

BUILDING BEYOND YOU BOOK REVIEWS

1.	<i>Olori Atuwatse III</i>	232
2.	<i>Leke Alder</i>	234
3.	<i>Ndidi Ukaonu</i>	235
4.	<i>Mo Abudu</i>	237
5.	<i>Dr. Sangu Delle</i>	237
6.	<i>Chude Jideonwo</i>	240
7.	<i>Miranda Naiman, CDir</i>	244
8.	<i>Dawn Ammons</i>	245
9.	<i>Lara Ayoub</i>	245
10.	<i>Dzignbordi Kwaku-Dosoo</i>	248
11.	<i>Dr. Ola Brown</i>	252
12.	<i>Audrey Joe-Ezigbo</i>	257
13.	<i>Niyi Adesanya</i>	258
14.	<i>Bolaji Sofoluwe MBE</i>	259
15.	<i>Chukwuka Monye</i>	260
16.	<i>Lorena Diaz Quijano</i>	262
17.	<i>Arunma Oteh OON</i>	264
18.	<i>Rehema Kate Isa</i>	266
19.	<i>Smita Mankad</i>	270
20.	<i>Betty Irabor</i>	272
21.	<i>Suzie Wokabi</i>	274
22.	<i>Chidi Ajaere</i>	275

*Reviewer 1***OLORI ATUWATSE III***The Queen Consort of the Warri Kingdom*

I have always loved fashion, makeup, and looking good in general. From my teens, I was familiar with the cool, major brands, and I remember being fascinated when I realised that one of them, House of Tara, was a Nigerian brand—the only one among the big names. Then I met Tara Fela-Durotoye, watched her steady boldness up close, and I finally understood how House of Tara was built into the phenomenon that it is.

As you read this book, you too will understand. This is the story of a woman who has consistently been propelled by conviction, not comfort. A woman who has prioritised walking and building big with God over playing it safe. As I read, I found in her words a manual for anyone building something new, walking uncharted paths, especially in a volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous environment.

I was drawn to how this book does not over-romanticise the process, and that refreshing honesty is essential in a world that has become increasingly consumed with the illusion of perfection over process.

Instructively, I found myself lingering on Chapter 10, ‘The Baton and the Whisper’. In many ways, it crystallises the heart of the book for me. Twenty-seven years is a long run in any market.

The temptation after such a run is to grip harder, to assume that letting go is the same thing as losing purpose.

Chapter 10 argues for something healthier. It presents succession as part of stewardship. You steward your time with excellence. You choose the next steward with care. You stay available as a coach, which is different from controlling things.

It hit home because I am building too. Many of you are. We strive to create institutions that will outlive our names, but if we are not deliberate, we postpone the exact strategic succession work that would make that future possible. Tara's life refuses that habit. She presents the full human moment of unease, despite the preparation and the nudge from God, and the joy and assurance that come with doing the hard thing.

This book has left me with not just a deeper respect for the scale of what Tara has built, but the journey and guiding principles upon which it was built. That matters to me as a builder and as a reader who values truth over myth. It also matters to me as a woman who believes in partnering with God to build a legacy that impacts the world.

Here is my simple advice to the reader of this book. Read it as a story, then read it as a set of decisions. It will leave you with questions that are worth mulling over. I don't just mean questions that you glean from her story, but actual questions and prompts that will help you think strategically and follow the path of wis-

dom this author has so carefully trodden for almost three decades in business.

Notice where conviction created new paths, where competence sustained momentum. Be reminded that you are just a steward nurturing a legacy for the next generation. In Tara's story, you'll find a blueprint for building something that matters—something that lasts.

Olori Atuwatse III

Warri Kingdom, Nigeria

Reviewer 2

LEKE ALDER

Principal, Alder Consulting

Building Beyond You is a fast-paced ball-juggling business academy. It is honest, personal, and emotional. Even raw. It highlights the unglamorous part of the glamour industry, and what it takes to pursue a vision - everything from ideation, to entrepreneurship, brand development, franchise licensing, restructuring, business culture, and operations. The criticality, of course, is developing a business legacy mindset.

In the book, we learn that “*structuring*” is beyond setting up departments. It includes policies and principles, as well as emotional intelligence. Oh, you’ve also got to learn to ask the right questions.

The book is the more believable because it is biographical. We

see Tara the smitten, Tara the wife, Tara the mother, Tara the unsure, Tara the cocksure, as well as Tara the wise. As it turns out, the greatest threat to any enterprise, is the entrepreneur.

If you want to take an MBA class without the jargon and headache, maybe you should consider reading this book.

Leke Alder

Nigeria

Reviewer 3

NDIDI UKAONU

Author, Power of Work

“Truly a masterpiece that blends the practicality of a workbook with the captivating elements of a well-told story”

An Immersive and Essential Read

Building Beyond You is truly a masterpiece that blends the practicality of a workbook with the captivating elements of a well-told story. From the very beginning, the narrative draws readers in, making it exceptionally difficult to put the book down. As I made my way through its pages, it became increasingly clear that this is not merely a book for entrepreneurs only. While the author’s intention may be to guide entrepreneurs in transcending their own limitations to build an institution that outlives them, the book goes beyond itself to serve as an invaluable manual for anyone eager to build meaningfully from the ground up. It offers practical insights and guidance that

can help readers not only follow but perhaps even surpass the author's own trajectory of growth.

Beyond its value for entrepreneurs, *“Building Beyond You”* also serves as a thoughtful reminder for intrapreneurs. It provides attention to the finer details and a big-picture perspective for professionals accustomed to structured environments and specialized roles within organizations. The book encourages these specialists to see beyond their immediate responsibilities and recognize the interconnectedness of their work within the broader business context thus enriching them to provide greater value.

