like a meteorite although it remains soft. Both will think it as a change. Either way, this book is probably the first one to liberate us from the *management consensus*.



## PART ONE: THREE EXCEPTIONAL MEN

The Unbelievable Success of  
Buddha, Gandhi and Gracie

In that part we protract the three exceptional men: Buddha, Gandhi, Gracie. We focus on their respective lives, huge battles and amazing victories to provide the starting point of the remainder of the book. This first rolling circle is therefore rather historic and fact orientated. It constitutes the beginning of a deep and slow spiritual breath in.

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## 1. Buddha: From Siddhartha to the Worldwide Buddhism

The history of the world has been enriched by an amazing number of religions gravitating around five spiritual trends: Judaism and Christianity, Mahometanism, Hinduism, Buddhism and Chinese Religions, but few of them have survived through the ages.

Buddhism survived among the other religions through *Non Violence Principle*.

Born between 567 and 487 B.C., in Kapilavastu in India, Siddhartha Gautama was a prince with a carefree life of pleasure. But he could not remain immune to the heart of human suffering. At the age of thirty he called for his charioteer, asked for his horse and left his palace life behind forever. Thus was inaugurated an episode in religious history

among the most important ever. Later, Buddhist literature was to dub it the Great Renunciation.

First, he went on the wrong track. Under two teachers, he learnt to enter states of consciousness that were imperturbable. Unimpressed, Siddhartha left the two men. He then decided that the answer could not be found until bodily desires were overcome. So followed a period of self-mortification. Five companions from the teacher's sect were his co-sufferers. One day during meditation, he felt a cool breeze soothe his body and ease his mind. In a flash, he saw what was incorrect about starving the body of its needs: he was seeking to cast aside the body in pursuit of the final answer when such separation was unnatural. The body and mind, Siddhartha concluded, were one and could not be torn apart. So, after seven years of searching he came back to a normal life accepting nourishment and so on. He began to meditate again, looking deeply into his own feelings, disentangling reality from dogma. Then one night it happened. Siddhartha, "the one who attains his aim", became who was to be named soon after the Buddha, the Awakened One.

The doctrine of non-self, as it came to be called, was not a theory of no self. It did not say that there was no self. It did not challenge the idea of a soul, since the soul, the Godhood immanent in every man, was understood to have manifested as the world itself. Instead, the theory of non-self pointed to the insubstantiality or emptiness behind the idea of identity.

The Buddha's major departure was from Brahmanism, which were the existing set of religions of his time. Brahmanical thinking had entangled the matter of enlightenment or liberation with a complicated system of gaining religious merit. The arrangement of society into castes, which grew rigid and degrading, further occulted the system. After some time, it was comprehensible only to the few who had engineered it and whom upheld it—the Brahmins. Gone was the spirit of intense inquiry, of poetic wonderment and of

renunciation which found expression in the sacred texts such as the Upanishads and the Vedas.

Buddhism can thus be seen as a revolt against Brahman orthodoxy. But as far as the Buddha is concerned, he was a man who was in internal revolt rather than external rebellion.

Buddha advocated the middle-way, one that charted the territory between sensual indulgence and self-abnegation, to solve the problem. An extremely simple logic formed the bedrock of his teachings. He postulated that life was filled with suffering, the scales of joy and sorrow tilting to favor happiness this instant and grief the next. Both emotions and events had no permanence. Yet, what caused such a burden of misery? In a word—desires. A vast territory of psychological ferment, of demands for appreciation and gratification, in fact, nothing less than the whole core of the human self, lay in the mind. With desire, the game of the mind began. Often man sang to desire's mesmerizing tune without knowing why. It was in his ignorance that the tragedy lay.

The next step in the doctrine followed naturally: do away with desires and the gates of abiding happiness and nirvana would be opened. The Buddha, however, differed from all others in the way he chose to end desire. The trick was not to avoid it or to get involved in a confrontation with it but to look deeply into its nature and causes. It was more a matter of cultivating an attitude of mindfulness towards desires rather than willfully bludgeoning them into temporary submission. The Buddha even developed breathing exercises and routines to help nurture such awareness and sensitivity.

The first to walk the middle way with the Buddha were his five companions. They also formed his audience when he delivered his opening sermon at the Deer Park in Sarnath. So significant is the event that Buddhism has marked it as the Turning of the Wheel of Law, forming the nucleus around which the order grew. The Buddha gave to his order simplicity and humility.

At the age of eighty, after having taught for half a century, he died. Buddha's disciples continued to teach his doctrine for centuries. Buddhism became globally successful. At the beginning of the 21st century, nearly half the world's population declared themselves Buddhist.

