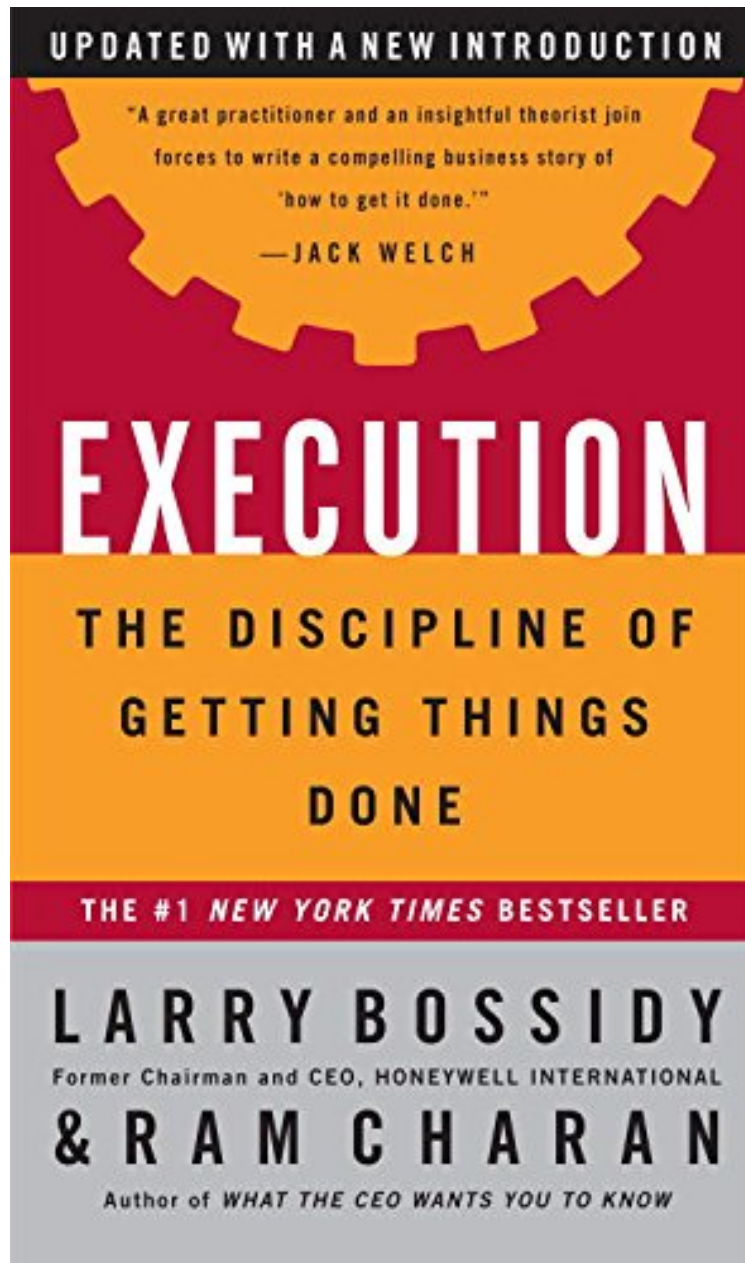


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Execution: The Discipline of Getting Things Done

Larry Bossidy, Ram Charan, Charles Burck
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The book that shows how to get the job done and deliver results . . . whether yours;re running an entire company or in your first management job Larry Bossidy is one of the world's most acclaimed CEOs, a man with few peers who has a track record for delivering results. Ram Charan is a legendary advisor to senior executives and boards of directors, a man with unparalleled insight into why some companies are successful and others are not. Together they've pooled their knowledge and experience into the one book on how to close the gap between results promised and results delivered that people in business need today. After a long, stellar career with General Electric, Larry Bossidy transformed AlliedSignal into one of the world's most admired companies and was named CEO of the year in 1998 by Chief Executive magazine. Accomplishments such as 31 consecutive quarters of earnings-per-share growth of 13 percent or more didn't just happen; they resulted from the consistent practice of the discipline of execution: understanding how to link together people, strategy, and operations, the three core processes of every business. Leading these processes is the real job of running a business, not formulating a "vision" and leaving the work of carrying it out to others. Bossidy and Charan show the importance of being deeply and passionately engaged in an organization and why robust dialogues about people, strategy, and operations result in a business based on intellectual honesty and realism. The leader's most important job--selecting and appraising people--is one that should never be delegated. As a CEO, Larry Bossidy personally makes the calls to check references for key hires. Why? With the right people in the right jobs, there's a leadership gene pool that conceives and selects strategies that can be executed. People then work together to create a strategy building block by building block, a strategy in sync with the realities of the marketplace, the economy, and the competition. Once the right people and strategy are in place, they are then linked to an operating process that results in the implementation of specific programs and actions and that assigns accountability. This kind of effective operating process goes way beyond the typical budget exercise that looks into a rearview mirror to set its goals. It puts reality behind the numbers and is where the rubber meets the road. Putting an execution culture in place is hard, but losing it is easy. In July 2001 Larry Bossidy was asked by the board of directors of Honeywell International (it had merged with AlliedSignal) to return and get the company back on track. He's been putting the ideas he writes about in Execution to work in real time.

