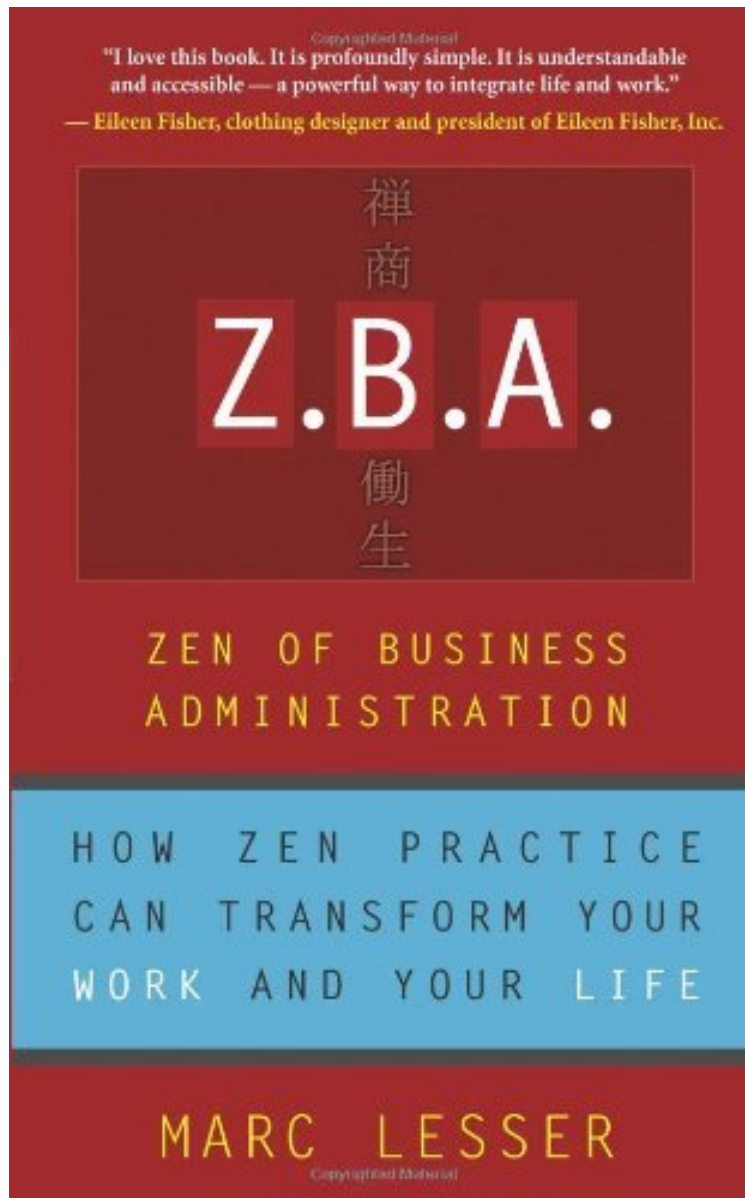


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## Z.B.A.: Zen of Business Administration

*Marc Lesser*

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**Marc Lesser : Z.B.A.: Zen of Business Administration** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Z.B.A.: Zen of Business Administration:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. DisappointingBy GendunI'm afraid I have to concur with an earlier reviewer, who had hoped, based on the title and the description, that this book dealt in a meaningful way with the application of Zen practice to the worlds of business and commerce, which I think is an important topic that deserves

reflection. Many of us spend a great deal of time and energy at work, and if we can't bring our practice to life in that context, then we're not really making contact with our lives. This book consists of homilies written in what I found to be an undistinguished California ecumenical Dharma center style. Lesser earnestly recounts his experiences in a series of autobiographical vignettes that connect basic points of practice with his experience in the business world. I didn't find this a particularly illuminating or useful approach. We can agree, for example, that everything is interconnected, and this includes everything at work, but this insight is superficial if merely stated in those terms. The question is how to meaningfully realize and actualize that fact in our interactions, and here, Lesser provides very little help. I'm not sure why he focuses so heavily on his own experience - I suppose the pattern of Dharma talks he's familiar with emphasizes leading from personal experience. But for me, at least, these stories are pretty boring and border on self-absorption. Honestly, I could care less about his experience on a high school wrestling team, and it's not exactly the Flower Sermon to read about. I believe he means well, for what it's worth, and apparently a lot of readers get some value out of this book. For someone with some degree of experience in practice, and to whom lines from the Heart Sutra will be as familiar as the opening chords of "Stairway to Heaven," this book will not break new ground, and doesn't have much to say. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Extraordinary. This book is an expression of its own content. By DallasJimMarc Lesser writes of the value of paradox. "If it is not paradoxical, it's not true." And in his own book, he skillfully balances the very nature of business leadership and success with the humility of a zen teacher. For most of us that is its own paradox. In the chapter "Act Like You Know What You Are Doing", I could see my business persona. I have had the chance to part of exceptionally successful businesses where we led with conviction, but I was also in touch with the realization how little we can be certain of anything. Most importantly, this is not a book "about" you or business administration. This is a book "for" you and your business. Marc gives practices at the end of each chapter so you can see what works in your life. If you are reading this to see if this might be worth your money, time and effort, buy it and start it now. 10 of 10 people found the following review helpful. We are all Zen students. We are all businesspeople. By Manny Hernandez "We are all Zen students. We are all businesspeople." This is how the first section of this book opens. As for me, I am a Manager. Also I am a person in search for answers in my spiritual life, and I am seeking into Buddhism for those answers. This combination led me to read by pure accident an ad on Shambhala Sun magazine (highly recommendable, if you are into Buddhism, by the way) that featured Marc Lesser's Z.B.A. I ordered it and it didn't take long for me to get hooked on it. Walking the reader through means of achieving the Buddhist Eightfold Path while at work, the book offers a refreshing perspective on how to bridge the gap between our "work lives" and our "personal lives", if such a dichotomy makes any sense whatsoever. A good example of how these two things are in essence one and the same is what Lesser makes of the purpose of Zen: "The purpose of Zen and the purpose of business practice is to develop and open, flexible mind, a mind that can deal with a world that is both solid and completely impermanent." In the end, there are so many fascinating elements proposed by the author, that I cannot avoid but to feel sorry for having finished the book. I almost feel like re-reading it, and I do recommend that you check it out.

