

urateur Alice
haels, technol-
ioneer Ralph
ce, not much,
lds. But below
ach to finding,
f great people.
m not merely
builders, but
es. They've all

ore than two
oncluded that
stry, from the
y the top fifty
will have once

ersonal styles,
g newcomers,
ing them into
so expanding
ger companies.
perbosses:

onships.

to what each
tant founts of
Chiat not only
rees but would
nto the night.

giality even as
petition. Lorne
at writers and
their material

o hold in common a set of basic
ally pronounced in every super-
intriguingly evident, and helped
it be called a "superboss person-
elt I had gotten somewhat closer
stigation: the key behind super-

dence, even fearlessness, when it
ideas. They almost universally
problems, only solutions." This
s as well. Oracle founder Larry
ous sport that has claimed the
t magnate Norman Brinker was
it almost killed him.⁴² Intel co-
t there—a pilot, an active heli-
to race through Bali streets in
guts, no glory.⁴³

perbosses share is *competitive-*
nse competitive blood running
/ seek it out, and they create it.
reak was obvious to his frater-
nmate remarked, "I don't think
/ Mike. If we were doing the
to time how long it took and
oyce made sure to hit the very
it of the park: "My poor father
Penny, who was in the stands
y into the activity at hand."⁴⁷

t shared by superbosses—and
gative nature. Superbosses
t what could be and are fired

up to turn their dreams into reality. As one of Alice Waters's protégés
said: "I think Alice has been a woman on a mission all of her life. Once
she went into food, she wanted the best produce, the healthiest produce.
Every bag of little greens that you see in your supermarket, you can send
her a thank-you note. She changed the notion of produce and also the
notion of raising animals and farming sustainably."⁴⁸ Marty Staff, a for-
mer marketing and sales executive for Ralph Lauren, had similar memo-
ries of his boss: "I remember when I would go to dinner with Ralph we
would never talk about business. We would talk about dreams. The
dreams were if you were skiing in Aspen what would you wear, what
kind of comforter would you have, what kind of car would you drive? You
know, would you wear sunglasses? Would they be mirrored? He would
construct this world and then he would simply fill in the blanks."⁴⁹

A fourth characteristic that superbosses universally manifest is *integ-*
riety. I use the word not primarily to mean "honesty" in the colloquial
sense, but rather strict adherence to a core vision or sense of self. Super-
bosses don't play games like some leaders do; unlike Bossy Bosses, they're
not distracted by the need to satisfy their big egos. They remain consis-
tently true to themselves, their beliefs, and their values. As maestro
Charles Prince, music director of Wiener Operettensommer (Vienna's
summer operetta festival), told me, his superboss Jorma Panula "is not
interested in all the traffic. He's just interested in making music the best
that he can; he's not interested in all the nonsense that goes on around a
career as a conductor. . . . He only cares about the art, about the work.
It's stupendous."⁵⁰ Even a leader like Ellison, who was known to do any-
thing to win, always stayed true to his vision for his business, and in this
sense showed unusual integrity.

A fifth and final attribute of superbosses, a natural extension of in-
tegrity, is *authenticity*. So many bosses cultivate an image for the benefit
of their reports. They keep a tight lid on their personalities, saving their
"true" selves for when they're away from the office. Not superbosses. In