



PRESS KIT

Successful CEO Empowers Business Leaders to Step out of the Box in 'Uniquely You'

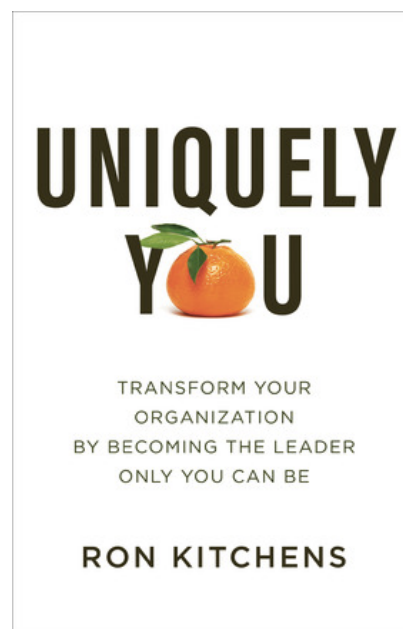
GRAND RAPIDS, Mich., Jan. X, 2019 – Ron Kitchens, an entrepreneur who has consulted and coached thousands from small businesses to Fortune 500 CEOs, U.S. Senators to faith-based leaders, combines stories from his life journey with his acute business acumen to guide readers in unlocking the keys to their own success in his new book [*Uniquely You*](#) (Baker Books, May 21, 2019, ISBN 9780801093746).

While most business books offer quick fixes and look at the success of other people, *Uniquely You* shifts the focus to readers and the importance of embracing their own story and being themselves in order to find success as an authentic leader.

“We live in an era of quick fixes, instant gratification and the idea that there is a cookie-cutter formula to success,” said Kitchens, senior partner and CEO of Southwest Michigan First, which has been named one of the best places to work by the Wall Street Journal and Outside Magazine. “That is not the case; everyone is different, our personalities are different, our learning styles, our experiences. If we were all created differently, why would our path to success and leadership styles be the same?”

Kitchens took an unconventional path to achieving business success and financial wealth. Born into poverty to teenage parents, Kitchens’ dad suffered from dyslexia, a trait Kitchens also inherited. But thanks to mentors in his life, Kitchens was able to commit himself to his education, graduating from college after eight long years.

In each chapter of the book, Kitchens shares stories of lessons he has learned throughout his life and explains how they are interwoven with real-life business practices that have helped him be the successful businessman he is today, like how a can of mandarin oranges found in a bag of groceries left at his house when he was a child, shaped how he welcomes new employees.



- Continued-

MEDIA CONTACT:

Kristin Nill, A. Larry Ross Communications, 972-267-1111, knill@alarryross.com



PRESS KIT

“When I was a child, we viewed mandarin oranges as a luxury, so for someone to give those to us, made me feel special and realize that I was not alone or forgotten,” said Kitchens. “To this day, I keep a can of them on my desk to not only remember that I am seen and where I came from but as a reminder to make sure my teams know that they are seen, heard and valuable. Every time we welcome a new employee, I leave a can on their desk. It’s my way of letting them know that as the head of this company I see them and value what they are bringing to the table.”

Whether a young professional about to join the workforce for the first time, a seasoned entrepreneur, or someone rejoining the workforce, *Uniquely You* will equip readers with the tools needed to find their own success their own way while encouraging them to embrace their past.

“The men and women I have the pleasure to work with believe that they are created to achieve greatness, but they are often exhausted, disenchanted and overwhelmed. The reason for this stems from our quick-fix culture. It seems that every book, podcast, and TED video promises a magic bullet, a get-rich-quick scheme, or the recipe for secret sauce,” Kitchens writes. “Here’s the good news: you already have what you need to succeed. Our stories possess the power to grow us into better leaders than we might otherwise become. Those who embrace their unique stories have unique success.”

Uniquely You releases May 21, 2019. For additional information, visit uniquelyyoubook.com.

