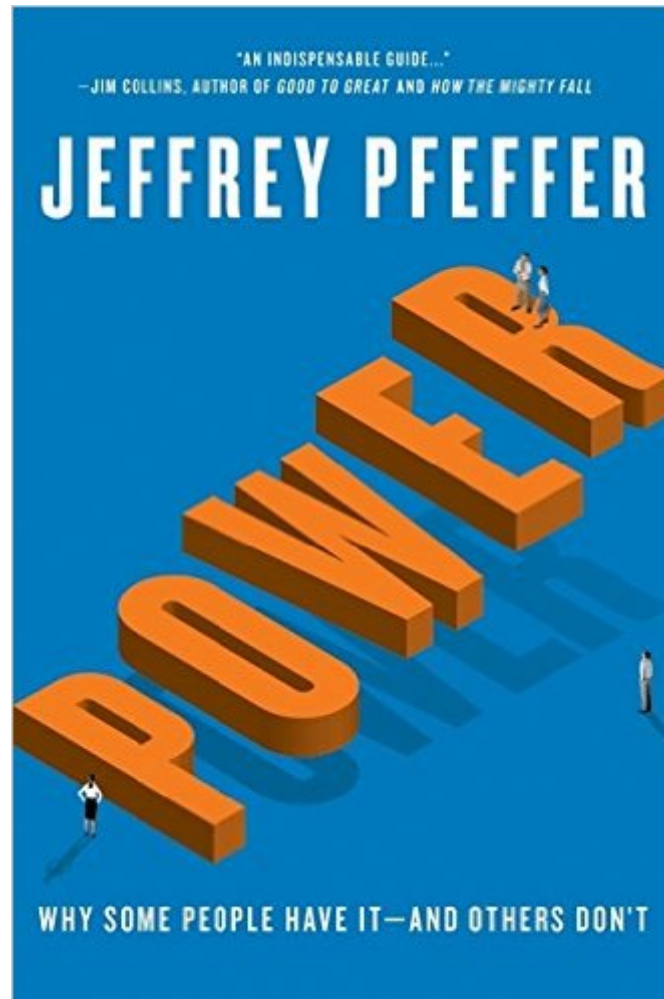# Power: Why Some People Have It And Others Don't

Synopsis

â œPfeffer [blends] academic rigor and practical genius into wonderfully readable text. The leading thinker on the topic of power, Pfeffer here distills his wisdom into an indispensable guide.â •â ”Jim Collins, author of New York Times bestselling author Good to Great and How the Mighty FallÂ Some people have it, and others donâ ™tâ ”Jeffrey Pfeffer explores why in Power. One of the greatest minds in management theory and author or co-author of thirteen books, including the seminal business school text Managing With Power, Pfeffer shows readers how to succeed and wield power in the real world.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I've been shuffling among academe, consulting, and private-sector executive positions for 35 years and this book really saddens me. (So much that I am writing my first review). The book promises to tell you about the "real" nature of leadership opportunities, disabuse you of your naive notions about what you might wish were true, and provide you with a set of techniques so you can successfully accumulate power. In a nut shell: liars, bastards, suck-ups and backstabbers win promotions most of the time and if you want to garner power, it's more important to play the game than to perform well. Which, I guess I actually agree with to a large degree, but that's only news to an academic. Ask any VP or above in a large corporation or see how many senior executives leave any company "happy." But what really makes me sad . . . I would have hoped that a professor of OB at Stanford would have included a chapter discussing whether this is a morally reasonable situation or at least what the instrumental impact on organizational effectiveness might be.Some specifics: the word

"ethics" does not appear in the index (nor in the book as far as I can tell); he uses Oliver North's testimony before Congress (you know -- when he lied) as a great example of effective "power speech"; he applauds Rahm Emanuel's profane screaming outbursts as effective positioning; he says that if a CEO trusts ANYONE, he (or possibly she) is a fool; that people actually like to work in hierarchic control and will gravitate to you if you are powerful even if they despise you. All of this without even a small nod to ethical or moral questions. And he never, ever questions whether one should consider pursuing happiness, satisfaction, spiritual fulfillment, or family rather than "power.

