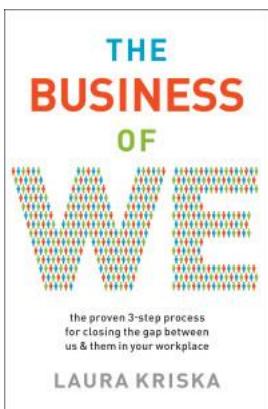


## PM WORLD BOOK REVIEW



Book Title: ***The Business of WE: The proven 3-step process for closing the gap between us & them in your workplace***

Author: **Laura Kriska**

Publisher: HarperCollins Leadership

List Price: USD \$19.99 Format: soft cover, 290 pages

Publication Date: 2021 ISBN: 978-1-400-21680-2

Reviewer: **Krystal Blackwell, MBA, PMP**

Review Date: June 2021

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### Introduction

In *The Business of WE: the proven 3-step process for closing the gap between us & them in your workplace*, Laura provides a simple and easy to follow action plan for business leaders and individuals to easily create an inclusive environment for your team members and people you encounter everyday. Her WE building steps are:

1. Foster Awareness
2. Self Assess
3. How to Take Action

Using this process in both your organization and personal life will help you as a people leader to be authentic, build trust, and provide a feeling of safety and belonging to your team. As we emerge from the pandemic, Laura teaches people leaders and individuals how to approach diversity and cultural differences. She provides numerous examples and details on how inclusion will increase productivity, and prevent misinterpretations that can have a detrimental effect on the organization.

### Overview of Book's Structure

#### Section I: Framing The Organizational Challenge

- Chapter 1: Diversity Can be Divisive: A Growing Problem in a Culturally Varied Organization
- Chapter 2: The Synergy of Cross-Cultural Compatibility: The Benefits of Bringing People Together
- Chapter 3: Conventional Wisdom versus Practical Knowledge: The Need to Close Deep Gaps (Rather Than Create Superficial Bridges)

## Section II: The Process

- Chapter 4: Foster Gap Awareness
- Chapter 5: Conduct an Us versus Them Assessment
- Chapter 6: Create a Gap-Closing Action Plan

## Section III: Moving Forward

- Chapter 7: Overcoming Resistance and Apathy: The Obstacles to Achieving Cultural Intelligence
- Chapter 8: HomeTeam Advantage: Why the Traditional Majority Culture Must Take the Lead
- Chapter 9: On Beyond Diversity: The Need for Building Internal Infrastructure

## Highlights

In the first three chapters, Laura provides numerous examples outlining issues that we face in our organizations. How the tiniest gestures, like simply pronouncing a person's name correctly, can have a profound effect on a person. When a small gesture such as this is then paired with a meaningful action, a single moment can become a memorable moment. If WE develop a WE mindset, this creates positive outcomes, increases productivity, enhances engagement, and overall creates an inclusive and welcoming environment for our teams.

The author provides numerous examples and years of experience in how companies have had to be reactive in regards to situations that have arisen, and works on stressing the importance of being proactive, to prevent the legal situations.

In Section two, Laura introduces us to numerous processes from bringing awareness into the organization, to performing different assessments of each team member and finally how to create an actionable action plan to move forward. She discusses the Iceberg Concept, which is the part of the cultural iceberg that you see could be the language someone uses, the type of clothing a person wears, or the type of food someone eats. These are all easily visible cultural differences. In regards to the invisible part of the iceberg, you are not able to see a person's cultural beliefs or values.

Once you understand the Iceberg Concept, Laura will then walk you through the multiple processes and assessments of WE-building so that you can understand where you fall on the cross-cultural continuum, and then what action plans you can put into place in order to improve your score.

In the final and third section, Laura explains how we can continue to move our organization and society forward with small actions. One thing we can do is not use the words: I, you, or they, instead replace these words with words of inclusion: we, us or our. She tells how to take negative feedback and turn it into positive feedback.

**Negative Example:** Starting with phrases such as “There is no way the sales team can make their sales target for the year.” or “The marketing team is terrible.” are negative and are considered Us vs Them language.

**Positive Example:** “We should discuss ways we can support our sales team because we as a company are not going to make our sales objectives for the year.” or “We need to improve our marketing team so our company can be more competitive in our industry.”

### **Highlights: What I liked!**

Everything! This book goes hand-in-hand with everything going on in our business organizations and world right now. We versus Them is a daily topic on every news channel in the world, and I personally was tired of hearing about this topic and chose to ignore this coverage, wrongfully thinking that our society is causing the We versus Them to become worse by constantly throwing this topic in our face. Every. Single. Day. Laura gently and clearly gives fantastic examples of the WHY, I/WE need to be mindful, aware, and acknowledge, not ignore what is going on culturally in our world and business organization. Do not underestimate the effect you can have on someone by simply pronouncing their name correctly. This book was truly enlightening and had a profound effect on me.

I love that Laura brings to light that people do not intend to be malicious, that most people mean well in their small talk and conversations, but a simple change in words, or tone, or body language can make the experience a negative one.

### **Who might benefit from the Book?**

Everyone. This book will benefit readers both in the business community, as well as, in their personal, everyday lives. Laura opens your eyes on cultural integration, proving that minuscule changes can have a substantial impact on our lives and the lives of others. Laura demonstrates how to utilize her three-step process of: Fostering your awareness, assessing yourself, then how to take action so that we become a positive, proactive human, not only in our personal lives in our business organization as a leader, versus always reacting to the negative.

### **Conclusion**

In conclusion, this book will teach you how to identify cultural gaps and how to be proactive in resolving issues before they begin. It tells stories, of no matter how small the interaction is between people, to always be mindful and choose your words carefully, the smallest word/gesture/tone of voice can have a profound effect on others.

For more about this book, go to:

<https://www.harpercollinsleadership.com/9781400216802/the-business-of-we/>

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## About the Reviewer



**Krystal Blackwell**

(With her family in photo)

Grapevine, Texas, USA



**Krystal Blackwell** is a proud wife of Michael for 10 years and mother of two children, Logan and MacKynzee. Krystal is a Project Manager in the telecommunications industry. She is a telecom kid, as her parents worked in telecom for 30 years, and now Krystal is following in their footsteps, with 12 years down, 18 to go! Krystal has an Associates of Arts Degree from Tarrant County College, as well as a Bachelors of Arts in English Literature with a minor in History from the University of Texas at Arlington. She also holds an MBA in Computer Information Systems from Ashford University. In March 2022, she earned her PMP Certification through PMI and is currently looking for her next learning opportunity.

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