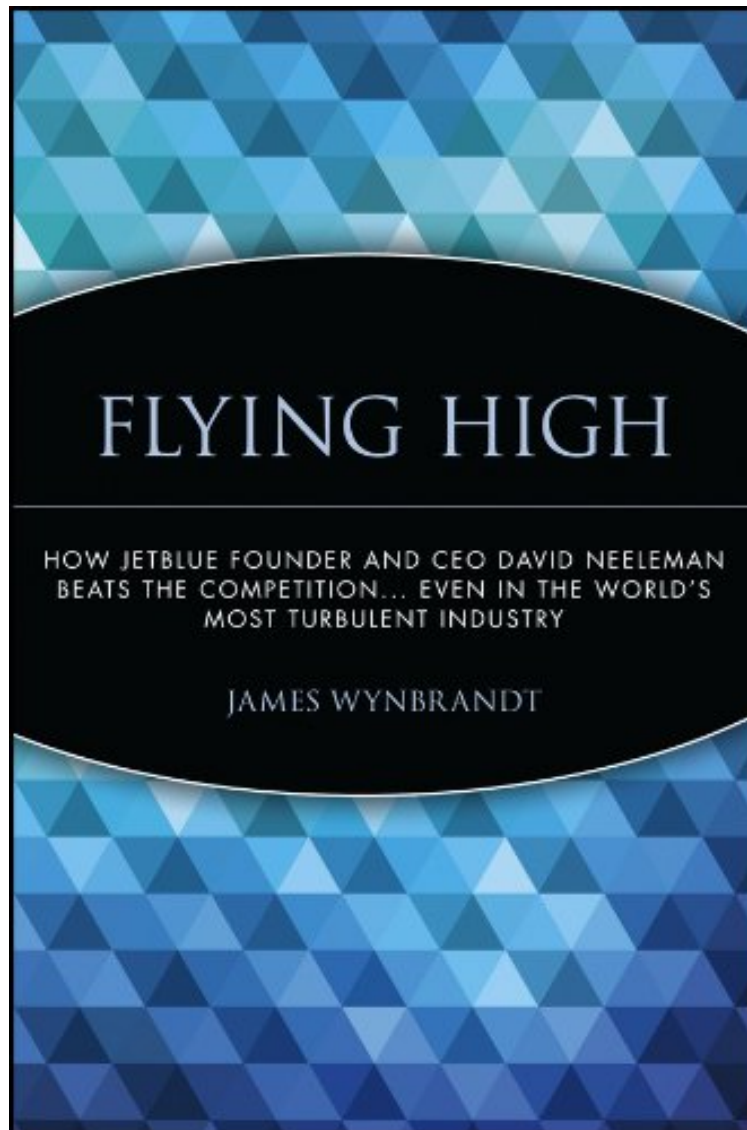


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## **Flying High: How JetBlue Founder and CEO David Neeleman Beats the Competition... Even in the World's Most Turbulent Industry**

*James Wynbrandt*

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**James Wynbrandt : Flying High: How JetBlue Founder and CEO David Neeleman Beats the Competition... Even in the World's Most Turbulent Industry** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Flying High: How JetBlue Founder and CEO David Neeleman Beats the Competition... Even in the World's Most Turbulent Industry:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Good information if you can ignore the hagiography

By EnplanedUpdate: having now read the book by Peterson Blue Streak: Inside jetBlue, the Upstart that Rocked an Industry, it's clear that hers is the better book. I am downgrading Wynbrandt's to three stars.\*\*\*After going back and forth between thinking three stars or four, I figure four. The downsides are these:As others have noted, to the extent this covers Neeleman, it's a hagiography. The man apparently walks on water. To the extent it covers JetBlue, it doesn't dig extremely deep and accepts JetBlue marketing material at face value. And arguably, it was published too early -- In 2004, the airline was barely four years old. The excellent books on Michael O'Leary and Ryanair by Creaton Ryanair: How a Small Irish Airline Conquered Europe and Ruddock Michael O'Leary: A Life in Full Flight were written in about the same timeframe, but about an airline (Ryanair) that was far further into its redevelopment as a low-cost carrier. Four years after Wynbrandt's book Neeleman was ejected from JetBlue. Today, Neeleman's lieutenant, Barger, has also left the carrier in the wake of some unhappiness by investors (check out JetBlue's stock price since it went public and you can understand why). Today, JetBlue clearly still bears the stamp of Neeleman's original vision, but has also changed in ways that would be unthinkable at its founding (including having a lie-flat first class section on some routes).The upsides are that it does have a lot of basic information well displayed. Wynbrandt covers the material on Morris Air (Neeleman's first carrier that was bought by Southwest in the mid-1990s). That's information that's otherwise not easy to find. And he outlines the major contributions of the other players -- Neeleman's supporting cast -- and how they came together -- how the startup got off the ground. That makes it clear that commercial aviation is a team sport. There's even a timeline showing some major events. So, all the basic information is there. So it's useful even when it's not necessarily as interesting as it could be.So, consider this a weak four star review, as opposed to a strong three star review.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Interesting Read about an Incredible Success Story

By Peter OrlerThe birth of JetBlue is a fascinating story and Wynbrandt captures the difficulty of breaking into and enacting change in the airline industry. He also does a nice job describing the personality and unique quirks of David Neeleman. At times, the book seems to be a bit fanatical about Neeleman, but, as I have never met anyone who knows Neeleman, it is certainly possible that he does have the profound effect on those around him that the author describes.Serves as a great introduction to the competitive dynamics of the airline industry, but I'm sure it would also be helpful for those looking to challenge the status quo in any industry.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Great look at how an Airline developed

