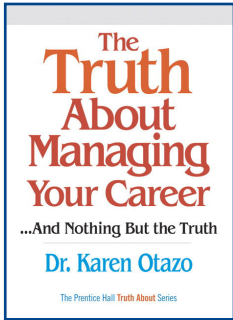




CONSULTING SCOOP



Book Review: *The Truth About Managing Your Career . . . And Nothing But the Truth* by Dr. Karen Otazo

[By Akbar Ali]

The first thing that strikes you while reading Dr. Karen Otazo's *The Truth About Managing Your Career* is its sheer frankness: this is not a book which hems and haws and waits to dispense tedious bits of career advice. From the opening sentence which brazenly orders the reader to do what few authors have ever suggested—"Don't read this book"—Otazo deftly sets up the reader's expectations and then quickly proceeds to obliterate them with a series of business tips (or "Truths") which has the reader eager to devour all 245 pages in one reading.

The book is divided into twelve "Truth" sections, each dealing with the most prevalent and consequential aspects of any career: *Starting a New Job, Working with Bosses, Working with Others, Networking, Getting Things Done, Managing Your Workload, Getting Your Point Across, Dealing with Enemies & Antibodies, Making the Right Impression, Getting Noticed, Getting Ahead, and Moving On*. Anyone who's ever had a traditional job recognizes the inevitability of most (if not all) of these situations. Otazo, a renowned global executive coach and "thinking partner" for multinational companies, organizes her expert advice into 60 indispensable "Truths." She is able to cover an astonishing number of commonplace situations and problem areas by distilling only the most crucial details, conveying her advice in a direct, easy-to-understand manner which can best be identified as career "straight talk."

The most reader-friendly aspects of the book are its structure and style. Rather than being written in an overly rigid or formal textbook manner, the book's brief chapters are easy to peruse and allow you to conveniently read up on what concerns or interests you most. Career management isn't an easy task, but finding solutions to roadblocks and challenges shouldn't be difficult either, and

Otazo adroitly conveys numerous solutions through the book's easily accessible style.

She also makes the book relevant to readers of all stripes, from entry-level newbies to experienced CEOs. All have something to glean from this guide to career management and should carry it with them as a reference when they find themselves in need of a resolution.

Otazo covers a comprehensive array of topics, including how hitting the ground running *isn't* a good idea, recognizing who to trust in the workplace and when to speak up, lessons you can learn from a bully boss, critiquing with compassion, appreciating your support staff, knowing how to say no, and knowing when it's time to move on.

Of course, all of this is dependent upon getting your foot in the door first, and this challenge Otazo examines thoroughly by explaining how to "look the part" and make those all-important good first impressions.

Much of the advice she offers is very practical, reassuring readers that their instincts are frequently right and that they have the power to craft the kind of careers they want. She also goes into the various causes behind workplace tension (you'll

likely recall a few of these from your own experiences) and the best ways to combat professional ugliness: "Strong emotions of any kind, particularly negative ones, can provoke defensive behavior in others" and "[A]nger should be neither expressed publicly (for the sake of the working atmosphere) nor discussed while it is fresh."



Some of Otazo's advice can be construed as counterintuitive or as opposing conventional wisdom: in *Kiss the Ring: Hierarchy Matters*, she instructs workers to swallow their pride and dispense with negative feelings they may hold toward others in the workplace, especially the important ones whose impact on their careers can be a lasting one. It isn't sycophancy (concerns ought to be expressed, albeit privately and neutrally), but it is important to be sensitive toward seniority. Human egos are, after all, fragile, and the more powerful the individual, the more fragile the ego.



CONSULTING SCOOP

What's one thing Otazo says you should *never* tolerate in the workplace? Illegal dealings, especially the flagrant kind a la Enron and HealthSouth. When you find yourself in a situation where your actions could be construed as complicit in (or willfully

ignorant of) corporate crime, it's time to leave—*yesterday*.

With over 25 years of experience with clients from various global industries, Otazo has the facts and experiences to back up her

principles. If the only thing lacking in your career is guidance, this indispensable tome can serve as both reference and inspiration.

EmploymentCrossing is the largest collection of active jobs in the world.

We continuously monitor the hiring needs of more than 250,000 employers, including virtually every corporation and organization in the United States. We do not charge employers to post their jobs and we aggressively contact and investigate thousands of employers each day to learn of new positions. No one works harder than EmploymentCrossing.

Let EmploymentCrossing go to work for you.