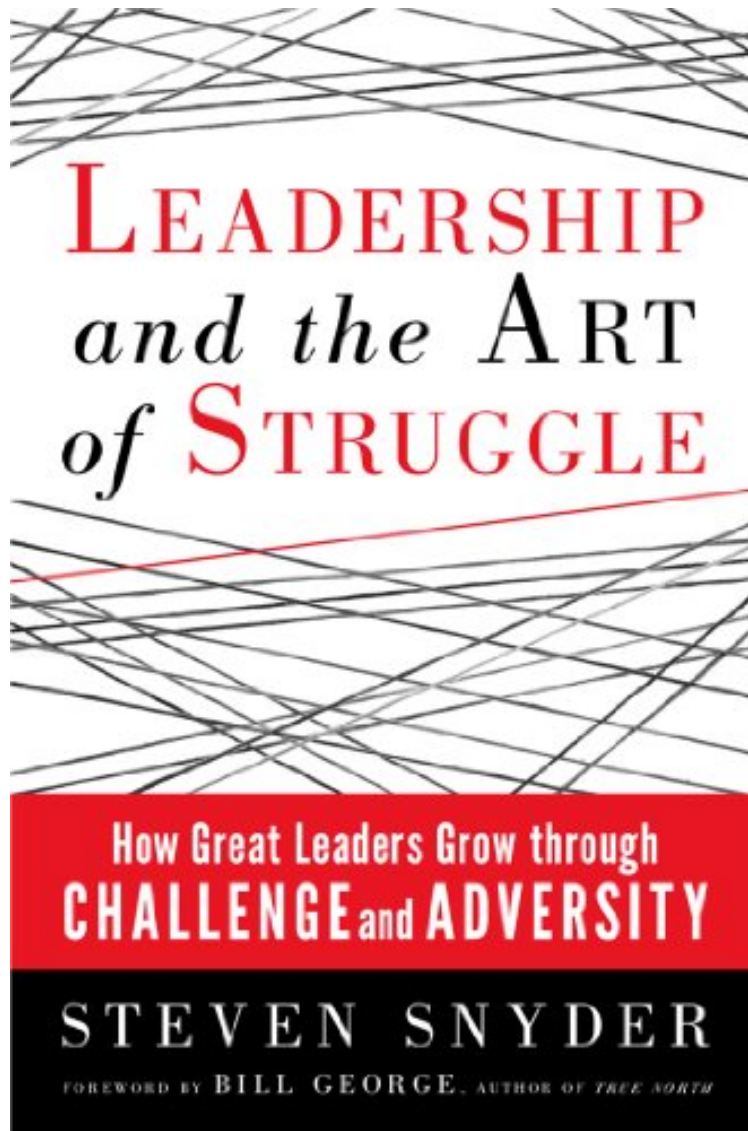


(Free download) Leadership and the Art of Struggle: How Great Leaders Grow Through Challenge and Adversity

Leadership and the Art of Struggle: How Great Leaders Grow Through Challenge and Adversity

Steven Snyder

**Download PDF | ePub | DOC | audiobook | ebooks*



#650725 in eBooks 2013-02-08 2013-02-08 File Name: B00AKL4NIO | File size: 17.Mb

Steven Snyder : Leadership and the Art of Struggle: How Great Leaders Grow Through Challenge and Adversity before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Leadership and the Art of Struggle: How Great Leaders Grow Through Challenge and Adversity:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. A Must-Have! Read it once; keep It for reference.By Susan Kruger, M.Ed.-SOAR Study SkillsI am the CEO/founding e-neur of a small, but growing, firm. This book was recommended

