



First, Break All the Rules: What the World's Greatest Managers Do Differently

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Gallup presents the remarkable findings of its revolutionary study of more than 80,000 managers in First, Break All the Rules, revealing what the world's greatest managers do differently. With vital performance and career lessons and ideas for how to apply them, it is a must-read for managers at every level.

First, Break All the Rules: What the World's Greatest Managers Do Differently Details

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Marcin Zaremba says

Zaczyn? od wad. W sumie ksi??ka ma jedn?, ogromn? i straszliw? wad?: tytu?. On po prostu nie przystoi do tak dobrej, dok?adnej i warto?ciowej pozycji. Brzmi jak new-age self-help lotniskowa pozycja.

Tymczasem to jedna z najlepszych ksi??ek o zarz?dzaniu jakie czyta?em, oparta na rygorystycznych badaniach o ogromnej skali, z których wyci?gni?to konkretne i wdra?alne wnioski.

W ?rodku jest tak du?o dobrego materia?u, ?e s?uchaj?c ba?em si?, ?e przez roztargnienie czego? zapomn?.

Ksi??ka stawia sporo niepoprawnych tematów. Autorzy (na bazie wspomnianego badania) pokazuj?, ja najlepsi zarz?dzaj?cy odrzucaj? ide?, ?e (1) ka?dy mo?e si? zmieni?, (2) nale?y traktowa? wszystkich po równo, (3) trzeba skupi? si? na eliminowaniu s?abo?ci pracowników.

Zamiast tego jest pokazana alternatywa, która podskórnie zgadza si? z moimi do?wiadczeniami (ad 1) ludzie si? nie zmieniaj?, (ad 2) nale?y pracowników traktowa? zgodnie z ich charakterem, (ad 3) trzeba skupi? si? na talentach pracowników.

Pó?niej jest jeszcze lepiej: wreszcie kto? mi wyt?umaczy? czym jest "talent" i czym si? ró?ni od umiej?tno?ci i wiedzy. Jest te? tak?e bardzo dobry sposób na okre?lanie czy pracuje si? w warto?ciowym miejscu zawodowo (Q12, odpowiednik Gallup StrenghthFindera ale do oceny firm a nie ludzi).

... ale to dopiero pocz?tek - liczba narz?dzi tu zawarta do wykorzystania przez zawodowych managerów jest ogromna. Pozycja obowi?zkowa dla ka?dego kto zarz?dza zespo?em. Jestem zachwycony.

"First, break all rules" wraz z "The Effective Manager" tworz? bardzo dobry tandem i szybki kurs jak powinno si? kierowa? lud?mi.

Ps. Najgorsze jest to, ?e po przeczytaniu zaczyna si? zauwa?a?, jak bardzo ludzie si? niedopasowali do swoich stanowisk. Moje ulubione has?o z ksi??ki:

Don't try to put in what was left out,
Try to draw out what was left in

Andrew Bihl says

Maybe I'm already a "great manager" or maybe they were just trying to make me think so, but it seems to me that all of the recommendations in this book are pretty obvious...all employees are different and require different inspiration, focus on your best performers, communicate often and clearly.

Definitely not groundbreaking or even informative from my perspective.

Ali Sattari says

I couldn't shake off the sense of cliché all over the book.

Stephanie says

Yesterday, I had a conversation with my best friend. she told me that her new principal (she's a 5th grade teacher) enrolled her in a number of training sessions. I immediately asked, "Why would she do that? She doesn't even know you yet!" My friend was slightly shocked, I think, because we have been conditioned to believe, as employees, that investment in YOU means that someone cares or thinks you're pretty hot stuff. After reading the first third of FBATR, I feel as though managers do too much of this without actually considering the individual. How can a new manager accurately gauge the training needs of an employee she's never managed? My best friend went on to explain that she'd been in charge of data for the entire elementary school last year and that she had a reputation for her skills. So, I can see how her principal, perhaps forced to decide sooner or later who would receive such training, enrolled my friend based on her reputation. FBATR makes me wonder, though, does my friend need this training? Is that where her proficiency lies or did she just get 'roped in' last year. Anyway, this book has me thinking about management in an all new way and I am very interested to see what else it has to offer.

Steve says

Gallup interviewed 8000 people. However, only about a dozen people were actually cited in the text. There really wasn't much that this book did for me. There was no "A-ha" moment. The author didn't even explain what these rules are that we are supposed to be breaking. Just disappointing.

Ezra says

This book greatly annoyed me. It poses as giving the secrets to managers to motivate employees into being the best. Very little gave me any confidence it could possibly work.

We have to trust the authors the "great" managers really are since very little information is provided about them to independently judge.

