



Leadership and the Art of Struggle: How Great Leaders Grow Through Challenge and Adversity

By Steven Snyder

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All Leaders Face Adversity. Exceptional Leaders Thrive in It.

Leadership is often a struggle, and yet strong taboos keep us from talking openly and honestly about our difficulties for fear of looking weak and seeming to lack confidence. But Steven Snyder shows that this discussion is vital—adversity is precisely what unlocks our greatest potential.

Using real-life stories drawn from his extensive research studying 151 diverse episodes of leadership struggle—as well as from his experiences working with Bill Gates in the early years of Microsoft and as a CEO and executive coach—Snyder shows how to navigate intense challenges to achieve personal growth and organizational success. He details strategies for embracing struggle and offers a host of unique tools and hands-on practices to help you implement them. By mastering the art of struggle, you’ll be better equipped to meet life’s challenges and focus on what matters most.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Leadership is never as easy as it looks and that's exactly as it should be, says executive, entrepreneur, and leadership coach Snyder, currently executive-in-residence at Minnesota's University of St. Thomas.

Leadership requires extreme courage and strength, but as Snyder argues, the best leaders have to get past the expectation of perfection while still striving for greatness. The author asked corporate, nonprofit, and government leaders to speak to the times of struggle in their careers and shares 151 of these stories to illustrate how the acceptance of the hard work of leadership can create true greatness. Snyder walks readers through the all-important steps of what he terms "The Pathway to Adaptive Energy": becoming grounded, exploring new pathways, and deepening adaptive energy. In addition, he addresses the everyday difficulties of beating self-doubt, facing change, establishing balance, and getting the necessary support. This is a practical, thoughtful guide to creating sanity, as well as "purpose and meaning" within leadership.

Review

"Leadership and the Art of Struggle provides you with the opportunity to learn from Snyder's remarkable wisdom. It is a living guide that you can return to time and time again as new situations arise."

—From the foreword by Bill George, former CEO, Medtronic; Professor of Management Practice, Harvard Business School; and author of the bestselling True North

"Steven Snyder's Leadership and the Art of Struggle is the must-read leadership book of the year. It is one of the most intelligent, revealing, and practical books on the subject I have ever read. It confronts a vital truth about leadership: that challenge is the crucible for greatness and that these adversities introduce us to ourselves. Buy this book immediately, read it with a sense of urgency, and apply it with the commitment of a disciple. You and those you work with will benefit greatly when you do."

—Jim Kouzes, coauthor of the bestselling The Leadership Challenge

"Steven Snyder covers all the bases from channeling your energy to managing conflict, including a great segment about overcoming your leadership blind spots. Leadership and the Art of Struggle is full of real-life examples of leaders who emerged from tough times better and stronger than before. This encouraging book is a must-read!"

—Ken Blanchard, coauthor of The One Minute Manager and Great Leaders Grow

"The leadership journey is rewarding but definitely not easy. Leadership and the Art of the Struggle gives you clear and compelling advice on transforming pitfalls into possibilities."

—Jodee Kozlak, Executive Vice President, Human Resources, Target

"A very fresh and inspiring perspective that constructively embraces the natural tensions that all leaders encounter every day. I heartily recommend it to any leader who aspires to lead and contribute more fully."

—Douglas R. Conant, former President, CEO, and Director, Campbell Soup Company, and coauthor of the New York Times bestseller TouchPoints

"Steven courageously confronts the element of struggle, which is frequently overlooked in all the leadership hoopla. It's time we had an open and honest conversation about this integral and vital aspect of leadership."

—Ken Melrose, former CEO, Toro

“Steven guides you on a journey that can be deeply fulfilling as well as enlightening. I recommend this book for any leader who wants to engage more authentically and constructively in a complex and ever-changing world.”

—**Mary Brainerd, CEO, HealthPartners**

“Leadership and the Art of Struggle contains compelling stories of great leaders who have struggled with various facets of their leadership responsibility. It offers practical advice and tools to help you deal more effectively with the inevitable struggles of leadership.”

