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Business & Economics

Executive Advantage: Resilient Leadership for 21st-Century Organizations
Jacqui Grey
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The stress an executive faces daily would overwhelm anyone without adequate training—a subject addressed in Jacqui Grey's guide to productive leadership, *Executive Advantage*.

Problems begin as executives combat emotional upheaval associated with responsibility and control, causing faulty decisions to compensate for perceived weakness or inadequacy. Grey dispels the myth of a greedy ogre in the corner office. She demystifies and humanizes people at the head of corporations.

Executive Advantage is not only for leaders. It's for everyone who needs to organize, delegate, and maintain stability in a tumultuous environment and is a particularly excellent reference for an entrepreneur. Grey's researched work is backed by countless interviews and an extensive bibliography. It addresses leadership from a psychological standpoint, preventing trouble before it can take root in one's mind and spread to employees like a disease.

"As long as people feel they have control and choice over their world, stress remains manageable," Grey writes. "That is why people will sacrifice money for the perception of freedom and why being micromanaged may generate a strong threat response."

Grey names any sabotaging element a "gremlin," an apt yet playful term for an enemy of the psyche intent on destroying a company. This sounds sophomoric, but her presentation of bad attitudes and strange behaviors will enlighten those in doubt. People who feel unimportant, unlovable, or experience difficulty in balancing—even separating—personal and professional issues have met at least one inner demon. Grey lays out a detailed plan for resolving conflict. Focus on the present and vision for the future are not enough. Unobstructed, smooth progress is rarely the norm, and she addresses reasons for common faltering and eventual failure.

A primary concern in this decade is backlash. "When anxiety gets out of hand, leading to derailment and ultimately to people leaving, the result can be a desire to get even. The upsurge in social media and social networking means that almost anyone, at any level in any

organization, can become a whistle-blower."

Divided into eight sections with illustrations, diagrams, and case studies, Grey presents her theory and offers solutions, explaining how to overcome self-defeating reasoning that will result in self-defeating performance. A special emphasis on powerful women makes this book valuable in preventing gender stereotypes. Grey discusses the difference between the male and the female brain, elaborating on strengths and weaknesses that may surprise those with long-held assumptions.

Grey is a regular seminar speaker and works with global blue-chip companies on leadership development programs. Her background in law and human resources has enabled her to advise investment banks and Internet technology companies.

If her work is learned, opposed to merely read, this author's success rate with trailblazers will likely be high.

Julia Ann Charpentier