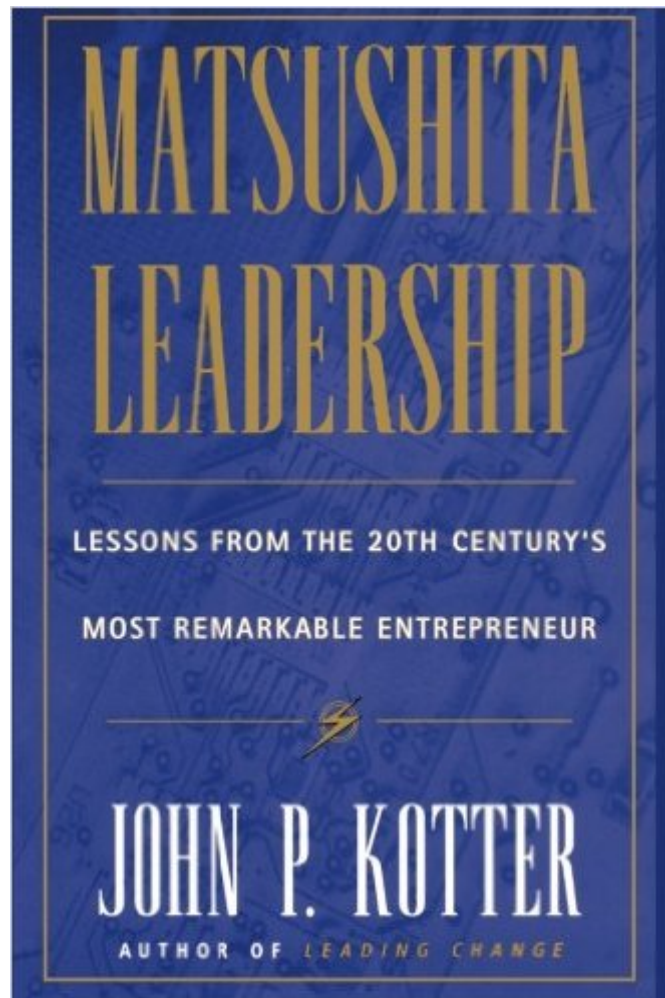


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Matsushita Leadership



Synopsis

He was one of the most inspirational role models of all time. Thrown into poverty at age four, Konosuke Matsushita (Mat-SOSH-ta) struggled with the early deaths of family members, an apprenticeship which demanded sixteen-hour days at age nine, all the problems associated with starting a business with neither money nor connections, the death of his only son, the Great Depression, the horror of World War II in Japan, and more. Yet John P. Kotter shows in this fascinating and instructive book how, instead of being ground down by these hardships, Matsushita grew to be a fabulously successful entrepreneur and business leader, the founder of Japan's General Electric: the \$65 billion a year Matsushita Electric Corporation. His accomplishments as a leader, author, educator, philanthropist, and management innovator are astonishing, and outshine even Soichiro Honda, J.C. Penney, Sam Walton, and Henry Ford. In this immensely readable book, Kotter relates how Matsushita created a large business, invented management practices that are increasingly being used today, helped lead his country's economic miracle after World War II wrote dozens of books in his latter years, founded a graduate school of leadership, created Japan's version of a Nobel Prize, and gave away hundreds of millions to good causes. The Matsushita story expands our notion of the possible, even for a sickly youngster who did not have the benefit of a privileged background, education, good looks, or a charismatic presence. It tells us much about leadership, entrepreneurship, a drive for lifelong learning, and their roots. It demonstrates the power of a longterm outlook, idealistic goals, and humility in the face of great success. Matsushita Leadership is both a biography and a set of lessons for careers and corporations in the 21st century. An inspirational story and a business primer, the implications are powerful, for organizations and for living a meaningful life.

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Customer Reviews

This is a rare attempt by an American to profile an Asian entrepreneur and world-renowned corporate leader. Because of the rather more subtle and complex social structures in Asia, which is particularly even more so in Japan, it is the rare non-Asian who is able to peer through the intricate webs and be able to grasp at the essence. Kudos to John Kotter

Business environment ALWAYS 'create' Entropy. Some people have power to 'control' this ... This is a book about a PERSON that has this power. A history of a little boy that was MASTERED by 'nature' to turn one of the greatest LEADER of this century

Most business Titan's come up with a philosophy to propagate their enterprise, but Konosuke comes up with an empire under the sun to propagate a philosophy, that of co-existence and co-prosperity. He came up with the Division structure of Management at about the same time as Alfred P. Sloan of General Motors, but was lessor known. Dr. Kotter unravels the mystery in this splendid book.

There are few entrepreneurs left in Japan today, and Panasonic is one of those behemoths which went astray under bureaucratic consensus driven management producing 47 rice cookers when none made any money any longer. It would be good if they not only venerated their founder, but actually applied what he practiced when he set up a little sweat shop producing light bulb fittings in Osaka. Kotter retells the biography of this great man, a classical story from rags to riches, and he tells it well without undue adulation, including the company's fate during the war and Matsushita's private tragedies. In his later life he may have adhered to few sectarian sounding ideas (the Tenrykyo sect may have inspired his "Peace and Happiness through prosperity" concepts). But this should not detract from the decadelong self-sacrifice, boundless drive, cost cutting and risk taking which he undertook during his professional life to create a leading world electronics conglomerate, which only started to stumble once he exited from this world. Kotter has researched well and writes engagingly. The book is definitely worth a read, if only to understand Japanese corporate history and its past entrepreneurial culture of the last century.

This is one of the best books I have read. There are many lessons that can be learned by reading this book. The book shows that even with major adversity, success can still be achieved.

The book provides an insight on what make Matsushita san tick, and drive, very happy to have got this book.

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