-30-

MEDIA CONTACT:

Kristin Nill, A. Larry Ross Communications, 972-267-1111, knill@alarryross.com



PRESS KIT

Endorsements

"I've seen firsthand how Ron has lifted up an entire community of leaders in Kalamazoo, Michigan. I'm really excited that this book gives the rest of the world the opportunity to be as equipped and encouraged as I've been by his work!"

Jon Acuff, New York Times bestselling author of
Finish: Give Yourself the Gift of Done

"Ron Kitchens is an extraordinary leader who inspires our dreams and shows us how to achieve them, and this book is his gift to everyone who is trying to improve themselves, their communities, and the world. *Uniquely You* is a wonderful compilation of personal stories, management advice, and leadership inspiration. Read it to discover and fulfill your true potential."

Denise Lee Yohn, brand leadership expert and
bestselling author of *What Great Brands Do* and *FUSION*

"Ron Kitchens carries a joy, delight, and contagious appreciation for the world and people wherever he goes. He makes us want to be better people, live better lives, and lead with more courage. Don't miss the chance to glean from his wisdom!"

Margaret Feinberg, author of *Taste and See: An Aspiring Foodie's Search for God Among Butchers, Bakers, and Fresh Food Makers*

"Like its author, *Uniquely You* is innovative, impactful, and truly transformational. This book speaks to the power your own story has to transform your life and organization. If you miss out on this book, you do so at your own peril."

Jonathan Merritt, author of *Learning to Speak God from Scratch*
and contributing writer for The Atlantic

"Ron Kitchens takes readers on a journey of vulnerability, honesty, and compassion. The stories he tells, which have shaped his life and his leadership, will change the lives of readers and help them discover their own unique stories that will change the trajectory of the organizations they serve."

Nancy Duarte, CEO and bestselling author

-Continued-

MEDIA CONTACT:

Kristin Nill, A. Larry Ross Communications, 972-267-1111, knill@alarryross.com



PRESS KIT

"As a CEO, it's really easy to feel alone at the top. Some days it feels like you're playing 'dress up' and hoping that no one notices you're not qualified. But *Uniquely You* made me feel not alone in that mindset and made me realize that we all have a story and we're all just trying to be the best leader we can. Ron's book has also made me think differently about the things that make me unique as a leader and how I can best utilize them for my team."

Jess Ekstrom, founder of Headbands of Hope

"What do you want? To inspire others? To build legacies? To reshape the world around you? Kitchens reminds us that doing the work to understand and articulate the answer to this simple question is a crucial step for every effective leader's journey. It isn't for the faint of heart. When we approach life with candor and truth and meet it head-on from a place of love, the answer to 'What do I want?' is within reach."

Roy Spence, cofounder and chairman of GSD&M,
cofounder and CEO of The Purpose Institute

"Ron is a leader worth following. His life and leadership are packed full of wisdom, insight, know-how, and practical discernment, based on a life well-lived that includes both success and heartaches. In *Uniquely You* he openly shares many of those powerful stories, knowing they will inspire you to take your life and leadership to the next level."

Brad Lomenick, former president of Catalyst and
author of *The Catalyst Leader* and *H3 Leadership*

-30-

MEDIA CONTACT:

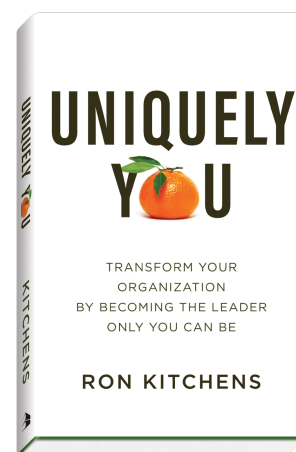
Kristin Nill, A. Larry Ross Communications, 972-267-1111, knill@alarryross.com



PRESS KIT

Uniquely You by Ron Kitchens

TITLE: *Uniquely You*
AUTHORS: Ron Kitchens
PUBLISHER: Baker Books
RELEASE DATE: May 21, 2019
PRINT ISBN: 9780801093746
MSRP: \$22.99
FORMAT: Hardcover, 224 Pages
SIZE: 5.5 x 8.5 in



SYNOPSIS:

The world is full of resources, gurus, and one-size fits all quick fixes aimed at helping people, whether entering the workforce, climbing their way up a company ladder for 20 years, re-joining the working world or becoming a successful leader. There is just one problem: there is no such thing as a one-size size fits all path to success.

