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The Business of Wanting More: Why Some Executives Move from Success to Fulfillment and Others Don't

Brian Gast
Barnegat Press (Oct 1, 2012)
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Categorizing Brian Gast's inspirational work as a "business book" undersells its universally applicable message. This is the story of an entrepreneur who achieved the kind of success most people only dream about, only to realize that he wanted more. It took the author's financial ruin for him to understand that business success and personal fulfillment don't always travel the same path.

Gast has the ability to look back and analyze his business career with unflinching objectivity. Unafraid to share his own uncertainty and pain, the author reveals a vulnerability that makes his story particularly poignant. "I believed that success equals money," Gast writes, but when he lost it all, he was forced to "finally look at how I'd been defining myself—and to finally notice what really matters and fulfills me: my wife, my kids, my friends, nature, truth, and music."

While this book is a very personal account, Gast quickly moves from his own trials and tribulations to ways in which the reader can learn from his experiences. He discusses "why we don't get what we really want," describing how to meet one's "four core needs": acceptance, connection, purpose, and service. Gast then lays out a process he calls "Q7," which combines four personal "quadrants" (feeling, acting, thinking, being) with seven steps to fulfillment. This process is designed to help the reader embark on a journey of self-discovery by creating a vision, bursting the false "bubble" one tends to live in, and finding a fulfilling future. The author makes it clear it is internal, not external, sources, that offer the greatest fulfillment.

The bulk of the book describes the seven steps in considerable detail. All along the way, Gast includes anecdotes about other business owners who faced similar challenges, exercises to put each step to work, helpful illustrations, and pointed questions that will make the reader stop and think about the direction of his or her life. Gast does not minimize the work one may need to go through to find fulfillment, but he concludes that it is worth it. "Fulfillment is our natural state," writes Gast. "Transformation is the process of clearing the path and returning to this native place that lives inside all of us." For those business owners and executives who have questioned why their perceived success has left them wanting—and for anyone who wonders how to lead a more fulfilling life—Brian Gast's formula is likely to be a winning one.

BARRY SILVERSTEIN (Winter 2013)

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