By the end of the book, I was struck by how closely the journey of the entrepreneur mirrors the career paths of many intrapreneurs, especially in the ongoing search for meaning and purpose. Both groups, despite their different roles, are united in this quest, making the lessons of the book universally applicable.

It is my hope that wherever the journey of life may take us, the values embodied by Tara Fela Durotoye—the author—stand as guiding principles: courage, openness to learning, a willingness to embrace superior wisdom, and the humility that characterizes true success. These qualities are not only central to the book but are also vital for personal and professional fulfillment. This book will surely challenge your evolution.

Ndidi Ukaonu

Nigeria

*Reviewer 4***MO ABUDU***Chief Executive Officer, EbonyLife Group**The Blueprint for Legacy*

Building Beyond You is a crucial blueprint for transgenerational success. The powerful Introduction challenges African entrepreneurs to solve the problem of business mortality, urging them to build scalable institutions, not just personal ventures. The journey culminates in Chapter 10, where founder of House of Tara International, Tara Fela-Durotoye, shares her vulnerable, actionable guide to Passing the Baton. Her framework for achieving founder freedom by designing robust systems is a definitive, inspiring masterclass. Essential reading for every visionary leader.

*Mo Abudu**Nigeria**Reviewer 5***DR. SANGU DELLE**

Building Beyond You

By Tara Fela-Durotoye (with contributions by Abiola Adediran)

Tara Fela-Durotoye has written the rare business book that is both structurally rigorous and deeply human. Building Beyond

You is not simply a manual for creating a sustainable, owner-independent company; it is a masterclass in African entrepreneurial resilience, a narrative of personal evolution, and a blueprint for founders determined to build enterprises that endure.

Drawing from her journey—from selling bridal makeovers out of a shared student apartment to building House of Tara into one of Africa’s most respected beauty brands—Tara pairs vivid storytelling with sharp operational insight. The result is a book that speaks to the seasoned entrepreneur, the overwhelmed small-business owner, and the ambitious dreamer all at once.

The writing is warm, generous, and disarmingly honest. Tara opens the curtains on the unglamorous side of entrepreneurship: the emotional toll of doing everything yourself, the pressure that comes with organic growth, the cultural resistance to structure, and the painful realisation that success built around the founder can become a trap rather than a triumph. She details these struggles not for sympathy, but to illuminate the path for others.

At the same time, the book is rich with practical frameworks—how to institutionalise culture, standardise operations, embed core values, recruit for growth, decentralise decision-making, and prepare for succession. From the early decision to stop running a “one-man show,” to the introduction of advisory boards,

HR policies, standard operating procedures, and franchise systems, Tara and Abiola show readers what it practically takes to build beyond the founder.

Abiola Adediran's contributions supply managerial precision and structure. Drawing on her experience working with multinationals, she translates best practices in systems and organisation design into tools that small and growing African businesses can actually use—checklists, questions, and exercises that push entrepreneurs to move from intention to implementation.

What makes *Building Beyond You* truly stand out is its rootedness. It is unapologetically African, filled with stories, textures, and realities that reflect the lived experience of entrepreneurs on the continent—from Lagos markets and Nigerian law school “housemates,” to the challenges of expansion from Victoria Island to Ikeja, Ibadan, and Port Harcourt. Tara captures all of this with empathy and authority.

The narrative voice is engaging and often unforgettable—whether recounting the chaos of juggling newborns and bridal clients, the nerve-racking first franchise deal in Ibadan, or the moment a Lagos Business School professor declared, “I can never work for any of you,” forcing a fundamental shift from personality-driven management to systems-driven leadership.

Building Beyond You is poised to become a foundational text

for African entrepreneurship—equal parts memoir, strategy guide, and leadership philosophy. It is not just about building a business that outlives you, but about becoming a leader worthy of that legacy.

This is Tara at her best: inspiring, pragmatic, fiercely honest—and inviting a generation of entrepreneurs to build with courage, competence, and continuity in mind.

Dr. Sangu Delle

Ghana

Reviewer 6

CHUDE JIDENWO

If you don't call Tara Durotoye an icon, then you must be calling her a legend – A review of *'Building Beyond You: The House of Tara Story'*

As I read this book, it hit me again as it has hit me a few times in the past two decades since I have known her: Tara Durotoye is truly iconic.

In a country where we use that word loosely, hers is one of those situations where it might even be an understatement.

I remember it because it was in reading this book that it occurred to me that it took less than 10 years for her to become a pioneer, a symbol and an inspiration for the generation before

and after her.

But then the brilliance of it is that it always looked inevitable – of course she would succeed, of course she was brilliant, of course she would build a long-lasting business; of course she would one day hand over this institution to someone else; a business – as Jim Collins, whose research she oft quotes, says it – built to last.

This book will show you that none of it was inevitable.

It only happened because from the start Tara was focused on building systems and structure, on leading and building from strategy, on subsuming ego under mission, of growing beyond her limitations – whether it was internship/apprenticeship in her teens, building a world class board, systemizing operations and finance, hiring MBAs in her first half-decade of business, going to business school herself, deliberately designing a company culture, or bringing in world class consultants in an era when only public companies felt the need to do so.

She takes you through the process of building House of Tara in this book - breaking down the bottlenecks, the learning curves, the discoveries and then the improvements with a disarming humility and simplicity; so that whether you are an experienced business person who is coming to the process of building to last late, or you're a young entrepreneur just ready to start the journey, you can understand what you need to do, how you need to

do, but above all else – because Tara is the queen of context – why you need to do it. I have handed over two thriving companies in the past decade myself, and in reading this, I marveled at the depth of insight that Tara shares.

One of the beauties of Tara's public ministry and the reason three generations of Africans adore her is her disarming authenticity – and that authenticity comes through here. When she speaks about her anger that a friend questioned if she could afford an MBA chief operator, it resonated. When she tells a Fortune 500 mentor that the problem she had to overcome to grow her business was herself, my heart melted.