As Ron Kitchens has learned, authentic success and leadership comes from embracing and listening to one's past. In *Uniquely You*, Kitchens shares the lessons he learned in his own life and how they have impacted his leadership style, making him the successful businessman he is today. Kitchens provides readers with the tools needed to find authentic success along with the life lessons that had a profound impact on his life. While sorting through those leadership skills, Kitchens explains how readers can use those experiences and encounters to channel them to unlock their own leadership styles that will be effective in building successful businesses and leading organizations.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Ron Kitchens is the senior partner and chief executive officer of Southwest Michigan First, which has been named by Outside Magazine and the Wall Street Journal as one of the best places to work. As one of America's leading thinkers on business, leadership, and entrepreneurship, Kitchens is the founder of the leadership conference Catalyst University and the cofounder of NEXT, an invitation-only leadership symposium for global economic development leaders. Kitchens and his teams have been extensively featured in more than 100 national and international media outlets. In addition to *Uniquely You*, Kitchens is author or coauthor of three other books.

WEBSITE: uniquelyyoubook.com

MEDIA CONTACT:

Kristin Nill, A. Larry Ross Communications, 972-267-1111, knill@alarryross.com



PRESS KIT

Ron Kitchens

Ron Kitchens is the senior partner and chief executive officer of Southwest Michigan First, an economic consulting firm, which has grown compounded revenue at 20 percent annually during his 14 years as CEO. The organization was also recognized by Best and Brightest Companies to Work For and Outside Magazine as the best place to work in America in 2018 under Kitchens' leadership.

In addition, Kitchens leads Consultant Connect and is the publisher of 269 MAGAZINE, a board member of Impact Athletic, the past chair of the Kalamazoo Institute of Arts, and a Trustee of Western Michigan University.

He is also the founder of the leadership conference Catalyst University and the co-founder of NEXT, an invitation-only leadership symposium for global economic development leaders. He previously served on the staff of U.S. Senator John Danforth, and he was an elected Alderman at age 21.



Kitchens and his teams have been extensively featured in more than 100 national and international media outlets including The Wall Street Journal, Fast Company, CBS, NBC, Fox, USA Today, Forbes, Fortune, The Economist and National Public Radio.

In addition to *Uniquely You*, Kitchens is author/co-author of three other books, including the bestseller *Community Capitalism*. He speaks globally on leadership, creating thriving, engaged, multi-generational teams and entrepreneurial cultures. He blogs and podcasts at ronkitchens.com and can be found on Twitter @[ronkitchens](https://twitter.com/ronkitchens).

MEDIA CONTACT:

Kristin Nill, A. Larry Ross Communications, 972-267-1111, knill@alarryross.com



PRESS KIT

Suggested Interview Questions *Uniquely You* by Ron Kitchens

1. Why did you decide to write this book?
2. What is the one thing you hope people take away from reading *Uniquely You*?
3. What makes someone unique?
4. Explain why you put a can of mandarin oranges on a desk when someone joins your team.
5. If you had one piece of advice for recent or soon-to-be graduates, what would it be?
6. How can someone take steps to be a better leader?
7. You have a phrase, “Always Forward,” that you use to encourage people to always move forward, but that can be challenging for some people. What should someone do if they feel stuck in a rut?
8. In the book, you have a list of current goals; have you already achieved any more of those goals? Do you have any new goals?
9. One in five children have a language-based learning disability. You grew up with Dyslexia; how did you overcome that and allow it fuel you?

MEDIA CONTACT:

Kristin Nill, A. Larry Ross Communications, 972-267-1111, knill@alarryross.com