Want to get a good job? Want to move up the corporate ladder? What are the tools you are going to need?A good education? Hard work and smarts? Being well liked?Not so much, at least according to Jeffrey Pfeffer, a Stanford Business School professor and author of numerous books on this and related subjects. No, despite popular notions and the usual urban myths, Pfeffer contends that the path to power is significantly different than the popular notions we were raised to believe.In "Power: Why Some People Have It and Others Don't," Pfeffer sets out example after example of just how poorly served executives are by using the above listed methods and instead take a more aggressive approach to the utilization of tools like building relationships (always appear to be supporting your boss), networking, self-promotion (in healthy doses, but not too much), organizational visibility, control of information as well as the usual power profile advice on initial impressions, speech, posture, etc.Pfeffer uses numerous examples - from the top of the corporate ladder (former GE boss, Jack Welch, of course, but also Bill Clinton, a former chairperson of Time, Inc, Ollie North and others) to those just getting started (including new recruits and interns) to illustrate what works and what doesn't in stark, cold terms. While Pfeffer admits that his techniques may not be for everyone or may make some squeamish, he recommends you try them anyway and keep your fears to yourself as you work your way up the corporate ladder, preferably quickly.The only disappointment here is perhaps in the labeling.

I have read and reviewed all of the previous books that Jeffrey Pfeffer wrote or co-authored and consider this one his most valuable because his focus is much less on dysfunctional organizations and how to resuscitate them; indeed, he focuses almost entirely on what any ambitious person needs to understand about what power is...and isn't. Unlike his approach in any other of the previous books, Pfeffer establishes a direct rapport with his reader and seems to be saying, in effect, "Over the years, I've learned a great deal about power will now share with you what I hope you will find most interesting and, more to the point, most useful." In the Introduction, for example,

he suggests that having power is related to living a longer and healthier life, that power and the visibility and stature that accompany can produce wealth, and that power is part of leadership and necessary to get things done, whatever the nature and extent of the given objectives may be. "Power is desirable to many, albeit not all, people, for what it can provide and also a goal in and of itself."Although Pfeffer does not invoke the core metaphor from Plato's "Allegory of the Cave" in The Republic, I think it is especially relevant to the various misconceptions about power that Pfeffer refutes. The situation in Plato's allegory is that people are located in a darkened cave watching shadows dance on a wall. (The source of light is outside the cave.) They think they are watching ultimate realities. Rather, what they observe are images, yes, but also distortions. The same is true of the "just world hypothesis" that the world is predictable, comprehensible, and therefore potentially controllable.

Power: Why Some People Have It and Others Don't Some We Love, Some We Hate, Some We Eat: Why It's So Hard to Think Straight About Animals (P.S.) Some We Love, Some We Hate, Some We Eat: Why It's So Hard to Think Straight About Animals Good to Great: Why Some Companies Make the Leap...And Others Don't Leaders Eat Last: Why Some Teams Pull Together and Others Don’t The Storyteller's Secret: From TED Speakers to Business Legends, Why Some Ideas Catch On and Others Don't Good to Great: Why Some Companies Make the Leap...and Others Don't, by Jim Collins: Key Takeaways, Analysis & Review Leaders Eat Last: Why Some Teams Pull Together and Others Don't The Life-Changing Magic of Not Giving a F*ck: How to Stop Spending Time You Don't Have with People You Don't Like Doing Things You Don't Want to Do Made to Stick: Why Some Ideas Survive and Others Die The Wealth and Poverty of Nations: Why Some Are So Rich and Some So Poor Beginning Power BI with Excel 2013: Self-Service Business Intelligence Using Power Pivot, Power View, Power Query, and Power Map Power Pivot and Power BI: The Excel User's Guide to DAX, Power Query, Power BI & Power Pivot in Excel 2010-2016 The Signal and the Noise: Why So Many Predictions Fail--but Some Don't Gods Generals: Why They Succeeded And Why Some Fail BALLS: It Takes Some to Get Some A Perfect Mess: Why You Don't Have to Worry About Being Good Enough for God Dealing With Difficult People: Get to Know the Different Types of Difficult People in the Workplace and Learn How to Deal With Them (How To Win People, How To Influence People) Revolution 2.0: The Power of the People Is Greater Than the People in Power - A Memoir You Are Not So Smart: Why You Have Too Many Friends on Facebook, Why Your Memory Is Mostly Fiction, and 46 Other Ways You're Deluding Yourself