That authenticity and heart shines through as she speaks of family, of faith, and of the personal growth that building a fast-growing business forces you to undertake.

And by the time we have gone through taxation, accounting, hiring, separating personal from company investment, franchising, and manufacturing relationships from Kenya to China built over decades, that's where we arrive at the end of the book.

That the reasons Tara is able to hand over a successful business in its third decade to a new chief executive officer is because she is one of a kind. She is special.

Special enough to have pioneered SME culture when Nigeria knew nothing about the 'ease of doing business index' and

startup was not yet a mainstream word. Special enough to make 'entrepreneur' sexy at about the same time Nigeria returned to democracy. Special enough to have, perhaps single-handedly, pioneered Nigeria's make-up industry.

And then something else hits you at the end of the book: that Tara – who has been one of the most storied African entrepreneurs of the past three decades – has not yet hit 50.

I knew this intellectually of course; but after a book like this, after a story like this, it hits you anew: She is not yet even 50 and she is already a sage. She is not yet even 50, and see how many lives she has already lived - successfully.

See how many businesses, how many families, how many churches, how many children, how many relationships and even how many industries she has inspired; for which she has been a model.

Did I call her icon? Yes, that was an understatement. I meant legend.

Read this book because it teaches you brick by brick how to build a high flying, long-enduring business in one of the harshest business climates in the world. Read it if you want to be the kind of leader that has the capacity and character to build that kind of business.

But above all else, read this book because to be special like Tara is one of the greatest gifts you can possibly give yourself. And in *'Building Beyond You'*, she finally shows you how.

Chude Jideonwo

Nigeria

Reviewer 7

MIRANDA NAIMAN, cDir

Founder & Board Chair, Empower Limited

‘Through her lived experience, Tara articulates a truth I know deeply as a Founder: prosperity should not come at the cost of freedom. *Building Beyond You* speaks to the moment when growth quietly turns into stress because everything depends on you.

The book shows how structure and systems are not bureaucracy, but the bridge to sustainability, scale and legacy allowing the business to thrive without the founder at the centre. A powerful and timely reminder for anyone building for the long term.’

Miranda Naiman, cDir

Tanzania

*Reviewer 8***DAWN AMMONS**

*Global Vice President Learning and Development
Seminole Hard Rock International*

Building Beyond You by Tara is a powerful guide to fearless leadership and intentional growth. This book isn't about asking 'what if,' but embracing 'why not' —and doing it scared. Tara's visionary approach shines through her tenacity, humility, and wisdom as she builds House of Tara by surrounding herself with excellence, learning and unlearning, and creating systems rooted in care for her team. Knowing Tara personally, she embodies love and brilliance, guided by faith, making her life, family, and business strategy a true win. Building Beyond You is a must-read for entrepreneurs and anyone seeking purpose-driven success.

Dawn Ammons
United States

*Reviewer 9***LARA AYOUB**

*Journalist | Clinical RTT® Hypnotherapist
Founder & CEO, The Media Lab
Founder, Limitless with Lara®*

I could not put this book down. It spoke directly to my heart, mind, and soul. Not only did it resonate with me personally and professionally, it also made me reflect deeply on where I am in

my own business and what still needs to be done.

I have known Tara for over 15 years, and I have watched her manifest her dreams and fulfil her purpose from afar, all while enabling women and girls at every opportunity. Reading her journey through her book felt like an affirmation of everything I have witnessed over the years. Though this book tells Tara's story, it goes far beyond that. She speaks to everyone, offering hope through practical exercises, real-time examples, and concrete advice that can be immediately put into action. Using simple, accessible language, she generously and transparently shares her roadmap to success. It almost felt like she wanted to save us time - cutting straight to the essence of her most pivotal life lessons.

This book is relatable and relevant for anyone who may not have direct access to a mentor, self-development opportunities, or who finds themselves stuck between decisions. My personal takeaways from Tara's journey revolve around five key S's: the Stem of success lies within us, and the essential roles of Structure, Systems, Scalability, and Sustainability.

Tara, as fierce and unstoppable as she is, has always put her culture, heritage, and people first: empowering women and girls, uplifting her community locally and globally, nurturing networks, showing up for her family, and always sharing the good. Her book beautifully reflects how she has placed Nigeria on the global map with intention and pride.

I especially appreciate her reflection on the structural barriers faced by young parents, especially mothers, with children under five, and how she navigated them with courage, dedication, and self-awareness. She also speaks heavily about the importance of financial literacy, mental wellness, and self-care - themes every person, especially women, should prioritise.

Tara captures the true essence of establishing, leading, and growing a sustainable, profitable business - and the immense power in recognising when it is time to 'hand over the baton'. True to who she is, she leaves the reader motivated, educated, and equipped to take action. I genuinely felt mentored by her as I flipped the pages. The flow, brevity, and ease of reading make the book both enjoyable and impactful.

March 30, 2025, for example, struck a deep chord with me. She reveals with so much grace the power of letting go, recognising the divine timing of moving on, and the art of anchoring into one's awakening with courage, clarity, and alignment with one's core values and intuition. Through her story of transition, Tara offers the reader a chance to look inward, to embrace one's own hesitations, and to witness how the caterpillar emerges as a butterfly.

This book is both an expander and an accelerator- a reflection of one of Tara's greatest gifts. If you want to build a business, make a major decision, step into entrepreneurship, transition to

a global market, or simply attune to your inner calling, this is the book to read today.

Tara's journey gives the reader permission to follow their dreams by revealing hers with such candour, generosity, and grace.

