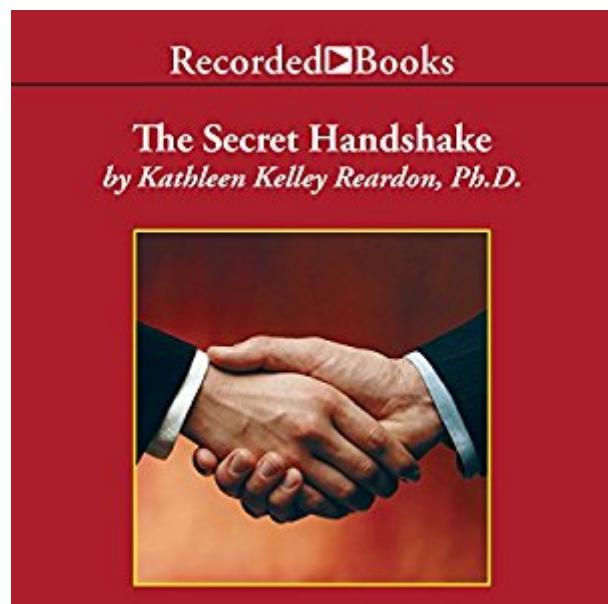


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The Secret Handshake: Mastering The Politics Of The Business Inner Circle



Synopsis

This ground-breaking work offers access to the boardroom and advice on getting noticed, networking, persuasion, and mastering the art of quid pro quo. A professor of management and highly sought-after consultant, Kathleen Kelley Reardon has worked with many of the nation's leading corporations. Drawing on interviews with executives from Fortune 500 companies, she has compiled essential advice on how to break into the inner circle of power at the top of the corporate ladder. Many books cover practical business knowledge, but few address the issue of interpersonal skills. The ever-changing circle of power within a corporation may not necessarily follow the same guidelines it publicly professes. The most talented employee isn't always the one promoted; there is an intangible quality the upper echelon look for. It may not come naturally, but it can be learned. Kathleen Kelley Reardon's guide to organizational politics gives you the navigational skills needed to reach the top. Narrator Ruth Ann Phimister will leave you feeling as if you've had an enlightning conversation with a caring mentor.

Book Information

Audible Audio Edition

Listening Length: 8 hours and 7 minutes

Program Type: Audiobook

Version: Unabridged

Publisher: Recorded Books

Audible.com Release Date: February 28, 2017

Language: English

ASIN: B06XC5ZHF9

Best Sellers Rank: #33 in Books > Audible Audiobooks > Business & Investing > Business Life #1082 in Books > Business & Money > Business Culture > Workplace Culture #2425 in Books > Business & Money > Business Culture > Motivation & Self-Improvement

Customer Reviews

Kathleen Kelley Reardon credits her parents for having jump-started her political skills. Now, those of us who didn't pick such a knowledgeable family to grow up in can read this book. Simply written and mainly jargon-free (with explanations for the jargon she does use), it's accessible to the educated layperson. Dr. Reardon shows that while political skill is not **sufficient** for success, above a certain level it is generally **necessary**. She also shows that politics is more necessary in some places than in others -- which can save your sanity if you just thought all organizations were just

plain political. (Not to mention, what the right political move is for any given situation varies very much between organizations, because among other things each group has its own culture. That's why you often need mentors wherever you are.) In a nutshell, politics is about personal interaction. So Dr. Reardon gives you many different tools for understanding yourself, understanding others and managing how you deal with each person. For example, she repeatedly emphasizes relating your ideas to what the other person is specifically talking about. She also includes help with gender communication -- important both for women on the rise and men who either currently deal with them or will do so. (Pretty much most women and most men, respectively!) Dr. Reardon does what it takes to give those who need it a heads-up: "As the politically astute know, speaking up before you know how others in a room think is naive. Many competent people fail to reach their potential because they can't get this simple fact through their heads. They convince themselves that their ideas aren't enthusiastically adopted because they're surrounded by imbeciles. They don't realize who the real imbecile is, politically speaking." The beauty of Dr. Reardon's approach is that it neatly spans from overall objectives to strategy to tactics. For example, you learn (1) that strategic compliments can be a good idea to let everyone know that you don't hold grudges, (2) how to make them credible by weaving them into conversations and (3) how to make them more direct or subtle by saying, for example, either "Jim did a great job on the marketing, really boosting our sales" or "Our sales have skyrocketed thanks to Jim's great work on the marketing" (that is, by placing the person's name either at the beginning or in the middle or end of the compliment). This is really Part I of a two-part series. Once you read and digested this book, check out [It's All Politics: Winning in a World Where Hard Work and Talent Aren't Enough](#) to take your political skills to the next level!

If you work in office it make sense to read this book to be aware of what is going behind of scene. It is going in people physiology and way people manipulate each other. This is not Carnegie style book how to trick customer to sale something. It is more about how to behave properly in corporate environment and how to read properly word and non-word messages. I would recommend this book.

It's been years since I bought this book, but I remember it not having much to offer besides some tips on being assertive. Right now I'm reading 'It's Always Personal: Navigating Emotion in the New Workplace,' which I feel offers more concrete tips on workplace behavior that could gain one more credibility with one's superiors.

I've noticed a wide variation of reviews, with most of the negative reviewers unable to separate the book and the subject. Office politics IS a distasteful activity...it wastes time and prevents many skilled workers from getting the rewards they deserve. But--as the author herself notes, it is here to stay, so either arm yourself or be robbed. I have read a number of office politics/OB books. What sets Reardon's book apart from the others is the following:--Self-evaluation tests...of your workplace and your personal style. Knowing yourself is the first step to optimizing yourself.--Relevant anecdotes...Reardon is an academic, and academic politics is really the second worst out there (the military is the worst). Furthermore, her experience as a consultant means she sees more politics in a year than most of us will see in a career.--She covers all aspects of the game. When to fight, when to give in, how to make up, how to build bridges, how to recognize barriers. This is a good overview of a nasty, brutish subject. Was it useful? Ask me in five years, when I'll have either made it or not.

I am very novice in handling political scenarios. This is a very good book and it has helped to understand various situations from a political perspective. After reading this book, I am able to articulate various situations that used to confuse me previously. I will recommend this book to everyone.

I connected with the subject matter from the get go. Overall, good read for the business-minded individual who wants to get ahead.

This work had some interesting tidbits here and there, but I felt on the whole it was rather thin. I think the thing that disturbed me the most, is that nowhere is adding value to the business is mentioned. I suppose that one could argue between perceived value and real value and perhaps that is the crux of politics. However it rather rubbed me the wrong way as it seems terribly self serving. I have been in corporations where the politically astute do have their way, influence decisions, then move on to their next corporate challenge leaving everyone else to clean up. However, suppose that fall more into the realm of ethics rather than politics. This book might be helpful to someone who really needs the ground up basics, but don't look here for any insight into deeper political management.

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