by my executive coach, just as I was reaching the pinnacle of a major struggle in my business. The first real benefit to me was simply the fact that the book exists; it served as a healthy reminder that I am not the first leader to ever face significant challenges. When you are in the midst of tough times, it is very easy to develop tunnel vision. Snyder's title, alone, is worth the price of this book! But the value is far greater once you peel back the cover. Snyder provides many high-level patterns, scripts, models, etc. on the various ways in which struggle can unfold in leadership. These patterns and models bring great objectivity to situations of struggle. All are supported with real stories that help the reader a much deeper -and more "practical" view- about how each script has played out in specific situations. Personally, I found the section on mediation very insightful and have already been incorporating meditation into my daily routine. Also, the next time I find myself entangled in a struggle, I will reference this book as a handbook for insight into that specific situation. The objective, yet fully compassionate, perspective of this book will serve me for years to come.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. The frayed edges of leadership through Snyder's "Struggle Lens" By off the tropic Steven Snyder's new book "Leadership and the Art of Struggle: How great Leaders struggle and grow with adversity" focuses on the inner dimensions of leading, the dynamics of "struggle" behind the success of key leaders. The inner dimension of leadership is often left out in popular conceptions of leadership, which tends to obscure the central fact of leading: the inner story of confronting weaknesses, failures, and disheartening moments. The background and hidden history of leadership success as grounded in struggle is often overlooked in the vast majority of leadership books with their focus on external behavioral leadership traits as unvarnished strengths and as products of unalloyed positive virtues of resolve, consistency, vision and so on. The focus on external behavioral characteristics of leaders offer an incomplete, even distorted, picture of leadership on account of the vulnerabilities that are left out in these descriptions. Snyder attributes this distorted picture of leadership to a key misinterpretation of the positive psychology movement as a school of thought that downplays, even overlooks, the importance of weaknesses or failures. Snyder argues that even this movement acknowledges that those seemingly inextricable, negative moments of failure are often the crucial impetus for the sort of revolutionary change that Snyder documents in the careers of great leaders in some of the business cases he discusses in his book. Snyder, as psychologist and realist, remedies this by foregrounding the inner dimension of leading, and with it the "struggle" behind some of the more inspiring and enduring stories of success in recent business history. Snyder's "Struggle Lens" brings what has been in the background to the foreground, the art of struggle and its role in transforming the moments of imbalance, tensions, conflicts to a crucible for change and the emergence of grounding and adaptive learning behaviors so crucial in forging enduring legacies of leadership. But what is success in leading according to Snyder? Success in leading is growth in the creation of values that acknowledge human strengths and failings and growth that seeks to promote the conditions for compassion, humility, altruism, in place of more narrowly circumscribed values related to egoistic aspirations. The "we" replaces the "I". All this involves a working on oneself, transforming the "fixed mindset" to a "growth mindset" through adaptive, learning habits. The "growth mindset" empowers a leader to create enduring values with wider circles of influence whereas the "fixed mindset" creates narrowly circumscribed values that are often detrimental to organizational life. Snyder's new emphasis and radical re-conception of leadership is based on an idea of leadership that was taught in a course offered at HBS by his former colleague Joseph Badaracco. Snyder's "Struggle Lens" is derived from the "lens" Badaracco uses in the study of leadership - the "lens" of classic works of literature, from Joseph Conrad's "The Secret Sharer" and Arthur Miller's "Death of a Salesman" to Chinua Achebe's "Things Fall Apart". Badaracco formulated a definition of leadership in that course that shows how leadership is inseparable from the idea that human beings are vulnerable, make mistakes, and often prone to suffering setbacks and yet able to redeem shortcomings and failures by mastering the art of struggle. Snyder's book is grounded by a "point-by-point" unpacking of Badaracco's 23 word definition of leadership: "Leadership is a struggle by flawed human beings to make some important human values real and effective in the world as it is." Snyder's deeply human-centered model of leadership however becomes a synthesis of Badaracco's insights and some of the key psychological studies and research that he brings to corroborate Badaracco's definition. Snyder's examination of two influential leaders, through his "struggle lens", is worth reflecting on. He focuses on how their struggles to get past their respective vulnerabilities and blind spots allow them to achieve the massive success they are now known for. The struggle lens reveals how close these leaders came to making crippling professional decisions by transforming their weaknesses at crucial periods in the history of the formation for their companies. Their reflective qualities, their capacity to take stock of their weaknesses and strengths, allowed them to evade the disaster that threatened to derail their professional lives. One emerges unscathed, while the other takes a more circuitous route to success after long, dark, periods of failure. Snyder has other illustrative stories to tell us to demonstrate how this inner dimension of struggle and growth becomes the source of resilience and success for people who find a way to adopt "adaptive" strategies. Not all adaptive strategies can be equal. Snyder introduces "tension maps" to break down key differences and challenges that different leaders face and his customized proposals for how leaders, at different stages of preparation and with different temperaments, confront and transcend weaknesses and conflicts is worth reading and internalizing for its wealth of detail. Snyder's discussions of the importance of having the "reflective mind" reign in the harmful effects of the "automatic mind" within the context of struggle and growth are critical reminders for relinquishing tired old "scripts"

