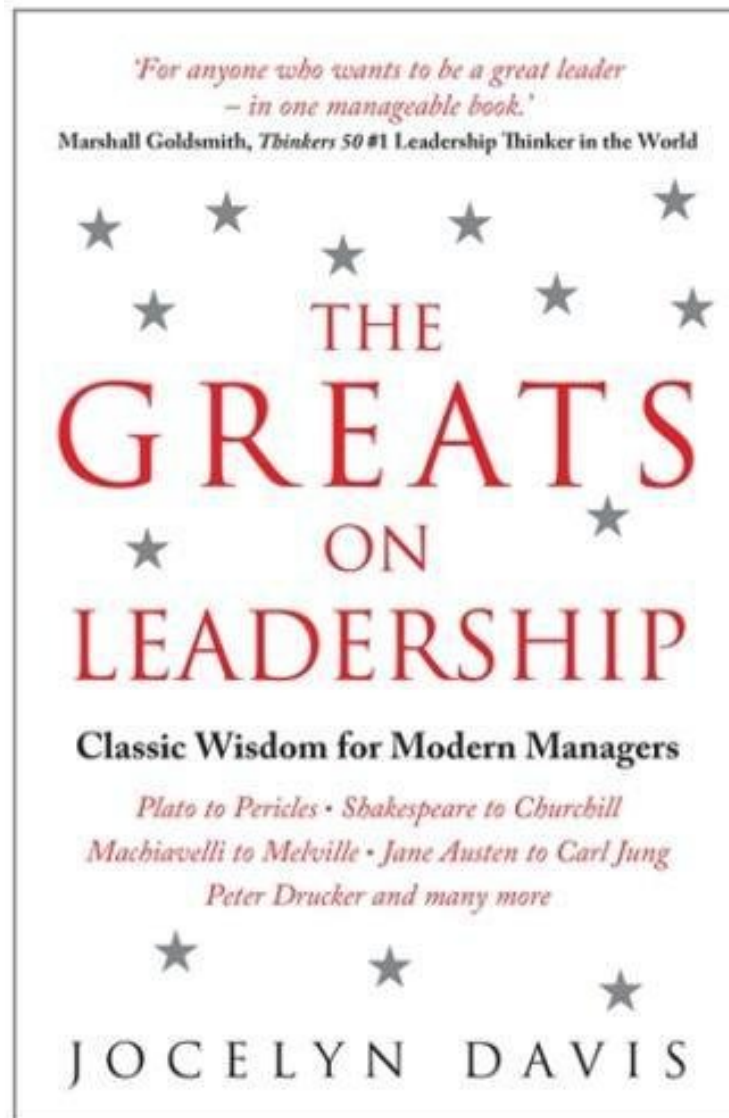


(Free) The Greats on Leadership: Classic Wisdom for Modern Managers

## The Greats on Leadership: Classic Wisdom for Modern Managers

Jocelyn Davis

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**Jocelyn Davis : The Greats on Leadership: Classic Wisdom for Modern Managers** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Greats on Leadership: Classic Wisdom for Modern Managers:

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Great tool for leadersBy CharGreats on Leadership is a rich and fascinating book that belongs on the bookshelf of all students of leadership. But a better place is in your briefcase, as it is loaded with ideas and tools to apply in preparing for your next leadership engagement, and frameworks to help you

process what you've learned and continuously improve your effectiveness as you go. Most leadership books that you might pick up at an airport bookstore have a catchy title, a simple model and compelling stories for getting the key points across. This one is different. Davis has done the heavy lifting to sort through the leadership literature through the ages to create a feast of examples and insights to be savored over time. In fact, each of the 24 chapters could be fleshed out into a stand-alone book that provides plenty of useful guidance. When I first saw the title, I admit that the dreaded A-word came to mind. That is academic -- which is business code for irrelevant. And then I read a few chapters and discovered, happily, that it is highly applicable to today's business challenges, and the writing is clear and engaging. Davis reminds us that leadership wasn't discovered by today's generation. While every company and organization on the planet seems to yearn for better leadership, it was always so. Better still, she puts leadership in a broad context from Moses to Lincoln, and Churchill to Lau Tzu -- in a way that helps us understand how great leaders think and what they do. Beyond the preface and introduction, don't feel the need to read it page by page. I suggest starting with one of four leadership domains: politics, battles, minds, and judgments; or people of most interest (Machiavelli, Melville, Shaw). Or you might start with more recent thinkers, like Marshall Goldsmith, and trace their intellectual roots -- to Shakespeare, no less! As a psychologist, I was drawn to the section on minds and was particularly struck by Victor Frankl's observations on the importance of human meaning, drawn from his experience in surviving the Holocaust. There are powerful lessons for leaders facing the more mundane challenge of increasing employee engagement by creating meaning, versus focusing on tangible rewards and incentives. While the challenges of leadership are daunting, Davis reminds us that students of leadership have many tall shoulders on which to stand. Read this book carefully and apply it thoughtfully, and some day others might be glad to stand on yours.

