

Congratulations -- You Just Got Hired: Don't Screw It Up

Robert L. Deitz

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“The purpose of this book is to provide practical job advice,” writes first-time author Robert L. Deitz in his introduction to *Congratulations – You Just Got Hired: Don't Screw it Up*. He fulfills his goal with humor and brevity. As to his guidance, he has the experience to back it up.

Basing the contents on a lecture he developed for George Mason University's School of Public Policy, Deitz—at the urging of colleagues and friends—has now compiled his thoughts into a well-written and tautly edited guide, one that should be required reading not only for those entering a career for the first time but for everyone in today's work arena.

The advice is driven by twenty-first-century needs and is clearly stated, with personal foibles inserted very sparingly—just enough to make the reader want to know more. Deitz provides his email address at the end of the book so readers can contact him with comments and questions, or share their own experiences.

“It dawned on me that while graduate students are prepared academically to enter the professions, they may not be practically ready for work life in an office,” writes Deitz. For those who have managed offices or owned businesses, the information provided here offers an elegant way to train employees in important topics such as hygiene, e-mail and voice-mail etiquette, how to comport oneself at meetings, and—best of all—how to work well with bosses and coworkers.

Deitz shows he is well aware of today's perils of writing in text-speak, slang, industry jargon, or vernacular. He cautions the reader accordingly: “I recently received a paper from a student who referred to a policy maker as ‘pissed off.’ This was not an ironic comment. In general, do not use any slang words or sayings found in the Urban Dictionary.”

“The most liberating words in the English language are ‘I don't know,’” states Deitz. There seems to be an element of shame in admitting that one does not have an answer, and Deitz breaks through this with clarity and crisp advice. He also touches upon such topics as work habits, avoiding gossip, dealing with the media, and handling confidential information.

Deitz's career in Washington, DC spanned thirty-five years during which he “watched the careers of many young professionals blow up for reasons having nothing to do with their academic training or their intellectual acuity.” He admits that he has even violated some of the rules himself, to his regret.

Congratulations –You Just Got Hired is the perfect gift for college seniors and anyone else looking for a job in today's volatile job market. It would also be good to have it on hand in any office. Deitz's advice is spot-on, relevant, and a pleasure to read.

DINDY YOKEL (May 28, 2013)

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