when they outlive their usefulness. He discusses "blind spots" that threaten the decision making of key leaders at key defining moments in their professional lives, and "adaptive" learning habits that allow them to transform their fixed mind-sets to the one of growth. Eventually, Snyder's description of great leadership and his prescription for transforming human weaknesses and limitations through the art of struggle is required reading for lifelong learning and development. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Uncertainty, Struggle, Setbacks - Choosing to be Bitter or Better By Thomas M. Loarie Life is a journey - a journey towards wholeness and "becoming the best we can be." Unexpected challenges and setbacks coupled with enslavement to our fears and weaknesses become roadblocks to our personal growth and divert us from the path to achieving wholeness. Recognizing the devastation these challenges and setbacks can cause to an individual's self-actualization, Author Steven Snyder in "Leadership and the Art of Struggle" shows how to embrace them and use them to unlock their potential for our greatest growth. Snyder's concepts follow from years of observation and personal experience (working for Bill Gates in the early formative years of Microsoft), research, and interviews. "Leadership and the Art of Struggle" is organized around three central concepts - becoming grounded (what is your dream, what are your values), exploring new pathways, and deepening adaptive energy. Adaptive energy which Snyder threads throughout the book is that force that propels you to reach your dreams. It points you toward your goal line and warns you when you veer off course. "It aligns your external criteria necessary for success with your inner values and principles." Snyder provides three sets of practices to provide the discipline necessary to embrace and thrive in times of struggle and chaos. These included grounding practices (adopt a growth mind set, becoming resilient in the face of failure, centering your mind and spirit, identifying the support needed), exploring practices (reframe the situation to see new possibilities, reinvent yourself, overcome blind spots, heal yourself from conflict, find a common ground, clarify your dreams, recommit or pivot, or leap), and deepening practices (prepare, use the energy of discipline, celebrate what is precious). Personal stories of leaders are sprinkled throughout the book to show how well-known leaders (Ann Mulcahy, Dick Schulze, David Durenberger, and others) used struggles and setbacks to grow in authenticity and personal leadership. Each made different decisions based on the struggle they faced but all: * sidestepped unrealistic expectations by accepting themselves * understood struggle was a natural part of leadership * came to understand the struggle itself unlocked the potential for greatest growth * developed skills, capabilities, and practices that help them cope, even thrive, in the midst of challenge and adversity * derived happiness and fulfillment from not only their successes but also, the intrinsic nature of the journey itself This book will be useful to all - leaders and non-leaders. Most of us have the potential to grow and lead, whether with a large organization or a small group. Snyder's goal is to meet you where you are now, and guide you in elevating your leadership ability to the next level. We live in turbulent times and each of us has a choice to make as we face certain setbacks and the struggles that follow - we can choose to be bitter or to become better. "Leadership and the Art of Struggle" is for those who choose the latter - and desire to become the best they can be.

All Leaders Face Adversity. Exceptional Leaders Thrive in It. Leadership is often a struggle, and yet strong taboos keep us from talking openly and honestly about our difficulties for fear of looking weak and seeming to lack confidence. But Steven Snyder shows that this discussion is vital; adversity is precisely what unlocks our greatest potential. Using real-life stories drawn from his extensive research studying 151 diverse episodes of leadership struggle; as well as from his experiences working with Bill Gates in the early years of Microsoft and as a CEO and executive coach; Snyder shows how to navigate intense challenges to achieve personal growth and organizational success. He details strategies for embracing struggle and offers a host of unique tools and hands-on practices to help you implement them. By mastering the art of struggle, you'll be better equipped to meet life's challenges and focus on what matters most. Leadership and the Art of Struggle provides you with the opportunity to learn from Snyder's remarkable wisdom. It is a living guide that you can return to time and time again as new situations arise. From the foreword by Bill George, former CEO, Medtronic; Professor of Management Practice, Harvard Business School; and author of the bestselling True North; The leadership book of the year; one of the most intelligent, revealing, and practical books on the subject I have ever read. It confronts a vital truth: that challenge is the crucible for greatness and that these adversities introduce us to ourselves. Jim Kouzes, coauthor of the bestselling The Leadership Challenge; Steven Snyder covers all the bases from channeling your energy to managing conflict, including a great segment about overcoming your leadership blind spots... This encouraging book is a must-read! Ken Blanchard, coauthor of The One Minute Manager and Great Leaders Grow; Leadership and the Art of the Struggle gives you clear and compelling advice on transforming pitfalls into possibilities. Jodee Kozlak, Executive Vice President, Human Resources, Target

From Publishers Weekly Leadership is never as easy as it looks and that's exactly as it should be, says executive, entrepreneur, and leadership coach Snyder, currently executive-in-residence at Minnesota's University of St. Thomas. Leadership requires extreme courage and strength, but as Snyder argues, the best leaders have to get past the expectation of perfection while still striving for greatness. The author asked corporate, nonprofit, and government

leaders to speak to the times of struggle in their careers and shares 151 of these stories to illustrate how the acceptance of the hard work of leadership can create true greatness. Snyder walks readers through the all-important steps of what he terms "The Pathway to Adaptive Energy": becoming grounded, exploring new pathways, and deepening adaptive energy. In addition, he addresses the everyday difficulties of beating self-doubt, facing change, establishing balance, and getting the necessary support. This is a practical, thoughtful guide to creating sanity, as well as "purpose and meaning" within leadership. Leadership and the Art of Struggle provides you with the opportunity to learn from Snyder's remarkable wisdom. It is a living guide that you can return to time and time again as new situations arise.

