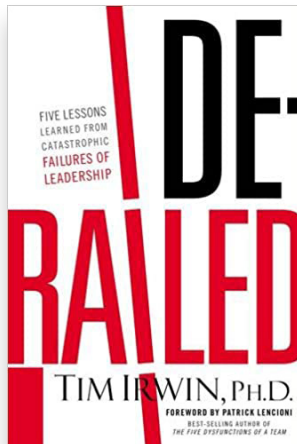


EXECUTIVE BOOK SUMMARIES

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Derailed THE NUTSHELL

Thomas Nelson 2009

SECTION ONE: RUNNING OFF THE RAILS

Chapter 1: Derailed

A failure to achieve the expected results in any work relationship can result in derailment.

SECTION TWO: PROFILES IN DERAILMENT

Note: This section contains a series of short biographies of corporate CEOs who have been derailed by personal choices, leadership styles, or character flaws.

SECTION THREE: DERAILMENT IN SLOW MOTION

Derailment is a Process

Stage I—A Failure of Self-/Other-Awareness. Derailed leaders seem oblivious to the impact of their behavior on others and of the resulting failure to build a strong, aligned team.

Stage II—Hubris: Pride Before the Fall. Hubris, or extreme arrogance, is seen in the leader who believes he or she is the epicenter of an organization's success.

Stage III—Missed Early Warning Signals. Otherwise talented leaders miss the warning signals represented by subtle but persistent feedback about their own inner states, others' diminishing confidence in them, or the wrong direction in which they are leading the company.

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Derailed

Stage IV—Rationalizing. In an attempt to maintain his psychological equilibrium, the derailing leader believes he is right and must stay the course, despite many warning signals to the contrary.

Stage V—Derailment. "I'm sorry... it's over."

SECTION FOUR: STAYING ON THE RAILS

What's Your Character Quotient?

Test #1: Does the leader have a strong moral / ethical guidance system that functions well in ambiguous situations?

Test #2: Does the leader make decisions just for expediency?

Test #3: Does the leader handle adversity with grace?

The Real Deal

A failure at authenticity frequently contributes to derailment. Here are some important aspects of being authentic that you can work on:

1. Get comfortable in your own skin—find out what you like about yourself.
2. Never, ever be arrogant.
3. Tell the truth.
4. Treat others with respect.
5. Build rapport with others by asking them questions about themselves.
6. Use self-deprecating humor. It personalizes you to others.
7. Share your true beliefs and convictions with those you trust.

Get A Hold of Yourself!

Self- and other-awareness, judgment, and self-management can be developed.

1. Grow in self-awareness by seeking feedback from multiple sources.
2. Find a wise and trusted advisor to help you interpret various work experiences and what you hear from others.
3. Be receptive to information about areas in which you are less than stellar.
4. Fine-tune your ability to connect with others.
5. Work on empathy.
6. Conduct a 360-degree feedback exercise.
7. Identify the circumstances under which you are likely to lose your composure—develop the early warning systems.
8. Wait longer to say something in meetings

Derailed

The Star of Your Own Show

Successful leaders possess extreme personal humility and intense professional will. Lack of humility can be lethal to our careers. Consider this:

1. Have an honest conversation with yourself about your own attitudes toward others. Do you feel smarter, more capable, or, in general, superior?
2. Be aware of self-promotion.
3. Develop a practice of recognizing others for their accomplishments.
4. Become more open to others and convey an interest in their opinions.
5. Be aware of how you may be perceived as aloof or withdrawn.
6. Get familiar with any non-verbal signals that you may be sending to others.
7. Ask a trusted advisor who's seen you in meetings how you come across.
8. Try to develop an inner calibration for when self-confidence crosses over to arrogance. Pay attention to those signals.

An Amazing Ordinary Hero

Courage emanates from our resolute beliefs and core convictions. Here are some suggestions for how it can happen:

1. Keep a journal about your experiences at work. Who do you admire? What inner convictions seem to guide them? What strikes you as courageous?
2. What are your convictions and bedrock beliefs? How confident are you that you will make courageous choices in tough situations?
3. Think about the influences that most shape your convictions.
4. When you have to deliver tough news, think about the timing and shape the message for the recipient. A trusted advisor can help you with this.
5. When you take a stand, make sure you have your facts right.
6. Managers hate it when they have to do our thinking for us. Be sure to have several possible remedies for a problem, along with a recommended solution.
7. Be courageous but be prudent about not throwing others under the bus.
8. Be willing to exercise the "nuclear option" as a last resort.

SECTION FIVE: ON TRACK FOR THE LONG HAUL

Five Critical Lessons Learned

Lesson One—Character Trumps Competence

Lesson Two—Arrogance is the Mother of All Derailers

Derailed

Lesson Three—Lack of Self-/Other-Awareness is a Common Denominator of All Derailments

Lesson Four—We Are Always Who We Are... Especially Under Stress

Lesson Five—Derailment Is Not Inevitable. But Without Attention to Development, It Is Probable

Habits of the Heart to Stay On Track

The Habit of Openness

The Habit of Self- / Other-Awareness

The Habit of Listening to Early Warning Systems

The Habit of Accountability

The Habit of Resiliency

Epilogue

It is my hope that this book will provide you with significant insight into who you are and how to be a person that stays on track. We need eight gigawatts of insight to be effective in today's workplace. We must keep intense light on our character as well as continue to become more and more competent at what we do.