Lara Ayoub

Kingdom of Jordan

Reviewer 10

DZIGBORDI KWAKU-DOSOO

*Executive High-Performance Coach | Human Skills & Visibility Strategist |
Founder, DCG Consulting Group*

If there is one book every founder, builder, and visionary must read on the journey toward building something that outlives them, *Building Beyond You* is it.

Tara FelaDurotoye has written a masterpiece, one that is as simple as it is profound, as gentle as it is disruptive, and as human as it is strategic.

As someone who has spent decades coaching leaders across continents on human skills, presence, and high-performance transformation, I see Tara's work as a landmark contribution to the global conversation on entrepreneurship, legacy, and leadership identity.

This book does not merely give advice.
 It shifts your behavior.
 It stretches your mindset.
 It shapes your character.
 And most importantly, it awakens the builder within you.

A Rare Blend of Vulnerability, Vision, and Victory

Tara writes with a clarity that comes from hard-won experience: the battles, the breakthroughs, the lessons, and the whispers that shape a leader's evolution. Her transparency is not performance; it is service.

As I read, I kept saying to myself:

“This is the kind of vulnerability that empowers, not the kind that drains.”

- She doesn't vent.
- She doesn't dramatize.
- She doesn't center injury.
- She uses her stories the way a master builder uses tools, to equip you, strengthen you, and position you for your next level.

A Playbook for Founders Who Want to Build With Their Humanity Intact

What sets Building Beyond You apart is its humanity.

Tara understands that every vision grows through people, and she teaches founders how to lead, collaborate, and communicate

with grace, strength, responsibility, and spiritual grounding. She reminds us that:

Your network is not decoration; it is infrastructure.

Relationships are currency, but only if you learn to steward them.

Every resource, every contact, and every encounter is an asset if managed with wisdom.

Legacy is not created at the finish line. It is built in every daily decision.

For entrepreneurs, executives, and builders across Africa and the diaspora, this book delivers the straightforward, empowered, human-centered guidance that is too often missing from traditional business literature.

A Strategic Manual for Anyone Building a Vision Bigger Than Themselves

From a high-performance perspective, this book is a masterclass in:

- Founder mindset
- Emotional intelligence
- Leadership transitions
- Succession
- Collaboration
- Influence and presence
- Purpose-driven building
- Strategic identity shifts

Tara has taken concepts that many leaders learn through

painful trial-and-error and delivered them in a way that is both digestible and actionable.

Her frameworks, reflections, and spiritual insights feel like sitting with a seasoned mentor who is honest enough to tell you the truth and wise enough to guide you through it.

A Global Book From a Global Woman

Beyond her Nigerian roots, Tara's voice in this book is universally relevant. Her message speaks to:

- founders in Africa
- innovators in global markets
- leaders navigating transitions
- creators birthing new movements
- women building industries
- men seeking meaningful impact
- anyone ready to build beyond themselves
-

This book travels.

- It translates.
- It transforms.

My Final Word to Every Reader

Building Beyond You is not a book you read once.

It is a book you reference, especially when you are:

- redefining who you are
- transitioning into a new season
- building with people
- preparing successors

or navigating the silent spaces where your next level is formed Tara has given our generation a gift, one that blends faith, strategy, humanity, and fierce clarity.

I celebrate her, I honor her, and I sincerely recommend this book to anyone who is building a vision that must stand, grow, and flourish beyond their name.

This is Tara at her most potent, and this is a book that will empower builders for decades to come.

Dzibordi Kwaku-Dosoo

Ghana

Reviewer 11

DR.OLA BROWN

I have had the privilege of knowing Tara Fela-Durotoye for many years — not just as a friend, but as one of my closest confidants and most trusted advisors. I have seen her in every season of life and business: the builder, the mentor, the mother, the visionary, and the quiet, resilient fighter who continues to reinvent herself. Few people embody the phrase “purpose lived out loud” the way Tara does.

Her new book, *Building Beyond Yourself*, is not merely a business manual. It is part memoir, part management guide, and part moral manifesto for a new generation of African entrepreneurs. It tells the story of how she built House of Tara, one of Africa’s most recognisable beauty brands, from a one-woman brid-

al makeup business into a structured, scalable institution that continues to grow even in her absence. But beyond the story of a single brand, the book is a blueprint for how to build enduring enterprises on the continent — companies that outlive their founders, employ people, and create wealth that circulates through society.

From Passion to Institution

Tara begins the book with a simple but profound truth: skill and passion are not enough. In the early years of House of Tara, the business was built entirely around her — her energy, her relationships, her talent. It grew, but it also trapped her. Every maternity break meant starting over. Every new opportunity stretched her thinner. Through hard-won lessons, she discovered that sustainability requires structure, systems, and succession.

This is the central message of *Building Beyond Yourself*: that real entrepreneurship is not about hustle or personality, but about designing an organisation that can survive and thrive independently of its founder. Tara shows, through deeply personal stories, how she learned to let go — to hire professionals, create governance systems, and build a business that runs on values, not moods.

A Blueprint for African Entrepreneurship

In one of the most memorable passages, Tara recalls visiting The World of Coca-Cola in Atlanta and wondering why so few African brands have lasted a century. That question frames the entire

book: Why don't we have more transgenerational African businesses?

The answer, she argues, lies in how we build. Too many founders mistake activity for achievement and ownership for impact. They fail to document systems, train successors, or institutionalise their culture. The result is what *The Economist* once called “entrepreneurship in Africa — unemployment in disguise.”

That description may sound harsh, but it captures an uncomfortable truth: many small businesses on the continent exist as a substitute for formal jobs rather than as scalable engines of value creation. They are expressions of survival, not strategy. Tara's book is a call to evolve beyond that stage.

For any economy to grow, a critical number of small companies must become big businesses — firms large enough to:

- create jobs,
- become customers for smaller enterprises,
- pay taxes that finance public goods, and
- eventually list on stock exchanges to democratise the wealth they create.

