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Business & Economics

Eyeballs Out: How to Step into Another World, Discover New Ideas, and Make Your Business Thrive

Donna Sturgess
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From its title through its content, *Eyeballs Out* is not your typical business book. Donna Sturgess uses an unusual personal experience—taking a tour of a state-of-the-art aircraft carrier—to demonstrate "how a personal immersion in an unfamiliar world can illuminate powerful ideas that might not be seen otherwise."

Sturgess says that immersing herself in the aircraft carrier's life offered "spectacular moments that forever changed my perspective on business and life." She recalls the highlights of her encounter while making sure to relate everything to the business environment.

The author includes a "spectacular point" in each chapter that, in a single sentence, conveys the key takeaway.

In a chapter entitled "Faith at Work," for example, Sturgess observes the spiritual importance of the ship's chaplain. She concludes that the role of the chaplain might be a welcome addition to the corporate workplace. "It is an unconventional idea to have an in-house chaplain in a major corporation," writes Sturgess, but it could humanize corporate culture. The need, she says, is for businesses to integrate a "care and compassion approach," and a non-denominational chaplain could help do just that.

Many of her other observations are equally intriguing. Sturgess believes that a sense of thrill is missing in most workplaces, and that creating the sensation of thrill is "a super-magnet for wildly talented people." The author suggests that businesses "develop an Xbox-type game to manage business strategy as a real-time sport," because annual planning is ineffective. She thinks that employers should seek out sailors and soldiers because they "have the potential to be high-energy corporate athletes." Sturgess also believes that businesses should use neuroscience research techniques "to better understand customer preferences and decisions."

In the closing few chapters, the author provides both a summary of the book's major

points, as well as a kind of roadmap for “taking an immersion” and then using that “immersion experience” as a refreshing way to inspire the workforce and “reboot the thrill of overwhelming success.”

Eyeballs Out is an out-of-the-ordinary book that provides a uniquely different perspective on business leadership. Given the number of leadership books that flood the market each year, that is no small feat. While a business leader may not always share the author’s wonder at her aircraft carrier experience, the reader cannot help but feel Sturgess’ unbounded enthusiasm for how an immersion experience can fundamentally change one’s outlook. If nothing else, *Eyeballs Out* will provide the reader with an eye-opening way of looking at the business world.

Barry Silverstein