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Linchpin: Are You Indispensable?



Synopsis

There used to be two teams in every workplace: management and labor. Now there's a third team, the linchpins. These people invent, lead (regardless of title), connect others, make things happen, and create order out of chaos. They figure out what to do when there's no rule book. They delight and challenge their customers and peers. They love their work, pour their best selves into it, and turn each day into a kind of art. Linchpins are the essential building blocks of great organizations. Like the small piece of hardware that keeps a wheel from falling off its axle, they may not be famous but they're indispensable. And in today's world, they get the best jobs and the most freedom. Have you ever found a shortcut that others missed? Seen a new way to resolve a conflict? Made a connection with someone others couldn't reach? Even once? Then you have what it takes to become indispensable, by overcoming the resistance that holds people back. As Godin writes, "Every day I meet people who have so much to give but have been bullied enough or frightened enough to hold it back. It's time to stop complying with the system and draw your own map. You have brilliance in you, your contribution is essential, and the art you create is precious. Only you can do it, and you must."

Book Information

Audible Audio Edition

Listening Length: 8 hours and 27 minutes

Program Type: Audiobook

Version: Unabridged

Publisher: Random House Audio

Audible.com Release Date: January 26, 2010

Whispersync for Voice: Ready

Language: English

ASIN: B00362DVOG

Best Sellers Rank: #10 in Books > Audible Audiobooks > Business & Investing > Careers #10 in Books > Health, Fitness & Dieting > Psychology & Counseling > Occupational & Organizational #54 in Books > Business & Money > Job Hunting & Careers > Guides

Customer Reviews

While reading Linchpin I looked around a few times to see if author Seth Godin was perhaps peering through my living room window to see my reaction. It really felt like he was talking to me, singling me out. How could he know how I rationalize things? "There are no longer any great jobs

where someone else tells you precisely what to do."Linchpin is a most unusual, well-organized, concise book about what it takes to become indispensable in the workplace - whether you work for someone else (at any level) or are self-employed. It's about how business has rapidly changed and how treating employees like factory workers (or doing your job like one) doesn't work any longer. We must make choices and take action to "chart our own paths" and add value that others do not. We cannot wait for a boss or a job description to tell us what to do, rather we must just take the initiative ourselves. Only then can we become indispensable "linchpins," rather than replaceable "cogs." There are so many fantastic quotes in the book too. "You don't become indispensable merely because you are different. But the only way to become indispensable is to be different. That's because if you're the same, so are plenty of other people."The 14 chapters in this book are each broken down into short segments with great headlines that summarize them. Godin uses special vocabulary words to describe the many factors that go into becoming a linchpin. These words have unique meanings in the context in which they are used. You'll learn interpretations for terms such as art, thrashing, gifts, resistance, pranja, ship, lizard brain, shenpa, emotional labor and others. "Art is unique, new and challenging to the status quo. It's not decoration. It's something that causes change.

I got an early copy of Seth Godin's new book "Linchpin: Are you indispensable" because I made a \$40 donation to the charity Acumen. In return, I agreed to review the book in a blog post at my site. Here goes, I hope you find this helpful. Every once in a while I run across a book that is so important, so compelling, so unique with respect to not only content but also writing style that I can't put it down until I finish it. This is not one of those books (for me); nevertheless, I am going to recommend it because I concur with his core message and if you have not heard it before from other sources, I think you need to hear it now. Parts of this book are brilliant - they will change how I talk about my core message. Much of what Seth had to say in this book was not new to me, and frankly I prefer the way others have said it. But Seth has a style of writing that will appeal to many, and I predict many will come away reading this book thinking it is the most important book they have read in a long time. Don't get me wrong, I am a BIG fan of Seth Godin, but for this book such claims would be pretentious. Here is Seth's bottom line: I didn't set out to get you to quit your job or to persuade you to become an entrepreneur or merely to change the entire world. All I wanted to do in this book was sell you on being the artist you already are. To make a difference. To stand for something. To get the respect and security you deserve. If I've succeeded, then you know that you have a gift to give, something you can do to change the world (or your part of it) for the better. I hope you'll do that,

because we need you. (p. 230).I think he succeeded, and if you have never heard this message, then I encourage you to get this book and read it.

Others have their own reasons for praising this book. Here are five of mine. First, this is by far Godin's most personal book in which he reveals more of his emotions and "soul" (for lack of a better term) than he has in any of his previous books. Also, from the beginning, he establishes a direct and personal rapport with his reader. I felt that he had written this book specifically for me. Although he and I have never met, I felt as if he were speaking to me and discussing ideas with me as if we were engaged in a face-to-face conversation. Moreover, unlike in most of his previous books, Godin does not climb up into a pulpit and launch a tirade, engaging his audience with a confrontational tone and Old Testament vehemence. He obviously cares deeply about the thoughts and feelings he shares but is at all times respectful of his reader. He repeatedly explains that everyone has several choices and urges his reader to make those only choices that are in her or his long-term best interest. In addition, meanwhile, Godin creates a multi-dimensional context, a frame-of-reference, in which to anchor his insights and recommendations throughout the narrative. He skillfully uses what I describe as a bi-polar strategy: passively but alertly observing what is happening (and not happening) in order to recognize and understand the ever-changing realities of the world that we share and then actively challenging whatever demeans and diminishes anyone's dignity. Finally, Godin utilizes the manifesto genre as a means by which to celebrate humanity at its best, not as an ideal beyond human fulfillment but as an attainable destination if (HUGE "if") vision, faith, courage, integrity, and commitment are sufficient to the formidable challenges that await each pilgrim.

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