By Lehigh History StudentFlying high tells the story of David Neeleman the founder of JetBlue and one of the most successful CEO's in aviation history. Neeleman is noted for delivering a high service, low cost airline that operates with the principles of southwest and the perks of the best in the industry. He does this by leveraging technology and his crewmembers to gain strategic advantages in the market. From ticketless reservation systems to strategic airport choices he has turned JetBlue into a premium service airline. From his experience in starting travel agencies and even another smaller airline named Morris Air the reader gets a clear view into some of the most interesting stories in airline history.As some other reviewers have noted this book does not go into JetBlue's recent debacles but it provides an excellent account of their rise to prominence. The lessons he learned are boiled down into a simple to read manner and it tells the interesting parts of the story. If you want the more detailed discussion of JetBlue check out the book Blue Streak but for a simple overview you can't go wrong here.

Flying High traces the incredible career of the founder and chairman of JetBlue, David Neeleman, from his teenage ventures and beginnings in the travel industry., to his short stint at Southwest Airlines and the ultimate launch of JetBlue. In a series of interviews with Neeleman's friends, associates, and high-ranking officials in both business and aviation, this books tells the store of Neeleman and explores the rules of success he both lives and builds his companies by.

From Publishers WeeklyAs the founder by the age of 40 of three successful discount airline companies-most recently the billion-dollar JetBlue-David Neeleman and his story deserves in-depth analysis. Unfortunately, this largely uncritical profile doesn't provide that. Veteran aviation and business writer Wynbrandt presents Neeleman's life in a lively and highly readable style. The first half lays out the details of Neeleman's major successes: turning the small leisure business Morris Travel into a national air charter by developing the concept of ticketless reservations, which Wynbrandt correctly claims "would forever revolutionize airline bookings," and brokering a deal with Southwest Airlines, which purchased Morris and then cut Neeleman loose. But the bulk of the book describes the development and success of JetBlue and presents a superficial look at some extremely troubling aspects of Neeleman's business philosophy, such as his disdain for unions ("I think they did a great thing for our country at a certain time") and his allowing JetBlue to share records of five million passenger transactions (a violation of its own privacy policy) with an army contract company working on post-9/11 security problems, a decision Wynbrandt too easily explains as a product of Neeleman's Mormon-based "respect for patriarchal authority."Copyright copy; Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. As veteran airlines writer James Wynbrandt shows in his excellent new book, Flying High, it took JetBlue's hyperkinetic free

spirit David Neeleman to extend the revolution started by Southwest's Herb Kelleher into a heady new frontier—by putting the discounters in a nose-to-nose rivalry with the major carriers. A devout Mormon with nine children, Neeleman, from Salt Lake City, learned about customer service as a kid on a milk crate in his grandfather's convenience store. When customers demanded a product his granddad didn't have, young David would bolt out the back door to Safeway to buy it. After a stint as a missionary in Brazil, Neeleman—a college dropout with ADD—started a travel agency, a charter airline to Hawaii, and a low-cost carrier called Morris Air, which he sold to Southwest. After just five months, Kelleher fired Neeleman, who'd barge into meetings and loudly lecture Southwest's proud managers on where their airline was screwing up. By the time he founded JetBlue in 1999, Neeleman had already pioneered many of the boldest innovations in aviation, including e-ticketing, automatic ticket machines, and at-home reservation staffs. Backed by farsighted investors, among them George Soros, JetBlue busted the biggest myth in airlines by proving that a low-cost carrier can also beat the majors on service. While Wynbrandt clearly idolizes Neeleman as a curious blend of saint and gladiator, his idol does deserve our gratitude. It took this hyperactive dreamer to put a fresh face on a tired industry, to show at long last that customers, not old-line carriers, are charting the future of commercial aviation. (Fortune, June 28, 2004)

From the Inside Flap "While Flying High tells the tale of JetBlue—from how it was founded to the way in which it operates today—this book is the story of David Neeleman. Throughout this fascinating journey, you'll discover the management techniques Neeleman has developed and used over the years, which most observers credit for JetBlue's unparalleled accomplishments. While he applies these rules to running JetBlue, they are truly applicable to every business in every industry."

From the Introduction JetBlue is the most impressive airline startup in history and an amazing success story. Its consistent record of profitability has made the carrier shine in an industry that's full of red ink. Behind it all stands David Neeleman—JetBlue's young, brash, bold, and uncompromising founder and CEO. Flying High traces Neeleman's spectacular journey from soft-spoken Mormon missionary to the top of the American airline industry. Full of insightful details and interviews with Neeleman's friends, associates, and prominent figures in both business and aviation, Flying High offers an up-close look at how he built a successful company—and changed an entire industry—by breaking the rules and taking good care of his customers. Among other things, you'll discover how Neeleman: Learned the travel business from the ground up, then used that knowledge to build his first successful airline—Morris Air Sold Morris to Southwest Airlines at age thirty-three, for a \$25 million personal profit—and then promptly talked himself out of a job with the company Created the technology behind e-ticketing Launched a low-fare carrier in Canada, before starting what eventually became known as JetBlue Steered JetBlue through the aftermath of 9/11, leading the way with dramatic actions that both improved security and ensured the airline's survival Forever changed the flying experience for passengers by introducing such innovations as live in-flight television and unparalleled customer service Turned JetBlue into a household name through clever marketing and public relations campaigns