—**Trudy Rautio, President and CEO, Carlson**

“If you are leading an organization of any kind today or desire to lead one in the future, you need to read this book.”

—**Frank Russomanno, former CEO, Imation**

“Snyder has opened an intriguing and insightful portal into the challenge of leadership. You’ll be inspired and invigorated with ideas that you can immediately put into action.”

—**Kevin Wilde, Chief Learning Officer, General Mills, and author of Dancing with the Talent Stars**

“Life in a start-up is chaotic, intense, and unpredictable. Snyder knows this world well and gives you sage advice on how to remain grounded, focused, and energized. This is a book that every entrepreneur or would-be entrepreneur should read.”

—**Michael Gorman, Managing Director, Split Rock Partners**

“Snyder boldly tackles a subject that every leader needs to master. Sometimes leadership is a struggle, and these are the times that really put us to the test. This insightful book will teach you how to thrive during life’s most challenging moments.”

—**Marshall Goldsmith, New York Times bestselling author of Mojo and What Got You Here Won’t Get You There**

“This book resonates to the core. It gives us grounding and offers precise practices for locating our work deep in the soul. Steven makes the dive into the waters of purposeful living and leading deep and attractive. What a delightful dive!”

—**Richard Leider, bestselling author of The Power of Purpose and coauthor of Repacking Your Bags**

“The French writer Albert Camus tells us, ‘In the depth of winter, I finally learned that there was within me an invincible summer.’ Snyder wisely observes that we can best strike a blow against tragedy and disappointment by using them as inspiration to make a positive difference in the lives of others through our personal leadership.”

—**Marilyn Carlson Nelson, Chairman, Carlson**

“This is the right book for these times. Leadership has become more difficult in the chaotic world we live in; Steven acknowledges that and draws on his own deep experience and the lessons learned of others to help any new, aspiring, or well-worn leader!”

—**Beverly Kaye, founder of Career Systems International and coauthor of Love 'Em or Lose 'Em and Help Them Grow or Watch Them Go**

“Leadership and the Art of Struggle deserves to be a leadership classic! Snyder brilliantly charts a course to strengthen ourselves through the important crucibles of challenge and adversity. If you want to build more authentic leadership in yourself and others, get this life-changing book!”

—Kevin Cashman, Senior Partner, Korn/Ferry International, and bestselling author of The Pause Principle and Leadership from the Inside Out

About the Author

Steven Snyder is the founder of Snyder Leadership Group, an organizational consulting firm dedicated to cultivating inspired leadership. He is also an executive fellow in leadership at the University of St. Thomas in Minnesota. Snyder was an early executive at Microsoft, where he managed the company's relationship with IBM and was the general manager of a business unit. Later, Snyder became CEO of the Internet startup Net Perceptions, where he won the World Technology Award for Commerce.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Winnie Logan:

Do you have favorite book? If you have, what is your favorite's book? Guide is very important thing for us to find out everything in the world. Each publication has different aim or perhaps goal; it means that book has different type. Some people feel enjoy to spend their time to read a book. They may be reading whatever they have because their hobby is definitely reading a book. Think about the person who don't like looking at a book? Sometime, individual feel need book if they found difficult problem or even exercise. Well, probably you'll have this Leadership and the Art of Struggle: How Great Leaders Grow Through Challenge and Adversity.

Rosalva Nichols:

In this 21st one hundred year, people become competitive in most way. By being competitive now, people have do something to make these people survives, being in the middle of the actual crowded place and notice through surrounding. One thing that often many people have underestimated the idea for a while is reading. Yeah, by reading a book your ability to survive improve then having chance to stand up than other is high. In your case who want to start reading a new book, we give you this Leadership and the Art of Struggle: How Great Leaders Grow Through Challenge and Adversity book as basic and daily reading guide. Why, because this book is more than just a book.

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