ForeWord Reviews

BUSINESS & ECONOMICS

10 Career Essentials
Donna Dunning
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Donna Dunning's 10 Career Essentials is not a book about finding a career; rather, it addresses the all-important notion of matching personality type to career goals. This well-written and organized book guides the reader through ten "essential career success strategies," each of which is thoroughly described and accompanied by specific examples. At the end of each success strategy is a "Reflection and Action" section which contains an exercise to help the reader with self-assessment.

The strategies have such interesting titles as "Ask Yourself for Directions," "Put Yourself in Charge," and "Disentangle Your Thoughts." Dunning consistently offers up provocative questions that lead the reader to self-awareness and discovery. In "Disentangle Your Thoughts," for example, the author asks, "Can you identify your blind spots?" and "Are you thinking about your thinking?" If nothing else, such questions are compelling enough to keep the reader engaged and moving forward.

Dunning does a particularly good job of employing the standardized Myers-Briggs Type Indicator, a sixty-year old personality inventory assessment tool, in a contemporary and useful way. Early in the book, she guides the reader through an analysis of personality types, encouraging the reader to select one of eight types that "seems most natural and comfortable." Then for each of the career success strategies, she describes how the reader can tailor the material in that chapter to his or her specific personality type. In effect, this writing technique customizes the text to the reader's individual needs. It is a clever and unique way of making the book all the more valuable.

Throughout 10 Career Essentials, the author offers excellent advice that can benefit anyone at any stage of their career. In the chapter, “Learn from Everyone,” for example, Dunning counsels, “When you take a learning approach to interacting with others, you are seen as diplomatic, empathic, understanding, tactful, nonjudgmental, open-minded, and considerate.” She follows that with a useful discussion of effective listening habits, empathic responses, how to clarify expectations, and how to learn from corrective feedback.

The author is careful not to judge an individual’s personality type. Instead, she provides tactful guidance that anyone can utilize without feeling self-conscious about their strengths and weaknesses.

10 Career Essentials should help readers get a handle on their life’s work, and better understand how personality plays a key role in career success.

Barry Silverstein