This is what *Building Beyond Yourself* is really about: helping African entrepreneurs develop the systems, discipline, and mindset to make that leap. It's not just about financial success; it's about building continuity, credibility, and institutional trust — the

missing ingredients of long-term economic transformation.

The Structure of the Book

The book moves from autobiography to application. The early chapters trace Tara's formative experiences — growing up around elegance and discipline, her first retail job at Perfumery, and her early days doing makeup for brides. Later chapters detail how she learned to create structure: hiring professionals, codifying processes, establishing advisory boards, and even designing a succession plan to transition leadership gracefully.

Every chapter ends with practical exercises, forcing the reader to reflect and act — to write down a vision, map key processes, or identify what must change for the business to run without its founder. Abiola Adediran's co-authorship adds technical depth, translating Tara's lived experience into frameworks and language accessible to both first-time entrepreneurs and seasoned executives.

Beyond Business: A Philosophy of Legacy

But *Building Beyond Yourself* is more than an operations manual. It is a philosophy of legacy leadership. Tara's humility is striking — she does not romanticise entrepreneurship. She describes her early burnout, her tears, her doubts, and the discipline it took to delegate and trust others. Through that honesty, she models what it means to lead with both excellence and empathy.

She also grounds the book in a broader economic and moral ar-

gument: if African entrepreneurs continue to build businesses that die when they do, then our economies will remain in cycles of fragility and reinvention. But if we learn to build beyond ourselves — to codify vision, structure, and governance — then our companies can become the bedrock of a stronger, fairer, more prosperous continent.

Why This Book Matters Now

At a time when the African entrepreneurship narrative often swings between hype and hardship, Tara offers something rare: a framework for maturity. She doesn't glorify the startup grind; she dignifies the process of structure and succession. Her message is deeply relevant to founders, policymakers, and investors alike.

She reminds us that legacy is engineered — through vision, process, and the courage to let go. In doing so, she reframes entrepreneurship not as a vehicle for personal gain, but as a public good — a tool for nation-building.

Final Reflection

Having walked closely with Tara through various seasons of her life and business, I can say that every word in this book is lived experience, not theory. It is both her personal story and her professional gift to a generation of builders.

If we heed her message, perhaps Africa will finally cross the bridge from “unemployment in disguise” to true economic independence — powered by businesses that last, leaders who let go,

and institutions that endure.

Building Beyond Yourself is, quite simply, one of the most important entrepreneurial books to come out of Africa in a generation.

Dr Ola Brown

Nigeria

Reviewer 12

AUDREY JOE-EZIGBO

CEO, Falcon Corporation Limited

The IMPACTONAIRE

Praise for Building Beyond You

What truly resonates in this book is the deep, heartfelt journey behind every decision a founder makes when it's time to step aside. Tara walks us through the reality that good governance, at its core, is about caring for what you've built enough to prepare it for life beyond you. It's the humility to document your lessons and the love to empower someone else to pick up the baton, all so that your vision, your values, and your legacy remain strong long after you've let go. There is no cold handover here; rather, taking the right governance steps, building the right systems and structures, ensures a warm, generous release rooted in faith, gratitude, and respect for the people and purpose at the heart of your organization.

Above all, Tara's story reminds us that letting go isn't just a

corporate act, it's deeply spiritual. It takes courage to trust the process, to invite wise voices in, and to listen for that whisper from God that says, "*It's time.*" You're called not just to govern well, but to lead with love, ensuring that both the business and those within it are freed to grow, transform, and thrive. For every founder wondering what comes next, you'll find in these pages a gentle reassurance: your legacy flourishes most when you let it walk into its new season, guided by faith and the governance wisdom you've so thoughtfully sown.

If you've ever wondered how to separate yourself from the enterprise you've poured your soul into, this message gives permission, and practical encouragement, to see release not as loss, but as a powerful act of love for what you've built.

Audrey Joe-Ezigbo

Nigeria

Reviewer 13

NIYI ADESANYA

*Trusted Advisor & Business Sustainability Expert
CEO, FifthGear Plus Consulting*

"*More than a business guide*", Tara Fela-Durotoye and Abiola Adediran have authored a blueprint for generational builders. This book is a masterclass in leadership, structure, and sustainability, revealing what it truly takes to build enterprises that endure beyond their founders. It is an authentic African narrative

of vision, grit, and transgenerational thinking. Every entrepreneur who dreams of building a centenary business will find in these pages both a mirror and a map.”

Niyi Adesanya

Nigeria

Reviewer 14

BOLAJI SOFOLUWE MBE

MD, ETK Group, BBA Committee, Lloyds Banking Group, Inward Investment Chair, Greater Essex Business Board, His Majesty’s Government Department for Business and Trade Export Champion.

I have followed Tara Fela-Durotoye’s incredible story for years. As an entrepreneurship and growth expert at Oxford’s Saïd Business School, I have a sharp eye for business models, scalability, and — of course — succession planning.

Tara has mastered all three of these key components of the entrepreneur’s journey, and she expresses these ideas vividly in this book. Building Africa’s institutions requires grit, determination, and a commitment to values — especially when building from the ground up. The enduring success, constant innovation, and far-reaching impact of House of Tara are a perfect demonstration of how this can be achieved.

Tara’s relatability, willingness to share, and genuine warmth draw you into this honest narration of her journey, inspiring you

to think big and dream audaciously. Her story is not only one of building a business, but of building a legacy — and doing so with courage, resilience, and purpose.

A highly recommended read.

