

The Other Side of Success

Robert E. Draper

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Given the state of the world's economy there will probably be an onslaught of books lamenting the business meltdown and the failure of the financial system. But most of these books are likely to avoid the real heart of the problem—the immoral behavior of executives. This is the point Robert Draper capably makes in *The Other Side of Success*. Draper himself a former CEO states in no uncertain terms that business leaders have only themselves to blame for business failure: "Heartless schemes are developed by hardhearted people and modern companies are merely a reflection of the greediness in all of us" he writes.

Draper uses his own personal and business experience to lead the reader through a surprisingly spiritual journey discussing the world of business the concept of success and the meaning of life. Along the way he rails against corporate malfeasance and managers who are too interested in self-enrichment but he also offers positive uplifting advice. When it comes to being an effective business leader for example he counsels the reader that "respect of others begins with finding reason to respect yourself." That's why it makes sense he says to care about and treat employees fairly.

Draper has an intriguing if unsettling view of success. Many may define success in material terms or by achieving something "good" but the author offers an entirely different perspective. Success he says is "the constant act of learning from everything be that thing called good or bad by others...real progress does not come from achieving 'honors' but from self-examination."

Draper is very much a modern-day philosopher. Throughout the book the author supports his viewpoint with excerpts from the writings of Dostoevsky Plato and Socrates as well as lesser-known but pertinent philosophers poets and writers. By doing so he demonstrates his love for learning. But he also shows that what may sometimes appear to be radical ideas about business and success are grounded in the writings of great thinkers from the past.

In the last section of the book simply titled "Life" Draper talks about such concepts as the rules of confusion balance knowing thyself relating to others and "not taking the game seriously." The author puts the responsibility squarely on the reader to use introspection and deliberation rather than "keeping score" to gain a richer fuller life. Ultimately says the author "kindness trumps all."

The Other Side of Success will leave readers at any stage of life with much to ponder. It is written from the perspective of a man who has learned hard lessons about life's challenges. In the end Robert Draper does a superb job of sharing his wisdom and conveying hope.

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