



## The RiVal: Play the Game, Own the Hustle, Power in Competition, Longevity in Collaboration

**Benjamin Von Seeger**

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*With candor and credibility, this book offers sage advice to those starting out in the business world.*

Reflecting on his own career, global business consultant Benjamin Von Seeger offers sagacious advice to both novice and experienced business leaders in *The RiVal*.

Von Seeger, who runs his own consulting firm and lectures at universities, had a distinguished career in sales for nearly two decades. He distills that experience into a tightly constructed, well-wrought book that intermingles his own stories with practical, level-headed advice. The unusual title is a reference to a business competitor as “a rival.” Von Seeger touches on a number of subjects, including global business, brand development and marketing, strategy, making sales calls, and studying the competition; the real focus of the book, however, is building relationships in business.

In short, easily readable chapters, the author doles out advice that is intended for individuals at the beginning of their careers. Still, much of the content could serve as a valuable refresher for more experienced business executives. While the author’s observations about global business and brand marketing are not unique, his perspective adds value to the subject matter. For example, Von Seeger cites a case study of a Mexican telecommunications organization that launched twenty-six different websites, each with its own unique look and feel, that served to undermine rather than support the firm’s brand image. He told the CEO of the company, “I don’t know what you’re doing, much less what you are selling or the message that you are trying to convey. If this scattered message is what goes out to your customers, then it’s also being reproduced internally. It’s failing all target audiences.”

It is this same candor that permeates *The RiVal*. Whether Von Seeger is discussing commitment, business ethics, or effective selling, he writes in strong, simple language with an air of authority and a frankness that is both blunt and refreshing. For example, about trust, he advises, “Trust is more than a social virtue; it is the currency of the global economy.” About the relationship between sales and marketing, he observes, “Marketing is the brick and mortar for a sales team; sales is the foundation.” About winning, he says, “A focus on winning is built on innovative thinking and the ability to seek out and utilize constructive criticism.”

*The RiVal* is likely to be invaluable to anyone who wants to become an accomplished, successful salesperson. Given Von Seeger’s experience selling complex products to C-level executives, his counsel in this area is particularly astute. His advice with regard to establishing relationships, using “emotional intelligence,” and learning the art of self-discipline should be directly applicable to improving a sales career. Even so, the book’s content, which touches on general leadership issues, should be of value to senior executives in any area. Clearly, the author’s commonsense, straightforward approach to business leadership is worth emulating.

*The RiVal* is as much about the author’s self-awareness and development as a business leader as it is a book of business wisdom. Readers will likely be delighted to read this story of a person who did not have to sacrifice his

principles and integrity to be successful in business.

BARRY SILVERSTEIN (February 11, 2016)

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