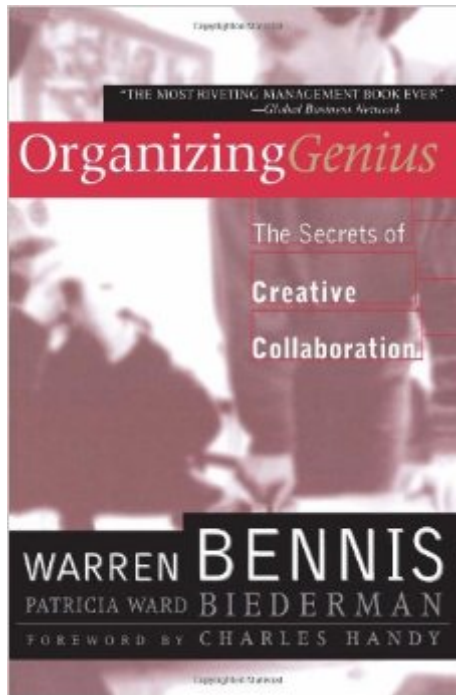# Organizing Genius: The Secrets Of Creative Collaboration

Synopsis

Uncovers the elements of creative collaboration by examining six of the century's most extraordinary groups and distill their successful practices into lessons that virtually any organization can learn and commit to in order to transform its own management into a collaborative and successful group of leaders. Paper. DLC: Organizational effectiveness - Case studies.

Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 4.0 out of 5 starsÂ Â See all reviewsÂ (43 customer reviews)

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Customer Reviews

This is an informative book on leadership qualities and insights by Warren Bennis, who is a distinguished professor of business administration at USC, and who has also advised at least four presidents. Bennis discusses four organizations that were able to combine incredibly gifted people in such a synergy as to create hitherto unknown super-accomplishments: Walt Disney Studios with the first full-length animated film, Xerox and Apple with the first user friendly computer, Lockheed's Skunkworks with the first US jet fighter, and the Manhattan Project which yeilded the atomic bomb. What were the key ingredients to their success? What did they do wrong, but succeeded in spite of such matters? These questions are entertainingly answered in this book. Among the fifteeen traits listed are: always having an enemy, seeing themselves as the underdogs, isolating themselves from unnecessary outside interferences, and hiring people that have both great ability and a talent for collaboration. Interesting and Useful - Five Stars

It never ceases to astonish me how little substance there is to most business books: they tend to

take a few ideas, puff them up with facts and stories, and then paste them together into a book when a single article - or indeed the flap of the book - would more than suffice. Alas, though Bennis is a brilliant man and great expert on leadership, his book fails on many counts.First, throughtout the text, the ideas are not that well delineated. So you get lots of stories that are often intersting and fun, but you wonder why all the details are included. Second, I didn't see what the book really adds: sure leaders can be both remarkable and difficult; sure, some teams are extraordinary; sure, we could use more great teams. But how do you do it? THe book doesn't provide much on that as a practical guide (its third failing).Nonetheless, I thought this book was very well written, which is almost certainly Bierderman's contribution. ALso, it is fun to read the stories on their own. Finally, the sumup chapter has useful ideas (and frankly, it - just 15 pages - is all that you would need to read if you don't find the stories inherently interesting).Tepidly recommended.

The book falls short of delivering the promise of "The Secrets of Creative Collaboration". There are a number of current examples of groups which have achieved varying levels of greatness either within their areas of expertise or impacting the region or country they support, including within the military which the authors discounted. The book is poorly connected, disjointed to this reader. To include the clinton campaign and Carville at the expense of better examples only enforced the perception throughout most of the book that to lead a great group, one must (usually) be an insensitive bully, willing to inflict whatever degrading words or actions which spring to mind to move the group forward. There are far too many other books available to the novice as well as experienced manager which describe traits and actions of group leaders and group dynamics.

Like in many business books the authors present their message in a number of examples, each describing how a group managed to do something clearly outstanding. The problem of the book is that the authors do not manage to come up with anything like a coherent framework to explain the success of these groups. Examples are only useful if they show the working of some underlying general principle. In this book, however, examples simply stand for themselves. The stories are nicely written and it is fun to read, but it certainly does not present a theory of successful teams. But maybe, as an academic economist, I am too demanding in this respect.

This absorbing work explores the marriage between able leadership and the organization of gifted people that, combined, produces extraordinary results. The authors examine seven such groups including the Skunk Works, the Manhattan Project, Disney Feature Animation Unit, and President

Clinton's 1992 campaign team. The book concludes with fifteen lessons of great groups. Extensive notes are provided.The authors clearly reveal the complex SYNERGY between leadership and organization that creates high-performance teams, but one has to also consider the influence environmental circumstances-threats and opportunities. Abounds with excellent insights. Reviewed by Gerry Stern, founder, HR consultant.com InfoCenter and Stern & Associates.

Exploring exceptional groups, such as the Manhattan Project, the Lockheed Skunk Works, Apple Macintosh and others, the authors explore the commonalities of high performing teams. The approach the authors use is a series of vignettes, each focusing on a different exceptional group - their composition, accomplishments, approaches,commonalities and travails.Identifying 15 different traits common to high performing teams, the book provides a reasonably entertaining look at the studied groups, as well as a pretty concise and useful recap of the traits at the end of the book. The introduction and the summary are solid, if unspectacular. As noted by a few other reviewers, the book occasionally bogs down in spots. However, it is one of the better of its type and a quick, entertaining read.

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