



What They Don't Teach You at Harvard by Mark McCormack

There was a day when an MBA would be a sure ticket to riches and a promising career. However those that have succeeded in business always tend to have a competitive edge. In *What They Don't Teach You at Harvard Business School: Notes from a Street Smart Executive* by Mark H. McCormack, the author takes you into the no nonsense business world. He has made it in his own business and now he shares the secrets of his success.

As he outlines in the beginning, he tries to convey the people skills and the gut instinct needed to navigate the shark infested waters of business Mark McCormack is Founder, Chairman and CEO of sports marketing company International Management Group (IMG). He was named 'the most powerful man in sports' by Sports Illustrated. He first achieved fame as the manager of Arnold Palmer's money interests and is largely responsible for turning sports into big business with endorsements, lines of clothing, television programming, and such.

In this book McCormack does not so much criticize Harvard Business School as the title suggests, but complements the traditional business school-education with 'street smarts' - "the ability to make active, positive use of your instincts, insights, and perceptions." (Funnily enough, McCormack did not even attend the HBS, he has a law degree from Yale.) "My main purpose in writing this book is to fill in many of the gaps - the gaps between a business school education and the street knowledge that comes from day-to-day experience of running a business and managing people." He splits the 'street smarts' and this book up into three parts: People,

sales and negotiation, and running a business. With each part consisting of 4-to-6 chapters.

In the first part McCormack discusses matters related to people, such as reading people, creating impressions, preparation for business situations, and improving your career. "Business situations always come down to people situations. And the more - and the sooner - I know about the person I am dealing with, the more effective I'm going to be." In the second part of the book - Sales and Negotiation - the author discusses sales, negotiations and marketing. Sales and negotiations are probably the strongest point of both the book and McCormack, he really excels here. ...The third part of the book - Running a Business - is probably the weakest part of the book. Although there are some great one-liners, it is clear that the author is not that much at ease with writing about organization structures, policies and procedures. In fact, it looks like he despises most of these subjects. However, in the final chapter he provides some good advice for entrepreneurs and people thinking about starting their own business.

This book is somewhat unconventional and is not really a business/management book. The examples from his experiences in sports marketing are exceptional and extremely useful. And yes, it is a great complement to the traditional business school-education (although they are now covering some of the subjects McCormack discusses, under the term 'emotional intelligence'). It is very simple to read and relatively short (250 pages). Recommended to all MBA-students, and yes also managers.

