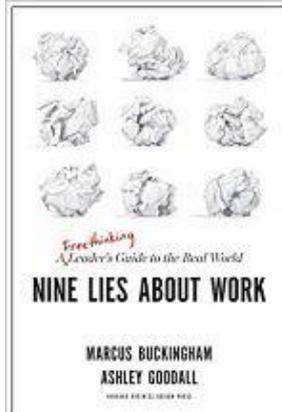


PM WORLD BOOK REVIEW



Book Title: **Nine Lies About Work: A Freethinking Leader's Guide to the Real World**

Author: **Marcus Buckingham and Ashley Goodall**

Publisher: Harvard Business Review Press

List Price: \$30.00 Format: Hardcover, 304 pages

Publication Date: April 2019 ISBN: 978-1-63369-630-3

Reviewer: **Sharon Harris, PMP**

Review Date: November 2019

Introduction

“A Freethinkers Guide to the Real World: Nine Lies about Work” is a very intriguing read that takes generally accepted practices in the workplace and challenges them with well-stated truths. This is an excellent book for leaders at all levels of experience and is designed to present the lies of current practices, determine how leaders may begin to challenge these lies with truths, and then re-engage those they lead.

The well-researched information is presented in a format that allows the reader to relate to the topic through the use of real world situations and applications. I thoroughly enjoyed reading this book and challenging my perspective regarding commonly accepted work place “lies”

Overview of Book's Structure

The book is arranged in 9 chapters with each chapter listing one of the associated 9 lies and the corresponding truth. The lies are well known concepts in today's workplace such as lie #1 - people care which company they work for, lie #5 - people need feedback, or the one I related to most which was lie #8 - work life balance matters most.

Each of these lies on the surface sounds like a well-meaning concept intended to benefit those we lead, but when the authors unpack the lie and provide the associated truth, they clearly dig deeper to what is the true driver behind each of these statements.

The stories used throughout the book engage the reader in a relatable manner and offer meaningful situations which allow the lie and associated truth to be better understood.

The summary list of 9 truths at the back of the book was a great synopsis and helped correlate with the 9 lies presented. I also appreciated the information regarding the engagement studies available in the appendices of the book as this helped clarify how the conclusions were derived and the book developed.

Highlights

The truths presented are intriguing and based on research and experience rather than an opinion. Of the lies I mentioned, the truth associated with lie #1, “people care which company they work for” was easily debunked through the story presented which showed people actually care which team they belong on regardless of the company the team is located. I find this to be an interestingly accurate conclusion as high performing teams can exist within dysfunctional companies.

Another truth which resonated with me was the truth associated with the lie of people rating other people. Each year we are asked to rate those we lead on a variety of scales or complete a peer review. This process is wrought with variation and skewed based on the evaluator’s perception. Clearly stating that the only person qualified to rate the performance is that individual who performed the function was a refreshing principle.

Highlights: What I liked!

Though I thoroughly enjoyed the entire book, the one lie and associated truth I especially enjoyed was lie #8 – work life balance matters most. This resonated with me as I thoroughly enjoy my work and take pride in producing a quality product which will help others. This may look like an imbalanced work-life balance to others, but for me this is a very happy and enjoyable place.

I feel others will relate equally well to one or more of the other 8 lies and find comfort and clarity in the truth revealed.

Who might benefit from the Book?

This book would benefit all individuals whether they are a leader designated by title or an informal leader of their peers. I feel everyone would be able to gain insight into their current position and apply the truths in a manner benefiting themselves as well as those around them. I would also recommend this book for any level of experience, as the information presented would be beneficial to the developing leader and the leader who has been in the trenches for a while.

Conclusion

Overall, I would highly recommend “Nine Lies about Work” as an excellent presentation of common workplace scenarios with associated truths that will push the reader to think outside the box of what has been accepted as the norm in the past.

I look forward to re-reading this book and sharing the concepts with others.

For more about this book, go to: <https://store.hbr.org/product/nine-lies-about-work-a-freethinking-leader-s-guide-to-the-real-world/10214>

Editor's note: This book review was the result of a partnership between the publisher, PM World and the [PMI Dallas Chapter](#). Authors and publishers provide the books to PM World; books are delivered to the PMI Dallas Chapter, where they are offered free to PMI members to review; book reviews are published in the PM World Journal and PM World Library. PMI Dallas Chapter members can keep the books as well as claim PDUs for PMP recertification when their reviews are published.

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Sharon Harris is currently a project manager with a biomedical company. Prior to taking on the project manager role, she was a laboratory director in a clinical and anatomic pathology lab for over 15 years. Sharon is a certified lean six sigma green belt and PMP. She holds a BS in Medical Technology and an MS in Immunohematology with her Specialty in Blood Banking.

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