—From the foreword by Bill George, former CEO, Medtronic; Professor of Management Practice, Harvard Business School; and author of the bestselling True North

—Steven Snyder's Leadership and the Art of Struggle is the must-read leadership book of the year. It is one of the most intelligent, revealing, and practical books on the subject I have ever read. It confronts a vital truth about leadership: that challenge is the crucible for greatness and that these adversities introduce us to ourselves. Buy this book immediately, read it with a sense of urgency, and apply it with the commitment of a disciple. You and those you work with will benefit greatly when you do.

—Jim Kouzes, coauthor of the bestselling The Leadership Challenge

—Steven Snyder covers all the bases from channeling your energy to managing conflict, including a great segment about overcoming your leadership blind spots. Leadership and the Art of Struggle is full of real-life examples of leaders who emerged from tough times better and stronger than before. This encouraging book is a must-read!

—Ken Blanchard, coauthor of The One Minute Manager and Great Leaders Grow

—The leadership journey is rewarding but definitely not easy. Leadership and the Art of the Struggle gives you clear and compelling advice on transforming pitfalls into possibilities.

—Jodee Kozlak, Executive Vice President, Human Resources, Target

—A very fresh and inspiring perspective that constructively embraces the natural tensions that all leaders encounter every day. I heartily recommend it to any leader who aspires to lead and contribute more fully.

—Douglas R. Conant, former President, CEO, and Director, Campbell Soup Company, and coauthor of the New York Times bestseller Touch Points

—Steven courageously confronts the element of struggle, which is frequently overlooked in all the leadership hoopla. It's time we had an open and honest conversation about this integral and vital aspect of leadership.

—Ken Melrose, former CEO, Toro

—Steven guides you on a journey that can be deeply fulfilling as well as enlightening. I recommend this book for any leader who wants to engage more authentically and constructively in a complex and ever-changing world.

—Mary Brainerd, CEO, HealthPartners

—Leadership and the Art of Struggle contains compelling stories of great leaders who have struggled with various facets of their leadership responsibility. It offers practical advice and tools to help you deal more effectively with the inevitable struggles of leadership.

—Trudy Rautio, President and CEO, Carlson

—If you are leading an organization of any kind today or desire to lead one in the future, you need to read this book.

—Frank Russomanno, former CEO, Imation

—Snyder has opened an intriguing and insightful portal into the challenge of leadership. You'll be inspired and invigorated with ideas that you can immediately put into action.

—Kevin Wilde, Chief Learning Officer, General Mills, and author of Dancing with the Talent Stars

—Life in a start-up is chaotic, intense, and unpredictable. Snyder knows this world well and gives you sage advice on how to remain grounded, focused, and energized. This is a book that every entrepreneur or would-be entrepreneur should read.

—Michael Gorman, Managing Director, Split Rock Partners

—Snyder boldly tackles a subject that every leader needs to master. Sometimes leadership is a struggle, and these are the times that really put us to the test. This insightful book will teach you how to thrive during life's most challenging moments.

—Marshall Goldsmith, New York Times bestselling author of Mojo and What Got You Here Won't Get You There

—This book resonates to the core. It gives us grounding and offers precise practices for locating our work deep in the soul. Steven makes the dive into the waters of purposeful living and leading deep and attractive. What a delightful dive!

—Richard Leider, bestselling author of The Power of Purpose and coauthor of Repacking Your Bags

—The French writer Albert Camus tells us, "In the depth of winter, I finally learned that there was within me an invincible summer." Snyder wisely observes that we can best strike a blow against tragedy and disappointment by using them as inspiration to make a positive difference in the lives of others through our personal leadership.

—Marilyn Carlson Nelson, Chairman, Carlson

—This is the right book for these times. Leadership has become more difficult in the chaotic world we live in; Steven acknowledges that and draws on his own deep experience and the lessons learned of others to help any new, aspiring, or well-worn leader.

—Beverly Kaye, founder of Career Systems International and coauthor of Love 'Em or Lose 'Em and Help Them Grow or Watch Them Go

—Leadership and the Art of Struggle deserves to be a leadership classic! Snyder brilliantly charts a course to strengthen ourselves through the important crucibles of challenge and adversity. If you want to build more authentic leadership in yourself and others, get this life-changing book!

—Kevin Cashman, Senior Partner, Korn/Ferry International, and bestselling author of The Pause Principle and Leadership from the Inside Out