

Corporate Bosses Turn Up the Heat on University Presidents

The heads of Harvard, M.I.T. and the University of Pennsylvania are under pressure after testifying to Congress about antisemitism on campus.



By Andrew Ross Sorkin, Ravi Mattu, Bernhard Warner, Sarah Kessler, Michael J. de la Merced, Lauren Hirsch and Ephrat Livni
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Ralph Nader's top C.E.O.s

The consumer advocate Ralph Nader has made a career out of criticizing corporations and C.E.O.s and [advancing laws](#) to make food, water, work and travel safer. Now the 89-year-old lawyer has shifted gears: He's singing the praises of exceptional business leaders.

Nader's latest book, "[The Rebellious C.E.O.: 12 Leaders Who Did It Right](#)," examines the work of executives he thinks did a good job when they ran their companies, including The Body Shop's Anita Roddick, Patagonia's Yvon Chouinard and Vanguard's John Bogle.

The book itself is an example of Nader's rebellious streak: He told DealBook's Ephrat Livni that publishers had encouraged him to write about corporate malfeasance, but instead he wanted to highlight principled business leaders.

"Young people think C.E.O.s are just judged by whether they meet market demand," Nader said in an interview. "This book raises the expectation level."

The C.E.O.s he has profiled, he said, meet five criteria.

They focused on workers. "Herb Kelleher, the former C.E.O. of Southwest Airlines, always called workers 'my people' and he prioritized them even over consumers, but the result was cordiality and a culture of 'yes' among staff that consumers could really feel."

They spoke their mind in public. "Often, C.E.O.s sound like they are speaking from a script and have marbles in their mouths. But those in the book didn't hesitate to articulate their positions. Roddick of Body Shop was withering on the beauty industry."

They admitted their mistakes. "They did that to hasten the corrective process. After saying they were wrong, they were quicker to fix problems."

They weren't overly secretive. "They all shared their so-called trade secrets and ways of doing business. They rebelled against the proprietary-secret syndrome that can often mask wrongdoing."

They showed restraint. "All paid attention to profits and knew that without them they could not be bold or take risks. But they did not put profits above all else and they didn't overpay themselves."