[Free pdf] What Were They Thinking?: Unconventional Wisdom About Management

What Were They Thinking?: Unconventional Wisdom About Management

Jeffrey Pfeffer
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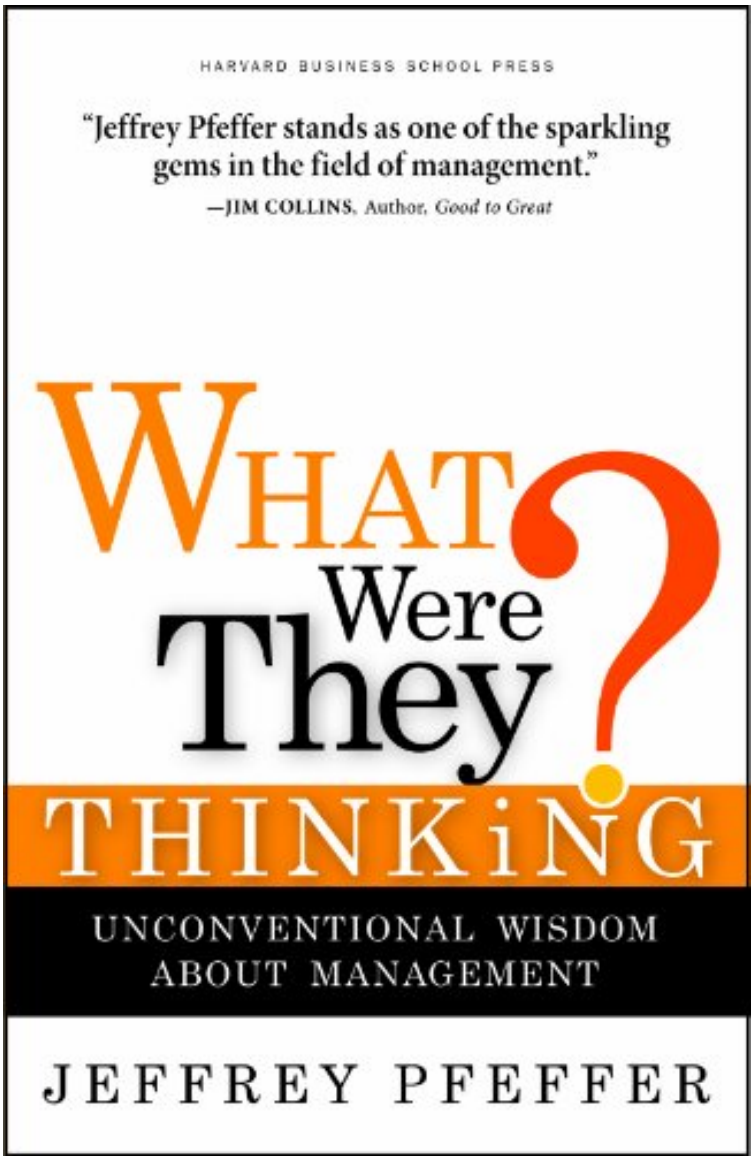

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Jeffrey Pfeffer : What Were They Thinking?: Unconventional Wisdom About Management before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised What Were They Thinking?: Unconventional Wisdom About Management:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Medicine for the not-ill and for those looking to become strongerBy AbhishekIronically those who really should read this book are unlikely to and those who do will find themselves

already aligned with its line of thinking. The book would appeal to the conscientious reader who perseveres to connect their immediate actions to long term implications toward the well being of all - the individual, the organization, the community. Though all should read this book to get fresh perspective on things the one who will benefit most is one striving to determine the right action in face of voices clamoring for a quick traditional response to a classic organizational problem.7 of 7 people found the following review helpful. Road Warrior Points and Family GiftsBy John W. PearsonMTW, a software company serving the insurance industry, pushed employee turnover from 30 percent (standard for their niche) to an amazing four percent. Like many innovative companies that pay attention to their corporate culture, they understand that compensation--alone--is not the big deal in attracting and retaining quality people. For example, MTW awards "Road Warrior" points to their traveling executives and often showers gifts on families of road warriors--thanking them for their sacrifices back home.This is just one of dozens of nuggets in Pfeffer's fast-reading book. No wonder Jim Collins describes him as "one of the sparkling gems in the field of management."Pfeffer packs a punch in each of his 28 short chapters. He applauds "noisy complainers" who point out errors so the systemic problems will get fixed. He champions IDEO's belief that "failing early and failing often is better than failing once, failing at the end, and failing big." He writes, "The principle is simple--learn and fail on a small scale."Pfeffer's chapter on New York's Orpheus Chamber Orchestra will rattle your notion of leadership: there's no leader, nor conductor! And you'll reach for the Maalox when you read that "most people bring only about 20 percent of their talent and energy to their jobs." Buy the book. He has some ideas for all of us.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Not the right book for meBy CustomerI could not see benefit in reading this book. Conclusions seemed vague to me. The only chapter I found interesting was bdquo;Executive-in-chiefldquo;.If someone is looking for a book full of advices how to deal with people, I suggest bdquo;How to win friends and influence people.ldquo; by Dale Carnegie.