Bolaji Sofoluwe MBE
United Kingdom

Reviewer 15

CHUKWUKA MONYE

The Systemic Process of Mimicking Systems

In this chapter on systems, TFD offers more than theory, she shares from the wealth of wisdom from as an African entrepreneur. She speaks to anyone who has ever felt the weight of running a business, especially in environments where certainty is rare and every day brings new challenges. TFD's perspective is refreshingly honest – success is not a solo act or a stroke of luck, rather it is built on the foundation of structure and systems. She understands that real legacy means creating something that lasts beyond the founder's charisma or hustle.

As she explains, structure is not about stifling creativity, instead it is a way to protect your business and make sure it survives the tough times. When you share processes, you give others the power to step up. Building systems is more than just paperwork, it is an act of trust and empowerment which can be achieved by

balancing discipline with innovation.

Systems should be flexible enough to let people experiment and adapt, but strong enough to keep things on track. Technically, building systems is about paving roads that everyone can travel, no matter who is driving. Controls should make life easier for customers and teams, not bog everyone down in bureaucracy.

For me, as an operations management expert and thought leader, systems are the heartbeat that keeps excellence alive. They are the quiet routines and habits that turn big ideas into everyday reality. Whilst these processes are not necessarily flashy, their impact shows up when things run smoothly as they minimize crises, and ensure growth is inevitable. If you have ever wondered why something just works, you are seeing the magic of invisible engines – the systems that let people succeed together, instead of relying on one superstar.

The McDonald Example

When Ray Kroc joined McDonald's in the 1950s, it was just a small burger stand. The food was good, but the business could not grow beyond a particular point. Kroc looked past the tasty burgers and saw the need for a system. He set up clear systems for making each burger, adding salt to chips, and opening new stores.

By turning burger-making into a repeatable process, McDonald's became known worldwide for its consistency. The key lesson here is that true excellence is not about what the founder can do, rath-

er, it is about what the system empowers everyone to do, over and over again, with the same high quality.

This chapter is a gentle nudge to all founders and leaders: don't try to do it all yourself. Build the structure, pass on the knowledge, provide the tools and trust the process. That is how you engineer longevity and leave a legacy worth remembering. As Tara aptly put it, work the systems, not your people.

Finally, I would add that once you have developed a system, you just need to mimic the system so that it becomes systemic.

Chukwuka Monye

Nigeria

Reviewer 16

LORENA DIAZ QUIJANO

LinkedIn Learning Instructor with 2,5 million students.

*Keynote Speaker, Mentor and Consultant on AI,
Digital Transformation and Agile Methodologies.*

Building Beyond Yourself is a powerful and timely book for entrepreneurs who don't just want to build a business, but want to build a life that extends beyond being "the only one" holding everything together—and who also want to build a company that will outlast them, enduring far beyond the founder's personal capacity or desire to remain in charge.

I read all the chapters and loved both the content and the structure. For me, this is a book primarily for more advanced, self-

aware entrepreneurs who are ready to rethink how they lead, delegate, and design their companies. At the same time, beginners and small entrepreneurs can benefit enormously from it—especially from the more foundational chapters. And if Tara, through this book, manages to convince beginners to start thinking about building beyond themselves right from the very beginning, that will be truly extraordinary and, in many ways, the ultimate accomplishment of her mission.

Some of the earlier chapters (especially 5, 6, and 7) clearly lay out the basics—structure, systems, processes—that every entrepreneur needs. The book also covers essential themes like preventing burnout, showing how sustainable growth begins with choosing not to be the only one, and with building the structures that allow real delegation and continuity.

Tara Durotoye herself is a role model: a remarkable Nigerian entrepreneur whose charisma and experience have touched the lives and hearts of people across Africa and around the world. With this book, her impact and reach will surely expand even further. She generously shares her formula for creating lasting companies and building beyond yourself—not only through sharp business insight, but also through a deeply human and spiritual perspective that clearly guides everything she does.

I genuinely loved her book.

Lorena Diaz Quijano

Argentina

*Reviewer 17***ARUNMA OTEH OON**

I am delighted that Tara Fela-Durotoye has taken time to author “Building Beyond You and share unique attributes that have been instrumental to her success as a leader who pioneered an industry that continues to profoundly impact the individual, business and society at large.

I admire Tara not only for her extraordinary success as a business leader, wife and mother but also for her discipline, values, and quiet determination to build with purpose.

Building Beyond You reflects the depth of that commitment and offers an important lesson for leaders and institution builders, particularly in emerging markets.

This book is not about entrepreneurship as personal success; it is about entrepreneurship as responsibility. Tara makes a persuasive case that the true measure of leadership is not visibility or growth, but the ability to build systems, cultures, and governance structures that endure beyond the founder.

One of the cases I found especially compelling is the book’s insistence that structure is fundamentally about decision-making and accountability. She also makes an incredible case, it is also about clarity of values, respect for process, emotional intelligence, and the discipline to separate personal identity from institutional

purpose. These are the very elements required to build credible organizations—whether in business, finance, or the public sphere.

The honesty of the narrative strengthens its message. By sharing her own evolution—through uncertainty, confidence, correction, and wisdom—Tara reminds us that leadership maturity is learned, not assumed. Her recognition that founders themselves can become constraints to scale is both insightful and necessary.

Building Beyond You speaks to a broader development imperative: Africa does not lack visionaries; it needs leaders willing to submit vision to structure, and ambition to stewardship. This book contributes meaningfully to that conversation.

It is a thoughtful, experience-based reflection on leadership, governance, and legacy—and a valuable read for anyone serious about building institutions that last.

Building Beyond You is a must read for leaders who desire to scale their impact on Society.

Arunma Oteh OOB
United Kingdom

*Reviewer 18***REHEMA KATE ISA***Co-Founder Oya Solutions, Oya Foods, Womanomics Africa®*

“Building Beyond You,” by the phenomenal Tara Fela-Durotoye and Abiola Adediran, found me at an intellectual, entrepreneurial and spiritual pause moment. It provided the vocabulary for unspoken and silent prayers, gave voice to unspoken struggles and also provided a blueprint which I have no doubt will resonate with the entrepreneur who dares to dream beyond a livelihood, towards a legacy. It’s business and it’s also personal.

