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New Ideas from Dead CEOs: Lasting Lessons from the Corner Office

Todd G. Buchholz
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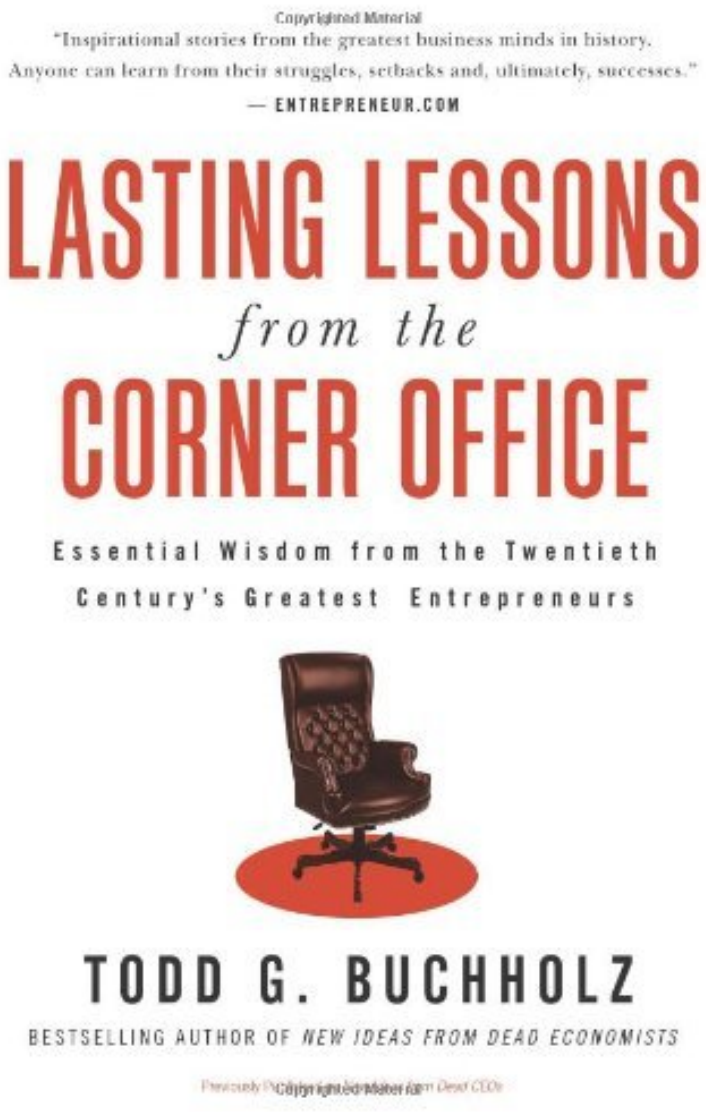

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Todd G. Buchholz : New Ideas from Dead CEOs: Lasting Lessons from the Corner Office before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised New Ideas from Dead CEOs: Lasting Lessons from the Corner Office:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Written on the 7th-Grade LevelBy Brian EgrasI have several issues with this book that compel me to give it a lowly 1-star.First, it is written on about an 7th-grade level. It reminds me of grade school reading comprehension assignment or a book report from a mediocre grade-school student. The words

