

## **Ford goes from Mr. Miracle to his polished protégé**

By Alisa Priddle  
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Two men with different backgrounds and personalities are making an uncharacteristically smooth transition of power for Ford Motor. It's a changing of the guard carefully crafted to be drama-free so the automaker can continue its positive momentum.

The highly successful Alan Mulally era is at its end. The 68-year-old CEO is turning over command July 1 to protégé Mark Fields, 53, of the Dearborn, Mich., automaker that employs about 180,000 with 65 plants around the world. ...

### **Fields dug in as COO**

...Fields, a 25-year company veteran, appears to have Wall Street's vote of confidence. There were no market jitters last year when Mulally, an investor darling for his turnaround efforts, was said to be on a short list of candidates to become CEO of Microsoft, raising the specter he would quickly leave Ford in Fields' hands.

Unlike the abrupt firing of past CEOs Lee Iacocca and Jacques Nasser, the awkward retirement of Alex Trotman or Bill Ford's abdication in 2006 when he found Mulally, the anointing of Fields is a slow and orderly internal hand-off. ...

...That pleases shareholders, said David Kudla, CEO of Mainstay Capital Management, an investment firm in Grand Blanc. "This is as smooth as you can get. It makes a big difference to the markets, which hate uncertainty." ...

### **Partners on a global mission**

...As any successor to a living legend, Fields knows the formidable comparisons many will make. Yet he knows he has benefited from Mulally's success and tutoring.

Mulally's ability to execute a global product plan and create a team able to weather the 2009 financial crisis and emerge with enviable profit margins will go down in corporate annals as the Mulally miracle. ...