The foreword by Ibukun Awosika’s is both poetic and powerful—comparing a builder to “a seed that remembers the forest”. This is an invitation to a soulful conversation, a promise made and kept as it unfolds as skilful masterclasses wrapped in pages of mentorship on building with purpose. It’s storytelling delight. How else do you describe the imagination of a bold vision, the wisdom of curated learning and application, an embedded love story, dreams, realities and intricacies of running, let alone growing an empire woven in practical business advice?

There is a timeliness to the writing. In an era that positions a mostly post-colonial, western identity of successful business, Tara confronts generational amnesia head-on, not just as a lament, but as a clarion call. She reminds us of the names of enterprises that were a staple in the 60s and 70s like Tandi Guarana, a popular soft drink, originally from Brazil and bottled in Nigeria by

Coastal Bottlers Ltd. This simple throwback will find a home in the heart of many Africans across the continent who will not only pause but hopefully be prompted to be curious about a history that is forgotten.

I am captivated by the questions that emerge. Provocations by the author to the reader gently stimulating the reflection on self, one's environment, options and choices. She asks the pivotal question: "How can we ensure that African brands transcend multiple decades?" Indeed many have failed the sustainability beyond founder test and no longer exist and many more regrettably never knew they ever did. With a generosity of insight and refreshing candidness, she provides the answer, drawn from the 27-year journey of her own House of Tara, reminding us of the power of asking the right questions.

Tara presents a formidable case for the beauty industry as a serious, scalable, and system driven sector. She shows us that the real magic isn't only in the perfect lipstick shade (while reminding us 'no customer no business'), but also in the robust financial controls, the meticulous inventory management, and the strategic HR policies that allow the brand to flourish across multiple locations. This is a narrative of glamour grounded in fundamentals of great products backed by good governance, passion and perfected process and systems.

You will find yourself reading up on the sector, and stimulated to probe what you know about your own. While the African beauty

and cosmetics market is a multi-billion dollar opportunity, the field is still dominated by global players. The market is currently estimated to be worth between \$8 billion and \$11 billion USD annually with estimates suggesting it could reach \$15 billion to \$17 billion USD by 2027-2028, representing a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of around 7-9%.¹ The current 20-30% share held by African brands is the beachhead (strong foothold), and it is this segment that is experiencing the most dynamic growth, innovation, and cultural relevance. The journey that House of Tara and similar brands have pioneered is creating a blueprint for how African brands can not only capture a larger piece of this spending but also build lasting legacies that define beauty on their own terms.

The core of this book's genius lies in its unwavering focus on legacy, not just success. Tara articulates a vision that is too rarely nurtured in our ecosystems: the vision of a business that outlives its founder. She masterfully demystifies the "how," guiding us through the often intimidating journey of creating structure. She reassures us that structure isn't about stifling creativity with endless meetings, but about creating freedom—the freedom for the founder to take a sabbatical, to focus on strategy, and ultimately, to pass the baton without the entire enterprise crumbling. Her own transition story, detailed with spiritual and strategic clarity, is not just inspiring; it is evidence-based literature at its most powerful. She didn't just theorize about succession; she lived it, and she gives us a front-row seat to the entire, graceful process while not hiding from the not so glamorous, personal and health

toll being in business, pioneering and raising a family demands.

The warmth and accessible style of the writing make complex topics feel like a conversation with a trusted, wiser sister. The interweaving of personal anecdotes—from the early days in her mother’s house to the challenges of balancing motherhood with entrepreneurship—makes the journey relatable. The practical exercises at the end of key chapters transform the book from a passive read into an active workshop, ensuring that the insights don’t just remain ideas, but become implemented actions in your own business.

The principles within these pages—from defining your core values to implementing financial controls and nurturing your people—are presented as non-negotiable fundamentals. They are the universal pillars upon which any enduring enterprise, in any sector, must be built. This is why the book’s application across the continent is limitless. Whether you are in Lagos, Nairobi, Accra, or Kigali, the lessons on systemizing your operations, separating personal and business finances, and building a culture where people thrive are instantly applicable and critically important. *1* Africa Beauty and Personal Care Market Outlook 2027” or similar titles. These reports often cite data from firms like Euromonitor and Mintel.

Tara does not present herself as a self-made island. She beautifully chronicles the counsel of icons like Ibukun Awosika, the divine alignment that brought Tundun Aderibigbe into her path,

and the formal mentorship programs that sharpened her vision. Underpinning the mentorship is a subtle and critical thread that distinguishes the author and which elevates the significance of this book. A willing and ready student in Tara. This underscores a vital truth for women builders: we do not build alone. Our journeys are amplified by the wisdom of those who have walked before us and the solidarity of those who walk with us. This book itself becomes a form of mentorship, with Tara and Abiola as our gracious guides. A must read. An essential business guide. The perfect gift to a budding and experienced entrepreneur.

Rehema Kate Isa

South Africa

Reviewer 19

SMITA MANKAD

Independent Non-Executive Director on Boards

Social Entrepreneur & Business Consultant

There are a few things that make Tara stand apart from other leaders I've known.

One, she leads from the heart, and you cannot ask for a better leader than that - making her humane, sensitive, a deep listener and generous.

Secondly, she has grown into her own power and identity with time, and is incredibly self aware - bringing her to the realisa-

tion that stepping away from her business is the best thing she could do for it. This is usually the hardest thing for founders to do, whether in non-profit or for profit companies. This has also allowed her to pull from her lifetime of experience the key learnings she shares in this book. Through honest storytelling and practical insights, she demystifies what it takes to transition a business from being overly reliant on the founder to one that can thrive without them. Tara's evolution from that mindset to understanding the importance of systems, processes and an empowered team is a transformation every passion-driven entrepreneur needs to undergo.