## 2. Gandhi: Gandhi's March to India Independence

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Mahatma Gandhi was born in Gujarat, India, in 1869, in an era dominated by extraordinary events, undreamed of discoveries and the men who made them possible.

Even among all these he became a determined emissary of truth and peace. With the strength of his will, Gandhi managed to free India from British domination using *Non Violence Principle*.

His life is the story of an ordinary man. As a child, Mahatma was shy and timid, but strong feelings of right and wrong were evident from boyhood. So was a latent desire to see his country free.

When his father died, Mahatma went to England to study law. Asked by an English friend to explain the Hindu Bible, Bhagavad-Gita, Gandhi found to his chagrin that he could not do so. He had not read it. He did so and it became one of his favorite books. His spirituality kept growing.

When he returned to India to set up his law practice he quickly felt unconvertible. The chance to go to South Africa

came when Dada Abdullah & Co. offered him a lawyer position. When he arrived in South Africa, racial prejudice was a reality. Indians were a targeted group. Mahatma had to contend with regular humiliations. It was there that Gandhi felt that *Non Violence Principle*, as a positive force of love, could be turned into a form of mass resistance, a moral equivalent of war.

Led by Gandhi, the Indian community used *Non Violence Principle* to fight the injustices of several Acts of government. The British government tried repression, but in the end, General Smuts did what all governments that opposed Gandhi had to do, he yielded.

Gandhi demonstrated a rare ability to love his opponents. He was always there to help them when they were in distress—for which he won their reluctant admiration. He gradually gave up the standard of living that he had worked so hard to achieve. As the desire to serve others increased and his commitment to causes grew, personal possessions became meaningless burdens. Leaving South Africa, Gandhi presented General Smuts with a pair of sandals he had made himself.

Penniless and relatively unknown in his country, he returned to India in 1915, determined to serve it. He began his work, addressing audiences, advocating hygiene, education and the importance of people's rights and obligations. He crusaded for equal rights and respect for women and the removal of untouchability.

He touched the lives of all those who came into close contact with him. He swayed the diverse mass of India, teaching them *Non-Violence Principle* and adherence to the truth. It was Gandhi who taught the meaning of self-governance to the Indian people by showing them what they could do. His confidence gave them confidence, his courage gave them courage and his dignity gave dignity to India's cause. The government that

he opposed in India respected the half-naked fakir even as it scoffed at him. His compatriots were often exasperated by the spirituality he brought into politics.

Gandhi has been repeatedly acknowledged as a brilliant strategist. The March he undertook to break the salt law, shows his talent for symbolic action. But his genius lay in his instinctive grasp of people and matters, and the restraint that he constantly advocated, whether it was for achieving personal or public goals.

Gandhi altered the course of Indian History through *Non Violence Principle*. The title given to him, Father of the Nation, was apt.

### 3. Gracie: The Historic Record of Fights with No Defeats

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Take the chest and two arms of VanDamme, the abdomen of Bruce Lee, the legs of Stallone, add the face of Marlon Brando at his peak. Throw all of this into the big melting pot of Rio de Janeiro, adding inner peace, stress reduction and a dose of *Non Violence Principle*. After simmering for thirty-odd years you will have Rickson Gracie, the most perfect descendent of the legendary Gracie family that created Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu. Rickson Gracie has dedicated his life to his martial art and is today considered the best fighter on the planet.

Rickson Gracie, son of Helio Gracie, was born into Jiu-Jitsu. At six years old he began competing; at fifteen he started to teach the art; and at eighteen he received his Black Belt. At twenty Rickson Gracie won his first awe-inspiring victory against the famous 230-pound Brazilian brawler Zulu who until that time had enjoyed a 140-match, undefeated record. With this victory, Rickson Gracie gained immediate national acclaim as the top free-style fighter, leaving his mark on the history of Jiu-Jitsu and the Gracie challenge. Five years later Zulu requested a



rematch and lost to Rickson Gracie again, in Maracanazinho before an audience of 20,000 spectators.

Rickson Gracie is a 7th Dan Black Belt Open Class Champion of the Gracie Family, whose technique is considered to be the finest expression of Jiu-Jitsu in the world. His innate talent and early mastery of the sport have resulted in an impeccable undefeated record in 450 fights, Jiu-Jitsu tournaments, free-style wrestling, Sambo, open weight free-style competitions, and no holds barred challenge matches. Rickson Gracie is a two time Brazilian Champion in free-style wrestling, a Gold Medal Winner of Sambo, and for the last sixteen years he has been the middle-heavyweight and no weight division World Jiu-Jitsu Champion. Most recently, he conquered Japan's elite fighting in a tournament, the Japan Open Vale Tudo, winning both in 1994 and 1995. At this time, Rickson Gracie was acknowledged by the Japanese for possessing the Samurai Spirit.

