

Get a Clue: 10 Steps to an Executive IQ

Temeko Richardson

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Temeko Richardson's no-nonsense approach to business success is pithily encapsulated in her title: *Get A Clue*. She's going to give it to you straight, and the solution will be precisely spelled out with no room for nuanced shades of ambiguity. This volume contains an approachable set of easily implemented steps to boost aspiring executives' (or, indeed, entrepreneurs') chances of making a real success of their career—and their bottom line.

Drawing on two decades of experience as an employee and consultant to Fortune 500 companies, Richardson is not shy about sharing her business savvy. With unadorned humility and engaging honesty, she acknowledges life in the fast lane of modern commerce ain't no easy ride.

Some might find the author's no-nonsense style a little much to handle. Others will appreciate her to-the-point, utility-driven chapter structure. She's compassionate when telling you what you need to hear—much in the manner of a doctor who acknowledges “this might sting a bit, but it's for your own good.” And she gets right to the point.

The work is split into four sections. There is an introductory set of chapters focusing on reviewing your current strengths and weaknesses; a section calling for introspection and self-inventory; a third focusing on precise evaluation; and the remaining chapters on implementation, follow-up, and ongoing planning and course-setting.

The last section could benefit from additional content. Each chapter dives right into the meat of the matter—if you're the type for a long, lingering read, you may be left wanting more. Those looking for reams of theory will have to look elsewhere. This is a handbook in the classic sense of that term—a reference manual that tells you what to do, how to do it, and what to do next. It will be appreciated by novices, yet its comprehensive scope offers plenty of detailed and precise insights for the more experienced.

Through judicious use of tables, bullet points, and other organizational devices, Richardson efficiently gets across the main takeaways. Debunking the technical crutches of overly complex and information-dense Excel reports, she emphasizes crucial need-to-knows that so few in the business world have learned either through formal, on-the-job training, or via good old-fashioned in-depth mentoring.

Justly critical of the cult of the complex, this book is all about making maximum use of data and analysis. The author mercifully doesn't let navel-gazing number-crunching cloud the age-old issues of business—will they buy it, can we deliver it, and can we make a profit doing so? Most will be grateful that potential clients, as well as those who can't afford or access Richardson's consulting experience, can still benefit from her jargon-free approach to leading, managing, and making money. No mere screed for data dweebs, this concise text also recognizes the importance of valuing key performers and bolstering the invaluable and less quantifiable twin forces of individual talent and personal drive for success.

What is perhaps missing is more case studies from Richardson's career. Even very brief capsules would round out the volume. Most importantly, the style is crisp, clear, and easy to follow and should maintain the readers' interest throughout.

SEAMUS MULLARKEY (January 21, 2014)

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