I'd like to see experimental data where the methods described indicate strong evidence they work. Otherwise, there could be any number of other factors influencing why employees improved.

Then again, I don't have any evidence these tricks do not work. So I'll give it two stars.

Foad Ansari says

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Katie says

This book had some sound advice as it focused on the four key principles all great managers know and practice: 1) select for talent, 2) define the right outcomes, 3) focus on strengths, and 4) encourage employees to find the right fit. It's worth a read, but I feel like I have to have a degree in psychology (or psychiatry for that matter) to be a great manager. Nonetheless, time will tell!

Bob Selden says

Other than present the findings of the research studies by the Gallop organisation, I'm not sure what aim the authors had for "First break all the rules". The title sounds like a "how to" book, yet the introduction does not suggest this.

Chapter one sets out the research results, Chapter two debates what the authors term "conventional wisdom". The remaining chapters, based on the "4 keys" to successful management, do indeed become a "how to".

Chapter one is excellent. The 12 questions developed from the research study with over 105,000 managers are practical and make good common sense. However, they are not new. If one looks at the work of writers such as Frederick Herzberg, these pointers have been around at least since the 1970s. In fact, they can be quite well mapped to Herzberg's theory of motivation (motivators and satisfiers).

I had a real problem with chapter two. I'm not sure where the authors have been for the last 30 years and I'd also question whether they have ever been managers themselves. Their description of "conventional wisdom" (which they do quite correctly proceed to debunk) could not be further from reality.

The authoritative writers, management teachers, trainers and indeed managers that I know of would hardly describe any of the following as "conventional wisdom":

- Treat all people the same, do not differentiate
- Anyone can be anything they want to be if they just try hard enough
- The manager must "seize opportunity, using his smarts and impatience to exert his will over a fickle world."

And there are more examples which are not worth repeating.

What Buckingham and Coffman suggest managers do in chapters, 3,4,5,6 & 7 which they call "breaking the rules" has been taught in all the enlightened management training organisations and by experienced management trainers for at least the last 30 years.

There is nothing new here, though if a manager wants a very good checklist of the things he or she should be

doing, buy the book for chapter one.

Eva says

Some notes:

People don't change.

Value talent, not experience.

Value outcome, not steps.

Cast people for fit, not the rung on the ladder.

Focus on strengths, not weaknesses.

Happiness at work:

1. Do I know what is expected of me at work?
 2. Do I have the materials and equipment I need to do my work right?
 3. At work, do I have the opportunity to do what I do best every day?
 4. In the past seven days, have I received recognition or praise for good work?
 5. Does my supervisor, or someone at work, seem to care about me as a person?
 6. Is there someone at work who encourages my development?
 7. At work, do my opinions seem to count?
 8. Does the mission/purpose of my company make me feel like my work is important?
 9. Are my co-workers committed to doing quality work?
 10. Do I have a best friend at work?
 11. In the past six months, have I talked with someone about my progress?
 12. At work, have I had opportunities to learn and grow?
-

David says

"People don't leave jobs or companies - they leave managers."

Lu says

I've just finished reading Marcus Buckingham's book *First, Break All the Rules: What the World's Greatest Managers Do Differently* recently, and enjoyed it immensely.

I generally like books that go against conventional wisdom, and this book is quite different than the other management books I've read in the years.

For example, the "break all the rules" in the title were touched upon at the introduction section, and I quote

directly from the book:

"The greatest managers in the world do not have much in common. They are of different sexes, races, and ages. They employ vastly different styles and focus on different goals. But despite their differences, these great managers do share one thing: Before they do anything else, they first break all the rules of conventional wisdom. They do not believe that a person can achieve anything he sets his mind to. They do not try to help a person overcome his weaknesses. They consistently disregard the Golden Rule. And, yes, they even play favorites."

Now we were all told as children that we get the best bang for the buck by improving our weak areas. However, the author argues that we are better off focusing on our strength through extensive surveys and in-depth interviews with the best managers.

In chapter 2, the author listed twelve questions he calls "measure sticks of workplace strength", and they are:

Do I know what is expected of me at work?
Do I have the materials and equipment I need to do my work right?
At work, do I have the opportunity to do what I do best every day?
In the last seven days, have I received recognition or praise for doing good work?
Does my supervisor, or someone at work, seem to care about me as a person?
Is there someone at work who encourages my development?
At work, do my opinions seem to count?
Does the mission/purpose of my company make me feel my job is important?
Are my co-workers committed to doing quality work?
Do I have a best friend at work?
In the last six months, has someone at work talked to me about my progress?
This last year, have I had opportunities at work to learn and grow?
"

The other possible questions on pay, benefit and such are not significant differentiators in workplace strength so they are not included in the core 12. Out of the 12, the first six questions are what great managers focus on. These questions have a strong correlation to the business performance of the company, the unit, and the individual.