Every day companies and their leaders fail to capitalize on opportunities because they misunderstand the real sources of business success.Based on his popular column in Business 2.0, Jeffrey Pfeffer delivers wise and timely business commentary that challenges conventional wisdom while providing data and insights to help companies make smarter decisions. The book contains a series of short chapters filled with examples, data, and insights that challenge questionable assumptions and much conventional management wisdom. Each chapter also provides guidelines about how to think more deeply and intelligently about critical management issues. Covering topics ranging from managing people to leadership to measurement and strategy, itrsquo;s good organizational advice, delivered by Dr. Pfeffer himself.

From BooklistThere is much to laud about the objective perspective that Stanford professor and author Pfeffer brings to business. First and foremost, he calls em as he sees em, showcasing common management errors and building on four years as a Business 2.0 columnist. Trimming employees' compensation and benefits packages? Nothing is gained from that immediate cost savings, except plummeting morale and retention issuesmdash;as the airline and auto industries have learned. Thinking about a merger or acquisition? Think again, he urges; it's an easier strategy than fixing operationsmdash;but one that more often than not fails. No function or goal of corporate America is left unscrutinized, from strategy to human resources. Yet he softens his radical and common-sense opinions by offering a range of solutions and companies that practice them well. Pfeffer points to Whole Foods, to Larry Culp at Danaher, and to CEO Gary Loveman of Harrah's as leaders who have managed to set corporate priorities and agendas that succeed. Short chapters with clear-cut messages and examples allow time to contemplate and copy. Jacobs, Barbara There is much to laud about the objective perspective that Stanford professor and author Pfeffer brings to business. --BookList, June 15, 2007"Pfeffer talks a lot of sense. [He]provides a kind of alternative MBA in how not to run a business." --The Financial Times, July 17, 2007The topics are diverse, from how companies get smarter to what to do about executive pay... --The Globe and Mail, October 24, 2007From the Back CoverWhy do so many companiesmake so many misstepsmdash;even while led by hard working, smart, and serious people who expend major time and effort trying to do the right thing? InWhat Were They Thinking? Unconventional Wisdom About Management,Jeffrey Pfefferprovides incisive and engaging responses to this question based on his popular business 2.0 column, ldquo;The Human Factorrdquo; Pfeffer shows how poor business choices arise when business leaders:FAIL TO CONSIDER THE UNINTENDED CONSEQUENCES OF THEIR ACTIONS.For example, when companies get into financial trouble, they often slash wages, benefits and staff. That boosts cash flow in the short run. But it also drives essential talent--and customers--out the door as service, quality and innovation vanish.RELY ON NAIuml;VE THEORIES OF HUMAN BEHAVIOURFor instance, many executives fall victim to the prevailingmdash;but inaccuratemdash;belief that if you want employess to do something you have to impel them with external forces such as threats or rewards.IGNORE OBVIOUS ANSWERSMany principles governing organizational behaviour are simple and powerfulmdash;but companies fail to capitalize on them. To illustrate, leaders could activate the ldquo;norm of reciprocityrdquo; by demonstrating generosity toward employees and thereby building a loyal and committed workforce. Yet management theory fails to take such obvious solutions into account.What Were They

Thinking?contains twenty-eight short chapters filled with examples, data and insights that challenge conventional beliefs and much accepted management wisdom. Each chapter also provides guidelines about how to think more deeply and intelligently about a wide range of critical topicsmdash;from people management and leadership to performance measurement and competitive strategy.Abounding with solid organizational advicemdash;delivered by Pfeffer himselfmdash;this book provides the wise and timely business commentary you need to make the smartest possible decisions for your company.