

Be a J.E.D.I. Leader, Not a Boss: Leadership in the Era of Corporate Social Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

Omar L. Harris

Intent Books

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With insightful templates for more empathetic styles of leadership, Be a J.E.D.I. Leader, Not a Boss urges stakeholders and business leaders toward self-reflection.

Omar L. Harris's eye-opening business book *Be a J.E.D.I. Leader, Not a Boss* concerns the evolution of leadership to emphasize contemporary values.

Championing justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion, or J.E.D.I., as primary values for modern leaders, this book draws on Harris's real-world experience to suggest means of correcting inequality to serve shareholders and society at large alike. Its intentions are covered with care in a slow opening section that establishes the book's commitment to its *Star Wars* theme—a distinctive, interesting twist on typical business books. Here, for example, “the force” represents how power should be wielded (to uplift, instead of to disenfranchise, others); and “the dark side” is what drives those who “seek personal gain above all else” and “lack a basic sense of responsibility.”

The thematic chapters zoom in on antiracism, employment engagement, and ego transcendence, with frequent pull quotes and bullet points to highlight important notions. They progress in a logical fashion from the opening call to action toward a concluding outline of a new model of leadership. The book's subchapters, which are devoted to subjects like stakeholder capitalism and servant leadership, help when it comes to holding attention. Human resources professionals will find the book's specific frameworks, which suggest means of making companies work for everyone, useful.

This passionate work is backed by data and illustrative businesses case studies, as of CEOs' divergent responses to the coronavirus pandemic. The book makes structural flaws plain via data that elucidates ingrained issues, such as that heterosexual white cisgender men, who represent 35% of the US population, represent 85.8% of the Fortune 500 CEOs. Other sobering stories, as of Google's shift away from its “Don't Be Evil” mantra, and of a CEO's racist remark that caused his company to lose market share, are present as well.

The book builds to a rousing call for progress and servant leadership. It is convincing in asserting that the status quo does not have to be treated as static, and that oppression and exclusion should be confronted in the corporate world. Urging stakeholders and business leaders toward self-reflection, *Be a J.E.D.I. Leader, Not a Boss* is a heartfelt business book for those who wish to incorporate the principles of justice, equity, diversity and inclusion into their workplace, presenting an insightful template for a more empathetic style of leadership.

JOSEPH S. PETE (July 28, 2021)

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