Tara's personal journey of building House of Tara from a small bridal makeup business to a global African beauty brand is both inspiring and instructive. She shares the mistakes, lessons, and pivotal moments that shaped this journey and is a powerful guide for entrepreneurs seeking to build sustainable businesses.

Third is her faith and spirituality, deeply personal but one that which she is not afraid to talk about or share; again unusual for a business leader.

I have known Tara since 2010 and have been privileged to not just call her a friend, but to view her journey over the years, both the ups and the downs. I remember the many conversations we've had - how she dealt with product fakes in the market, managing people and teams, and how her day starts with her spiritual practice. We talked at length about succession planning, board gov-

ernance and making time for what's important - family, friends, faith - beyond work that can become all consuming.

This book will surely be an inspiration to many young women in Africa who dream of being entrepreneurs, and young leaders everywhere.

In “Building Beyond You” Tara shows us that true success lies not just in what you build but what you leave behind.

Smita Mankad
India

Reviewer 20

BETTY IRABOR

Entrepreneur|Media Icon

Tara Fela-Durotoye’s “Building Beyond You” is a powerful invitation to every entrepreneur who dreams of creating a business that ultimately outlives them. It gently urges the reader to shift from STRIVING to truly THRIVING, reminding us that meaningful entrepreneurship is not just about building for today but preparing for tomorrow.

Many founders inevitably become the heartbeat of their businesses—present in every detail, every decision, every crisis. For those who have walked this path, the truth becomes painfully clear: this posture is unsustainable. It quietly limits the very growth, freedom, and longevity we desire for our businesses.

Tara captures this reality with disarming honesty. She reminds us that sustainability requires more than passion and hard work; it demands structure, clarity, and systems that stand firm where human strength falters.

She poses a delicate yet necessary question: *“If we desire to build legacies, why do we rarely make legacy our main focus?”* The answer, she insists, begins with the mind—“a simple radical change in your mindset is where a major proportion of the breakthrough begins.”

Her reflections on systems shimmer with unpretentious wisdom. Through documenting, delegating, and structuring, she explains, “you open your business up for opportunities and increase its value.”

I felt this deeply, remembering the seasons when I was ubiquitous in every corner of my business—an exhausting, unrealistic stance that dimmed its potential rather than expanding it. Tara’s words land gently, like a soothing balm for those who have stretched themselves thin, believing they must be everything for their business to thrive.

Aware of the troubling pattern of many African businesses fading by the second generation, Tara resolved to break the cycle. Our labour to build beyond us should never be in vain, and this book stands as a guide, a map, and a mirror—helping us build

with intentionality, resilience, and with legacy at the core.

Betty Irabor

Nigeria

Reviewer 21

SUZIE WOKABI

BeautyPreneur

Founder of SuzieBeauty & SB Dada, CEO of O'Bao Kenya

Tara Fela-Durotoye. A FORCE to be reckoned with. I first met this beauty through our mutual wonderful friend Dr Wale Akinyemi. Going past that, Tara invited me as a guest to a make-up conference in Lagos. It was a must-attend for me. I experienced what this amazing woman had created in a country and industry that was so fierce that I as an East African beauty industry pioneer was seeing as decades ahead of us! And SHE was that pioneer!

Reading this life story has been life altering for me as well. The intricacies I did not know of. I remain inspired by her passion, her grit, her happiness, her fearlessness. She remains as one of the main queens of this continent and I will forever be honoured to call Tara my friend, my mentor, and who I look to.

This is a MUST READ. A best seller worldwide is not an option. So much love!!

Suzie Wokabi

Kenya

*Reviewer 22***CHIDI AJAERE***Executive Chairman GIG Group*

Tara Fela-Durotoye's *Building Beyond You* is not just a business book — it is the biography of transformation. Through her own story of starting House of Tara from a single makeup chair to a nationwide beauty institution, she teaches every African entrepreneur one timeless truth: a business built around you will die with you, but a business built on systems will outlive you.

From Passion to Structure

In Chapter 1, Tara shows how passion and skill can ignite success but cannot sustain it. She moves from being a gifted makeup artist to understanding that structure — documentation, punctuality, policies and daily discipline — is the invisible backbone of any thriving enterprise. Structure, she reminds us, is not bureaucracy; it is freedom — the ability to step back without everything collapsing.

From Control to Systems

Chapter 3 captures her evolution into a systems thinker. Growth and franchising forced her to create processes that could reproduce quality without her presence. She confronts the African tendency toward “one-man businesses” and reveals that scaling requires a new kind of humility — the courage to delegate, trust, and replace personality with process. Her message is powerful: the business will only grow when the founder

grows. The first system to fix is your mindset.

From Operations to Legacy

By Chapter 5, Tara delivers a clear playbook for building companies that last generations. She breaks down how to systemize every function — accounting, marketing, HR, procurement, customer service — and how to document, test, and refine them. She connects structure with governance, accountability, and technology, showing that internal controls and clear policies are not for big corporations alone but are the oxygen of sustainability. Her mantra — “Work the systems, not your people” — defines the mature entrepreneur’s creed.

Final thoughts and the Bigger African Lesson

Tara’s mission is deeply continental. She challenges Africa’s cycle of first-generation success and second-generation collapse. Her life’s work calls founders to move from survival to succession, from being busy to being built. She reminds us that the true legacy of an entrepreneur is not wealth, but institutions that keep creating value long after the founder is gone.

Tara doesn’t just tell us to build businesses; she dares us to build nations through businesses that outlive us.

Chidi Ajaere
Nigeria