



Organizing Genius: The Secrets of Creative Collaboration

By Warren Bennis, Patricia Ward Biederman

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Uncovers the elements of creative collaboration by examining six of the century's most extraordinary groups and distill their successful practices into lessons that virtually any organization can learn and commit to in order to transform its own management into a collaborative and successful group of leaders. Paper. DLC: Organizational effectiveness - Case studies.



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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

For years, Warren Bennis has written about leadership in works such as *Learning to Lead*, *Beyond Leadership*, and the bestselling *On Becoming a Leader*. His aim in these well-received titles was to catalog the traits and styles of leadership that help individuals excel in their work. In his new book (and already another bestseller) *Organizing Genius*, Bennis declares the age of the empowered individual ended: what matters now is "collaborative advantage" and the assembling of powerful teams. Drawing from six case studies that include Xerox's PARC labs, the 1992 Clinton campaign, and Disney animation studios, Bennis and coauthor Patricia Biederman distill the characteristics of successful collaboration, showing how talent can be pooled and managed for greater results than any individual is capable of producing. Organized in easily digested chapters and written in clear, concise prose, *Organizing Genius* will be useful to folks finding their way in new organizational structures. The lessons Bennis and Biederman offer in the final chapter of the book don't constitute the obvious advice most business books convey; these are real experiences gleaned from the stories of collaboration they surveyed.

From Publishers Weekly

University of Southern California business professor Bennis and Los Angeles Times reporter Biederman examine six "Great Groups" whose work affected and sometimes changed the modern world. They are the Disney organization and its animated films; the Xerox Corporation's Palo Alto Research Center, which designed the first user-friendly computer; the Clinton presidential campaign of 1992 for what the authors deem a remarkable victory; Lockheed's Skunk Works, where the U-2 spy plane and the Stealth bomber were developed; Black Mountain College in the foothills of North Carolina, which lasted only from 1933 to 1956 but attracted many major artists; and the Manhattan Project, whose scientists created the atomic bomb. All of these groups, the authors stress, consisted of enormously talented people with a sense of mission, who worked under a strong leader and were imbued with pragmatic optimism. Each segment is so well told that it has lessons for all.

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From Library Journal

To determine the characteristics of creative groups, Bennis (business administration, Univ. of Southern California) and Biederman, a Los Angeles Times reporter, here consider Disney Productions, PARC-r&d for Xerox, President Clinton's presidential campaign, Lockheed's Skunk Works, Black Mountain College, and the Manhattan Project. The authors conclude that creative groups usually operate in dull or tacky surroundings, are young and optimistic past the point of realism ("Great groups believe they're on a mission from God against a big, bad enemy"), are poorly paid, and go unrecognized. In these examples, many of the leaders were difficult to verbally abusive. The authors warn that it is possible for great minds to work in groups to accomplish great evil, and care must be taken to scrutinize the intended results. Sexual references are included that do not add to the story and are in poor taste. The authors acknowledge the noticeable absence of female participants in creative groups but do not give an adequate explanation. While interesting, this is not a necessary purchase.?Peggy D. Odom, Texas Lib. Assn., Waco

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Users Review

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