ForeWord Reviews

SELF-HELP

Up and In: Seven Keys to Unlocking Your Potential
Steve Kubicek
Summit Partners
978-0-9848426-0-5
(May 1, 2013)

Motivational business book combines faith with leadership and life skills.

Being discouraged, feeling adrift, and struggling with what life has dealt us are experiences to which many can relate. Some, though, are trapped in a seemingly endless cycle of doubt or defeat, yet long for a way out. Others proactively seek to strengthen themselves for when tough times will assuredly come. *Up and In* addresses these needs by exploring eight "keys" that will "unlock your potential, adjust your perspective" so one may "transition from down-and-out feelings to an up-and-in point of view."

The author, Steve Kubicek, was a highly successful Fortune 500 executive who handled international contracts and billions of dollars of sales before retiring to pursue entrepreneurial endeavors. In *Up and In*, he effectively melds the leadership and life lessons learned from his highly successful business career with spiritual teachings from his Christian faith and service as an ordained deacon. The result is a highly motivational book filled with compassion that is sure to help many who yearn to overcome life's difficulties.

The eight keys cover issues including self-worth, the power of encouragement, controlling emotions, handling change, loving each other, finding significance, sharing oneself with others, and embracing a full life. The keys are explained in forty-two readings that deliver "challenging and inspirational wisdom" and practical life advice through easily relatable stories, examples, and meaningful quotations. Readings are often only four or five pages long and contain summaries of key points for application along with questions to prompt deeper reflection.

With biblical excerpts, theological interpretations, and calls for a closer personal relationship with Jesus, these readings will resonate most with evangelical Christians looking to improve their outlook and achieve a more fulfilling life within the framework of their faith. Readers from other Christian traditions will also find inspirational messages in keeping with their general faith worldview. Readers from other religions or from non-religious perspectives

could also benefit from an exploration of these keys, as they might consider the advice from any other self-help book.

While presented in a daily devotional format for self-study, members of small groups could easily have weekly discussion meetings and support each other as they implement changes in their lives. Christian ministers and counselors asked to provide spiritual guidance for self-development or for depression will likely find recommending Kubicek's guide to be a more appealing choice than psychological texts or secular self-help books that might contradict spiritual teachings. Psychiatrists, psychologists, social workers, and life coaches might also consider suggesting *Up and In* to clients who would appreciate a Christian resource.

With advanced praise from business executives and academics and a message and style that so well addresses important life issues, *Up and In* rightly deserves a wide readership and a place in bookstores and on library bookshelves where leadership, self-help, and Christian devotional books are in demand.

William Gee