In Chapter 2, the author also lays out the "four keys" of great managers, and they are:"

When selecting someone, they select for talent ... not simply experience, intelligence, or determination.
When setting expectations, they define the right outcomes ... not the right steps.
When motivating someone, they focus on strengths ... not on weaknesses.
When developing someone, they help him find the right fit ... not simply the next rung on the ladder.
"

The book then went on to explain the four keys in more detail concluding with a final chapter on how to apply the four keys in business situations.

I found the book brings an interesting perspective to workplace productivity and people development. It causes me to rethink how I work, whether I'm leveraging my strength, and also how to work with others by focusing on their strengths as well.

I also found the author's definition of strength to be refreshing, and am planning to take the online strength-finder test to prepare for the next book in the series Now Discover Your Strength.

Highly recommended. 8/10

Ashley says

I'm not a manager, but this book felt especially relevant to me since my company just did an employee survey based on the 12 questions Gallup formulated through this study. It was interesting to compare my thoughts on the survey without knowing anything about it, to learning all the mechanics and data of 'why' behind it all.

I've also been thinking about my next steps at my current company, and this provided some guidance on really taking time to figure out what I'm good, what I enjoy, and not just blindly taking the next step 'up'. The authors really pushed "excellence at every level" and I couldn't agree more. It's frustrating to see some of the more menial jobs at my company treated so flippantly. I don't care what you do, you can do it and do a great job at it. Extra effort at ALL levels should be recognized and rewarded.

The authors also did a really nice job explaining an alternate view of having to terminate employees. While it's never pleasant, great managers truly approach it in a different fashion, and that was utterly fascinating to me to see a new side of that. A point that was continually stressed throughout is that people don't leave companies, they leave managers. Another oft-repeated sentiment was that of excellence and failure being surprisingly similar. Average is the anomaly. You can't simply infer excellence by taking the inverse of failure. The difference between the two lies in how inherent talents are executed, and often those talents are surprisingly similar.

I also really enjoyed that the advice given by exceptional managers seems to fly in the face of convention but are backed up by massive quantities of data. I.e. spend more time with your top people, not your employees that are struggling - things don't have to be fair. Speaking of the data, I also really enjoyed that seemingly subjective, qualitative data was somehow quantified and measured just like quantitative data. It really lent a lot of credence to the authors' claims.

A great read - I highly recommend this to anyone, manager or not. I have a feeling I'll pick this one up again in the future.

Natalia Luneva says

The best managers are those that build a work environment where the employees answer positively to these 12 Questions:

1. Do I know what is expected of me at work?
2. Do I have the materials and equipment I need to do my work right?
3. At work, do I have the opportunity to do what I do best every day?
4. In the last seven days, have I received recognition or praise for doing good work?
5. Does my supervisor, or someone at work, seem to care about me as a person?

6. Is there someone at work who encourages my development?
7. At work, do my opinions count?
8. Does the mission/purpose of my company make me feel my job is important?
9. Are my co-workers committed to doing quality work?
10. Do I have a best friend at work?
11. In the last six months, has someone at work talked to me about my progress?
12. This last year, have I had opportunities at work to learn and grow?

Key Ideas:

The best managers reject conventional wisdom.

The best managers treat every employee as an individual.

The best managers never try to fix weaknesses; instead they focus on strengths and talent.

The best managers know they are on stage everyday. They know their people are watching every move they make.

Measuring employee satisfaction is vital information for your investors.

People leave their immediate managers, not the companies they work for.

More wisdom in a nutshell:

- Know what can be taught, and what requires a natural talent.
- Set the right outcomes, not steps. Standardize the end but not the means. As long as the means are within the company's legal boundaries and industry standards, let the employee use his own style to deliver the result or outcome you want.
- Motivate by focusing on strengths, not weaknesses.
- Casting is important, if an employee is not performing at excellence, maybe she is not cast in the right role.
- Every role is noble, respect it enough to hire for talent to match.
- A manager must excel in the art of the interview. See if the candidate's recurring patterns of behavior match the role he is to fulfill. Ask open-ended questions and let him talk. Listen for specifics.
- Find ways to measure, count, and reward outcomes.
- Spend time with your best people. Give constant feedback. If you can't spend an hour every quarter talking to an employee, then you shouldn't be a manager.
- There are many ways of alleviating a problem or non-talent. Devise a support system, find a complementary partner for him, or an alternative role.

misha says

A perfectly good tree died for this book.