Tom Atkinson, Ph.D., Talent Development Professional

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. namely that the greatest tools for leaders in the modern workplace may be ...

By Learned Foot

I appreciate the central thesis of this book, namely that the greatest tools for leaders in the modern workplace may be the wisdom accumulated between the pages of the great and dusty books. Jocelyn Davis moves through a number of classics, and links each ancient (or not-so-ancient, as in the case of Roald Dahl) classic to a contemporary business thinker. This double set of lenses is an intriguing one. Such a project for a book is an ambitious one, but it's borne along well by Davis' speedy narration. In the first twenty pages, I laughed out loud while reading her humorous account of Cecil B. DeMille versus a feisty movie extra. Pop-culture references (e.g., looking at MBTI through an analysis of Harry Potter characters) also help to balance the serious and analytical ideas, making for an entertaining read. Though the book contains a lot of ideas, it doesn't get bogged down. The ideas are cleanly and efficiently presented. To quote a phrase I heard a lot while working as a consultant for McKinsey Co, it maintains the 20,000 foot view. It keeps things at the executive level. (And for this reason she justifiably recommends reading this book in tandem with the classics themselves, as this work provides more of a roadmap than an exegesis, designed to help readers uncover for themselves the lessons necessary in their particular business situation.) And it covers a lot of territory, both in literature, and some of the most important ideas in leadership development, culled from Davis' extensive experience in the field. One of the most exciting things about this book is how it deconstructs common ideas about leadership through very old wisdom. How have we forgotten what we used to know? Take, for example, the contrast between the charismatic flashy modern corporate leader who drives his division over its budget, in contrast with the tongue-tied and reluctant Moses leading the Exodus. Or notions of cut-and-dry, one-size-fits-all egalitarianism in contrast to Plato's notion that justice might mean treating different people differently. The final case-study on the Tao Te Ching, which emphasizes the leader who can fade into the background in an undistinguished but profoundly influential way, helps to dispel the idea of business leader as status-hoarder. The final few pages, in describing one of my favorite scenes from the Chronicles of Narnia, cement the importance of imaginative thinking even when the real world seems to be full of bad coffee and uninspired leadership, where no positive and lasting change appears possible. The book has a very practical flair, and its tables of key summarizing insights will be familiar to anyone who reads PowerPoint documents that distill an entire idea into a headline. Each of these ideas is well-worth unpacking, and the questions throughout the book provide opportunities for reflection. There is a wealth of insight to be found in this book, and study of it and the classics it describes could sustain a person or a group for many years in the aim of creating positive change in business.

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Chapters to address specific challenges is especially useful for quick and easy access to the information the ...

By Sylvia Celentano

As leaders we are always looking for perspective, ideas and beyond that, the ability to then translate those ideas into action with practical tools. Add to that, we are not dealing with machines but rather people. And we do not have psychology degrees. And who has time to read every lesson the world seems to offer? As Davis suggests, do a google search and you will receive an ocean of information. What I appreciate most about this book is the author's ability to pinpoint the most relevant topics, and then effortlessly take us from classic wisdom to action. Davis manages to invite the reader into a classical story. And she does so in just enough detail to extract the lesson from it. She then seamlessly transitions from the story to the lesson it offers and she applies it to current, relevant leadership challenges. If that weren't enough she adds simple tools, questions and steps to transfer the ah-ha into day to day life. Each chapter is rich with information and lives on its own. When thinking about Talent, turn to chapter 20 and pick up thought-provoking ideas to carry with you a simple set of questions to help you learn about

your person, their aspirations and ultimately to tap into their potential. I also appreciate the usability-factor built in to the book. Davis provides options and tools to guide the reader in using the book whether you prefer to work on your own, on an as-needed basis or with others. Table A2: Chapters to address specific challenges is especially useful for quick and easy access to the information the reader might be looking for. Finally, turn to the Contents Map what a succinct helpful tool to both navigate and appreciate the depth of thinking behind this resource. Davis is clearly a deep thinker and an elegant writer. She is able to translate complex into digestible. There are many resources to choose from. I found this one to be packed with value. Looking for a resource that can give real advice for tough leadership challenges? Choose this one. (Full disclosure: I worked closely with Davis for 15 years in the leadership development industry, and have seen her real-life leadership skills in action.)

