

Acting Up: Winning in Business and Life Using Down Home Wisdom

Janice Bryant Howroyd

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Acting Up is a business-minded, advice-filled memoir about doing good work and achieving success with integrity.

Janice Bryant Howroyd's empowering memoir *Acting Up* imparts her passion for education, mentorship, and self-improvement.

The memoir is divided in two parts: the first addresses the founding of Bryant Howroyd's company, explaining what entrepreneurship is and the importance of empowerment in direct terms. The second part of the book concentrates on the pillars of entrepreneurship, focusing on education, humanity, pressure, cooperation, and integrity; it includes practical advice for others who hope to become entrepreneurs too and to achieve their own goals with integrity and a sense of purpose. There are pieces of advice from Bryant Howroyd's mother (in the "Mama says" sections); there are short, snappy encouragements marked as "Janicisms" too. Herein, she shares the morals, ideas, and models that she lives by, including her family values—called crucial to achieving her success. Indeed, a strong sense of Bryant Howroyd's personality and her family dynamics pervades the book, giving life to its more predictable advice on entrepreneurship, money, and life.

Bryant Howroyd's personal story is compelling. Born in North Carolina in a time of segregation, she had loving parents and ten siblings; they were her models for integrity, teaching "her more than anyone else about everything that matters." With their support, she grew up knowing that she "wanted to do good," though it took her years to figure out how. She left her hometown in 1976 with only \$900 to her name. Two years later, she founded ActOne, which became a global organization leading the human resources industry. She became the first Black woman to own a billion-dollar business; she worked with US presidents too. Still, as a Black woman, she had to overcome significant challenges to succeed.

Bryant Howroyd is convincing in arguing that integrity matters, both in business and in one's personal life—indeed, that having integrity (or not) can define a person's entire life. Case studies are used to support this perspective. They focus on people and companies that either had no integrity or that lost it somewhere along the way. Drawing on their examples—and on her own—she exhorts: "Never compromise who you are personally to become who you wish to be professionally."

Acting Up is a business-minded, advice-filled memoir from a successful businesswoman; it concerns doing good work and achieving success with integrity.

ANNA MARIA COLIVICCHI (November 7, 2022)

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