In the 1997 Pride 1 Vale Tudo match in Japan's Tokyo Dome (before 47,860 spectators), he defeated Japan's top ranked fighter, Nobuhiko Takada, in 4 minutes 47 seconds of the first round. A year later, to the day, in the 1998 Pride 4 Vale Tudo match, Rickson Gracie defended his title. In the most awaited rematch in martial arts history, drawing an overwhelming 50,000 spectators to Japan's Tokyo Dome, Rickson Gracie defeated Takata once again. At Colosseum 2000, held at the Tokyo Dome, broadcast to 30 million TV Tokyo viewers (the highest viewed television program for its time slot), Rickson Gracie fought Japan's number one fighter, Masakatsu Funaki. He defeated his opponent with a rear naked choke in 11 minutes 46 seconds of the first round.

Rickson Gracie has proven himself as accomplished a teacher as he is a competitor. He has been teaching his martial arts style for over 20 years and his array of students have included FBI Agents, SWAT Teams, Navy Seals, military personnel, martial artists of various styles, athletes and actors. His highly

practical self-defense style is widely recognized as a superior martial art, for real-life situations.

Rickson Gracie established the Rickson Gracie International Jiu-Jitsu Association in 1996 in order to help unify the community of Jiu-Jitsu. Through the Association, the traditional, technical and philosophical aspects of Jiu-Jitsu are able to be shared with people around the world. Rickson Gracie presently competes in invitational tournaments and teaches on Special Tours and seminars as well as at the Rickson Gracie Jiu-Jitsu Center in West Los Angeles. Rickson Gracie's students credit his teachings with the achievement of great self confidence, heightened awareness, stress reduction, youthful vitality, increased physical energy, balance improvement and inner peace.

A modern day legend, Rickson Gracie has gained international acclaim for his leadership in disseminating the art and philosophy of Gracie Jiu-Jitsu. He espouses strong family values and a healthy life-style. He is the epitome of discipline, determination and sportsmanship.

The prestigious Vale-Tudo events were for Rickson Gracie the greatest demonstration of efficiency in the field of fighting sports of using *Non Violence Principle*. According to Rickson Gracie, the Vale-Tudo does not need to be violent. It is violent when no technique exists to win. The fighter who has technique, as he has, delivers only a few punches, gives only a few blows to create space, but is always looking for victory. Rickson Gracie did not get hurt, he did not hurt anyone, and won the fights relatively easily. He was different than the other fighters who did not have the same technique, and who just attempted to break each other until one totally lost his breath.

As a final reward Rickson Gracie became the first non-Japanese of all time to be named Samurai by Japan while Japanese best martial-arts champions have been starting learning Gracie's Jiu-Jitsu, recognizing the superiority of this martial-art to theirs.

Twombly for his multi-cultural syncretism and his way to make everything of human species appears with nearly nothing on the canvas. Picasso for is cubism as new way of looking at the things. Sculptors: Joseph Beuys for is «make things emerge» approach and project to shape society through Arts. Writers: Georges Luis Borges for is manner to find the whole world inside anyone. The poet Stéphane Mallarmé for his ability to hear what silence have to say to us. Marcel Proust for is deep investigation inside himself. James Joyce for his incredible idea to challenge words to make them tell. Franz Kafka for is analyze of power of organizational structure on individuals.

Other people were indirectly enormously helpful through their own work. Among them: Jean Baudrillard, Gilles Deleuze, Pierre Bourdieu, Michel Foucault, John Stuart Mill, Benjamin Constant, Arnold Toynbee, André Malraux, Marcel Mauss, Georges Duby, Fernand Braudel.

I would like to make special note for Marshal McLuhan who dared to shift from a field to another one (grammar field to media metaphysics), because it has to be done by someone anyway.

Finally, I am deeply thankful for Gaston Bachelard who demonstrated that great thinking can be produced even when not following academic ways.

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Askoa Main Shrine, Sarnath, India

Archaeological Museum, Sarnath, India

Allahabad, Nepal, India

Benares, Uttar Pradesh, India

Benares Hindu University, Benares, India  
Bodhgaya, Bihar, Nepal  
Deer Park, Sarnath, India  
Dhamekh Stupa, Sarnath, India  
Kapilavastu, Bihar, Nepal  
Kushinagar, Uttar Pradesh, India  
Lumbini, Nepal, India  
Mahabodhi Temple, Bihar, Nepal  
Shravasti, Nepal, India

#### On Gandhi' Steps

Dandi, Gujarat, India  
Gandhi Ashram of Ahmedabad, Gujarat, India  
Gandhi Museum, Delhi, India  
Gujarat, India