are simplistic, the sentences are short, and the writing is full of author-specific personal interjections that try, albeit unsuccessfully, to make the reading fun. In the chapter on Walt Disney, the author even goes so far as to take several paragraphs to explain why the author didn't particularly like the menu at one of the Disney restaurants on one of his visits there and why Walt would not have let that happen. Who cares?Second, the ideas presented are very, very simplistic. There are no complex insights. If you think bromides like "follow your passion" are great pieces of advice, well, this book is for for you. Here is the summary of the findings cited in the Conclusion chapter: "It does not take a village, a Harvard MBA, or even a rich uncle. It takes passion, an obsession with turning a small idea into a sweeping revolution." That's it. There is nothing more than that in the entire book.Third, the book is chock full of the author's asinine pop culture references that are completely unrelated to the story. Here are some of the many, many examples. This one involves Sam Walton: "Their New York-based management teams scoffed at Sam, as if they were watching comedian Jeff Foxworthy tell redneck jokes: 'You might be a redneck if you think a quarter horse is a ride out in front of Wal-Mart;' ..." GROAN. Here's another in the chapter on Ray Kroc: "Of course, it could have beaten Kroc by inventing a six-spindle job (which reminds me of the guy in There's Something About Mary who hawks a Seven Minute Abs video to trump the best-selling Eight Minute Abs tape)." DOUBLE GROAN.Fourth, the entire book was researched via Google. There are no personal interviews. There is nothing that can not be found on the internet. In the Acknowledgement section, the author cites the founders of Google as the second most important contributor to the book (after Johannes Gutenberg for inventing the printing press).Fifth, the author interjects his own opinions of situations as the legitimate thoughts or motivations that were going through a subject's mind. These interjections are placed as if they are facts but are nothing more than the author trying to make his poorly researched version of the story compelling. Here are some examples. From the Mary Kay Ash chapter: "The plan looked bold. Mary Kay felt fearless." She did? How do you know? From the Ray Kroc chapter: "Disney did not respond in 1954. He was not interested in sharing his brand of success with an upstart." Really? When did Walt tell you this was the reason? The entire book is full of this crap.Sixth, the book isn't really about lessons from CEOs. It is about the passion that makes someone an entrepreneur. Each of the CEOs started the business. None was hired into the position. (Well, maybe Sarnoff was hired, but you could even argue against that, too.) I suppose that the title "New Ideas from Dead Entrepreneurs" did not sound like it would sell as many copies. So, it's no wonder that the sole trite lesson purported was to follow your passion. If the author had considered some CEOs that were not entrepreneurs, perhaps we could learn something else - like how to turn around a failing company or what to do when faced with an ethical dilemma. It would even have been more insightful to study some CEO failures. You won't find anything that interesting in this book.If you want to know more about these CEOs, just read Wikipedia or a 7th grader's book report. It's about as insightful and accurate.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five StarsBy DaveFun read.1 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Dead Ceo's Come AliveBy D. OmensThis book was entertaining and informative for someone with a limited background in economics. I'm so glad it was recommended to me. The individuals who were profiled especially the women made it most relevant.The author is witty and his style keeps the reader interested from beginning to end. Anyone buying this book is in for a treat.

New Ideas from Dead CEOs uncovers the secrets of success of great CEOs by giving readers an intimate look at their professional and personal lives. Why did Ray Kroc's plan for McDonald's thrive when many burger joints failed? And how, decades later, did Krispy Kreme fail to heed Kroc's hard-won lessons? How did Walt Disney's most dismal day as a young cartoonist radically change his career? When Esteacute;e Lauder was a child in Queens, New York, the average American spent $8 a year on toiletries. Why did she spot an opportunity in selling high-priced cosmetics, and why did she pound on Saks's doors? How did Thomas Watson Jr. decide to roll the dice and put all of IBM's chips on computing, when his father thought it could be a losing idea? We learn about these CEOs' greatest challenges and failures, and how they successfully rode the waves of demographic and technological change.New Ideas from Dead CEOs not only gives us fascinating insights into these CEOs' lives, but also shows how we can apply their ideas to the present-day triumphs and struggles of Sony, Dell, Costco, Carnival Cruises, Time Warner, and numerous other companies trying to figure out how to stay on top or climb back up. The featured CEOs in this book were not candidates for sainthood. Many of them knew "god" only as a prefix to "dammit." But they were devoted to their businesses, not just to their egos and their personal bank accounts and yachts. Extraordinarily fresh and deeply thoughtful, Todd G. Buchholz's New Ideas from Dead CEOs is a truly enjoyable and funmdash;yet serious and realisticmdash;look at what we still have to learn and absorb from these decomposing CEOs.