Entrepreneur Marc Lesser built his company, Brush Dance, from a tiny recycled-paper venture operated out of his garage into a multimillion-dollar publisher of greeting cards and calendars. Armed with an MBA, this founder and CEO grappled with the usual challenges of running a company: meeting payroll and balancing cashflow, hiring and firing employees, and maintaining relationships with vendors and customers. Informing every decision was Lessers commitment to Zen practice. As an ordained Zen priest, he has practiced and studied Zen for thirty years. In Z.B.A. he follows the great spiritual tradition of teaching stories to beautifully describe the delicate path of living a working life as a spiritual practice.

"Marc Lessers book illuminates his two-tiered life history - as Zen adept and business entrepreneur - with a skillfully woven fabric of Buddhist teachings and personal stories. I loved reading about his triumphs and tribulations in both spheres. This is how it really is, in Zen and in business. May his readers learn and prosper from Marc's hard-won wisdom!" - Lewis Richmond, author of *Work as a Spiritual Practice*

"Z.B.A. is a wake-up call for any entrepreneur who seeks self-knowledge, life balance, and boundless vitality." - Will Rosenzweig, former president and CEO of The Republic of Tea and coauthor of *The Republic of Tea: How an Idea Becomes a Business*

"In Z.B.A. Marc Lesser has managed with elegant and honest lucidity to point to a Zen way of working. This book isn't Zen in ten easy steps; it's a reliable companion for the path." - Norman Fischer, former abbot of the San Francisco Zen Center and author of *Taking Our Places From the Inside Flap*

"I love this book. It is profoundly simple. It is understandable and accessible - a powerful way to integrate life and work." - Eileen Fisher, clothing designer and president of Eileen Fisher, Inc.

"Marc Lesser's book illuminates his two-tiered life history - as Zen adept and business entrepreneur - with a skillfully woven fabric of Buddhist teachings and personal stories. I loved reading about his triumphs and tribulations in both spheres. This is how it really is, in Zen and in business. May his readers learn and prosper from Marc's hard-won wisdom!" - Lewis Richmond, author of *Work as a Spiritual Practice*

"ZBA is a wake-up call

for any entrepreneur who seeks self-knowledge, life balance, and boundless vitality. Yoursquo;ll save yourself years of practice just by contemplating the provocative questions at the end of every chapter." mdash; Will Rosenzweig, former president and CEO of The Republic of Tea and coauthor of *The Republic of Tea: How an Idea Becomes a Business* "I have long realized that among spiritual paths Zen is uniquely suited to application in the world of work. The way is right there at your fingertips, not complicated, but it does require a guide, someone who knows Zen practice mdash; and the ins and outs of real-world business. In *ZBA* Marc Lesser has managed with elegant and honest lucidity to point to a Zen way of working. This book isn't Zen in ten easy steps: it's a reliable companion for the path." mdash; Norman Fischer, former abbot of the San Francisco Zen Center and author of *Taking Our Places* "There is an urgent need for all of us to walk our faith in the marketplace. *Z.B.A. Zen of Business Administration* by Marc Lesser will surely help. Read, rejoice, and start practicing." mdash; Ken Blanchard, co-author of *The One Minute Manager*; and *The Secret* "Marc does a brilliant job blending the spiritual and the practical in a likeable style of simplicity, genuineness, and self-deprecating humor. His book shows us how the philosophies and practices of Zen will give us resilience in the face of challenges, win the hearts and minds of employees, customers and business partners, and deliver a unique kind of competitive edge in the world of business." mdash; Minh Le, president of The Wilfred Jarvis Institute "In a world of intense competition and drive for short-term profits, Marc Lesser brings a new and vital message. The world of work is not about profits, promotions, bonuses, and self-interested behavior. True work is the art of living lifemdash;a life of vitality, of completeness, of interdependence with our fellow workers, our environment, our loved ones, and most important with ourselves." mdash;John Oliver Wilson, retired executive vice president and chief economist of Bank of America