You don't need a big title or a business degree in order to lead with impact. What you need is practical wisdom: the insight, judgment, and strength of character that all great leaders have, but that most business schools and corporate workshops don't teach. *The Greats on Leadership* gets you there. Jocelyn Davis takes you on an in-depth tour of the best leadership ideas of the past 25 centuries, featuring classic authors from Plato to Winston Churchill, Shakespeare to Jane Austen, C.G. Jung to Peter Drucker, and many more. In a style both thought provoking and entertaining, she shows how -history's great writers have always been, and still are, the real leadership gurus. Davis spells out the behaviors that distinguish true leaders from misleaders and covers 20 specific leadership topics, including: Leadership Traps (Shakespeare) Change (Machiavelli) Power (Sophocles) Dilemmas (Madison, Hamilton) Communication (Lincoln, Pericles) Personality Types (Jung) Motivation (Frankl) Judgment (Maupassant, Melville, Austen, Shaw) Character (Churchill, Plutarch, Shelley, Joyce) Each chapter begins with a synopsis of a great work by the author and then draws out the key leadership insights, weaving them together with business examples, the best contemporary research, and tools to help put it all into practice. In the last two chapters Davis presents a new way to think about leadership levels, framing them in terms of the impact you have rather than the title on your business card. Whether you're a recent graduate or MBA searching for something more inspiring than the standard textbook, a new manager looking for something deeper than the typical how-to book, or an experienced executive seeking ideas to lift you to the next level, this remarkably readable and practical guide will set you on the road to becoming a great leader.

A rare blend of old and new. Davis draws together leadership lessons with the best of modern business writers. Robert Mass, Partner, Head of International Compliance, Goldman Sachs Whenever I hear Jocelyn Davis talk about leadership, I listen. Her latest, *The Greats on Leadership*, is indispensable to the novice and a great resource for the experienced. Bryan Burrough, co-author of the #1 New York Times bestseller *Barbarians at the Gate* For anyone who wants to be a great leader in one manageable book. Marshall Goldsmith, *Thinkers 50* #1 Thinker on Leadership in the World Eminently practical. A great balance of introspection, inspiration, and impetus toward execution. 800-CEO-READS Editor's Choice A must-read for anyone who is serious about continuing their own evolution as a leader. Ed Boswell, former leader of PwC's People Change Practice A great reminder to think about leadership in terms of the scope of the leader's impact and not rungs on the corporate ladder. Carmelita Lubos, Director, Global Talent Management, Burberry Davis provides a book of substance that is a joy to read. In doing so, she demonstrates the relevance of the humanities even in a fast-changing 21st-century world. SUCCESS magazine Brings to life the writings of many of our most-loved authors and applies their thinking to present day business. This is a book you will return to, time and time again. Karen Blal, CIPD Regional Director Asia A uniquely insightful take on leadership development. Charles Miller, SVP Leadership Development, Citibank A rare book that meshes the deeply profound and personal wisdom of great writers and philosophers with immediately practical tools that anyone can apply. Court Chilton, Senior Lecturer, MIT Sloan Executive Education A delightful and mind stretching read that, when coupled with application tools and exercises, transforms the theoretical to the actionable. Richard Whiteley, author of *The Customer Driven Company*, *Love the Work You're With*, *The Corporate Shaman* About the Author Jocelyn Davis is an author and consultant with 25 years' experience in the corporate learning industry. Before founding her company, Seven Learning, she was head of RD for The Forum Corporation, a global leadership development firm. She is co-author of *Strategic Speed: Mobilize People, Accelerate Execution* (Harvard Business Press) and has published widely on leadership, strategy execution, and workplace learning. Her clients have included companies such as Microsoft, Disney, and Unilever. Known as an exceptional leader herself, she is the recipient of awards for excellence in management and product innovation. She holds an M.A. in Philosophy. She lives in Santa Fe, New Mexico, with her husband and daughter. [JocelynRDavis.wordpress.com](http://JocelynRDavis.wordpress.com) @JocelynRDavis