

Book Review

DISRUPT YOURSELF

MASTER RELENTLESS CHANGE AND SPEED UP YOUR LEARNING CURVE

Whitney Johnson, Harvard Business Review Press, Boston, Massachusetts, (2019), ISBN 978-1-63369-878-9, Page 95, Price \$20.49.

“Playing safely is not safe in today’s fast-paced competitive business environment. An individual, who seeks to stand out from the mob and practise novelty in highly uncertain business climate, works beyond the limits. Whitney Johnson has used the term “Disruption” – to understand why some individuals succeed in outstanding ways. The title of the book i.e. “Disrupt yourself” inspires us to make the jump onto new learning curves, innovate, and stay at the top of the game. It shows the inconceivable value of recognizing what you are good at and finding unpredicted ways to use those strengths to the marketplace. The dramatic ‘jumps’ that Johnson encourages us to take truly form the basis of creativity and success.”

“The author has made an attempt to apply the lessons of disruptive innovation to personal growth. She shows us how to pursue roles suited to our own strengths, to follow our own unique and innovative way of thinking and doing – and to significantly increase our efficiency, creativity, and happiness.”

“The first section of the book explains the ‘art of taking the right risk’. It’s been said that amateurs compete, professionals create. That sentiment applies to helping people take the right risks. High-growth individuals seek avenues to create. Managers who want to develop those individuals help them to find out the right opportunities. They don’t pit people against each other; they pit them against themselves.”

“The second section makes us learn how to ‘play to our own distinctive strengths’. The author stated that for high-growth companies and individuals, this is progressively more important. It’s human nature to obsess about weaknesses. In a typical 360-degree review, weaknesses are identified, and the focus placed on how to eliminate them. It is more effective to focus on distinctive strengths. When people feel strong, they are more willing to venture into new territory – to play where no one else is playing.”

“The third section focuses on ‘embracing the constraints’. The author suggested that constraints give us something to strike up against. They make us stronger and more determined. Whether we lack time, money, buy-in, or expertise, constraints can help us develop resourcefulness and use the lack to our advantage.”

“The fourth section of the book emphasizes upon ‘battle entitlement, the innovation killer’. This is the hardest – and most critical – accelerant to hold. As per the views of the author, It is possible to become a high-growth individual without some of the other competencies, but without this one, your hard work will certainly fall short. We keep our own interests above others such as coming up late for meetings, assuming things will go as we suppose, feeling jealous of another person’s success, and a myriad of other things. But the world does not revolve around one person. The story cannot be “It’s all about me.”

Professor Sima Kumari and Dr. Pratistha

Gratitude is the way forward because the focus is on what we already have and what is going right. Pay attention to what's going right and you'll grow faster."

"The fifth section represents the importance of 'step down, back, or sideways to grow'. The whole point of disruption is to move up the y-axis of success over the x-axis of time. When you disrupt yourself, you are making a conscious decision to leave a comfortable spot and move down the y-axis, on the premise that the slope of your next curve will be even steeper, leading to another period of rapid growth and success. Managers can make this possible – a carefully calculated step back can be an employee's slingshot to a high-growth future."

"The sixth section of the book provides insights about 'give failure its due'. The author believes that failure doesn't bound disruption; shame about failure does. High-achieving people need to be reminded of this. Failures are inevitable and can be instructive. Whether we see an experience as a failure or success is always our choice. Both the up and the down are part of personal disruption."

"The seventh section is about 'be driven by discovery'. The author stated that disruptors take the right risks and play where no one else is playing. Companies need people who can do a dogleg pivot and change trend as new data emerges. Seventy percent of all successful new businesses end up with a policy dissimilar than the one they originally pursued. Just as this is true for successful companies, it is true for people."

"The last section highly recommends the 'application of personal disruption in your team and company'. The author believes that the principles of personal disruption can have influential effects on the success of individuals, teams, and companies.

"Overall it is an excellent piece of wisdom which provides clear guidance that will help you both boost your career and become a driving force in market evolution. Her innovative approach proves that staying true to your own strengths can be groundbreaking, and often take you further than following established paths." It is great pleasure with which we have recommended this book as a must read book.

– Professor Sima Kumari and Dr. Pratistha