.com Disciplines like strategy, leadership development, and innovation are the sexier aspects of being at the helm of a successful business; actually getting things done never seems quite as glamorous. But as Larry Bossidy and Ram Charan demonstrate in Execution, the ultimate difference between a company and its competitor is, in fact, the ability to execute. Execution is "the missing link between aspirations and results," and as such, making it happen is the business leader's most important job. While failure in today's business environment is often attributed to other causes, Bossidy and Charan argue that the biggest obstacle to success is the absence of execution. They point out that without execution, breakthrough thinking on managing change breaks down, and they emphasize the fact that execution is a discipline to learn, not merely the tactical side of business. Supporting this with stories of the "execution difference" being won (EDS) and lost (Xerox and Lucent), the authors describe the building blocks--leaders with the right behaviors, a culture that rewards execution, and a reliable system for having the right people in the right jobs--that need to be in place to manage the three core business processes of people, strategy, and operations. Both Bossidy, CEO of Honeywell International, Inc., and Charan, advisor to corporate executives and author of such books as What the CEO Wants You to Know and Boards That Work, present experience-tested insight into how the smooth linking of these three processes can differentiate one company from the rest. Developing the discipline of execution isn't made out to be simple, nor is this book a quick, easy read. Bossidy and Charan do, however, offer good advice on a neglected topic, making Execution a smart business leader's guide to enacting success rather than permitting demise. -- S. Ketchum From Library Journal Bossidy, an award-winning executive at General Electric and Allied Signal, came out of retirement to tend to Honeywell (and bring it back to prominence) after it failed to merge with General Electric. Charan has taught at Harvard and Kellogg Business Schools. Collaborating with editor and writer Burck, they present the viewpoint that execution (that is, linking a company's people, strategy, and operations) is what will determine success in today's business world. Bossidy and Charan aver that execution is a discipline integral to strategy, that it is the major job of any business leader hoping not just to be a success but to dominate a market, and that it is a core element of corporate culture. Details of both successful and unsuccessful executions at corporations such as Dell,

Johnson Johnson, and Xerox, to name a few, support not only their how-to method for bringing execution to the forefront but also the need for it. Each author addresses specific topics in paragraphs that begin with either "Larry" or "Ram," and this easy style adds to the appeal of a very readable book. Recommended for academic and public libraries.

Steven J. Mayover, Philadelphia
Copyright 2002 Reed Business Information, Inc. "If you want to be a CEO—or if you are a CEO and want to keep your job—read Execution and put its principles to work."

Michael Dell, chairman and CEO, Dell Computer Corp. "Good practical insight and advice on managing for results at firms of any size. Execution is key, and this book clearly explains what it means and how it brings together the critical elements of any organization—its people, strategies, and operations."

L. R. Raymond, chairman and CEO, Exxon Mobil "The best-thought-out plans in the world aren't worth the paper they're written on if you can't pull them off. And that's what this book is all about. Execution: The Discipline of Getting Things Done is well written and gives sound, practical advice about how to make things happen. It is well worth the reading."

Ralph S. Larsen, chairman and CEO, Johnson Johnson "Larry Bossidy recognizes how execution in a business defines the true greatness of a company. He captures a lifetime of building winning formulas and puts them in a simple and practical context for executives at any level. Read it!"

Ivan Seidenberg, president and chief executive officer, Verizon "For those managers who have struggled to make it happen, fix a problem, get it done—or otherwise transform winning strategies into genuine results—here's the missing medicine from two who know from long experience what works and what doesn't. Larry Bossidy and Ram Charan offer a compelling leadership prescription, and it comes down to realism, discipline, and above all, great execution."

Michael Useem, professor of management and director of the Center for Leadership and Change, Wharton School, University of Pennsylvania "Larry Bossidy and Ram Charan define the true meaning of leadership from an implementation p...