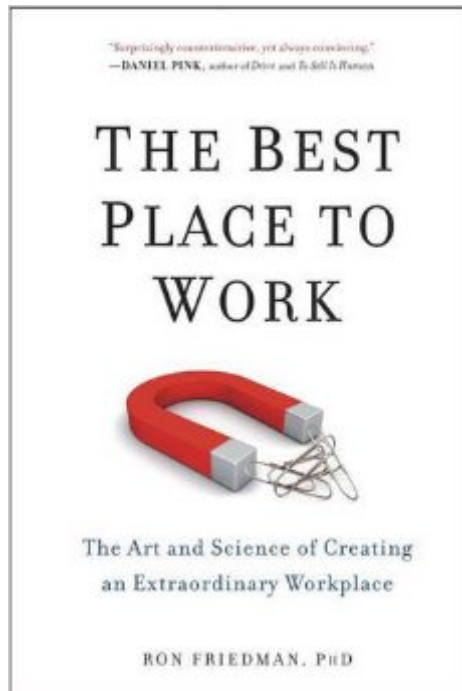


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# The Best Place To Work: The Art And Science Of Creating An Extraordinary Workplace



## Synopsis

For readers of Malcolm Gladwell, Daniel Pink, and *Freakonomics*, comes a captivating and surprising journey through the science of workplace excellence. Why do successful companies reward failure? What can casinos teach us about building a happy workplace? How do you design an office that enhances both attention to detail and creativity? In *The Best Place to Work*, award-winning psychologist Ron Friedman, Ph.D. uses the latest research from the fields of motivation, creativity, behavioral economics, neuroscience, and management to reveal what really makes us successful at work. Combining powerful stories with cutting edge findings, Friedman shows leaders at every level how they can use scientifically-proven techniques to promote smarter thinking, greater innovation, and stronger performance. Among the many surprising insights, Friedman explains how learning to think like a hostage negotiator can help you diffuse a workplace argument, why placing a fish bowl near your desk can elevate your thinking, and how incorporating strategic distractions into your schedule can help you reach smarter decisions. Along the way, the book introduces the inventor who created the cubicle, the president who brought down the world's most dangerous criminal, and the teenager who single-handedly transformed professional tennis—vivid stories that offer unexpected revelations on achieving workplace excellence. Brimming with counterintuitive insights and actionable recommendations, *The Best Place to Work* offers employees and executives alike game-changing advice for working smarter and turning any organization—regardless of its size, budgets, or ambitions—into an extraordinary workplace.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This is my favorite book of the year! It's packed with science-based guidance on how to be a better employee, a better manager, and a better business owner. I'm the founder and CEO of a relatively new company, and this book is now my go-to guide for how to build my business in the most effective way possible. I'm a behavioral scientist myself, with a Ph.D. in Brain and Cognitive Sciences, so I certainly appreciate the value of applied research, but the truth is that I honestly don't have the time to stay current on all the studies that are published on how to motivate employees, how to hire, how to design effective office spaces, and how to gain a competitive advantage in the knowledge-based economy. This book compiles over 1000 peer-reviewed scientific journal articles, saving me years of time and effort. The best part of the book is the tools guide at the end of each chapter--a little checklist of action items for managers, business owners, and up-and-coming employees. I don't have to reread the book to make sure that I'm applying its lessons; I can just refer to the end of each chapter to make sure I'm on track. I can't say enough good things about this book. It's totally riveting and fun to read. FIVE STARS!

Ron Friedman did us all a favor here. He synthesizes a massive index of academic research, boils it all down into digestible nuggets, and helps us piece together some really interesting insights. What's more, he shows us why the research matters: It's one thing to know the research results, it's another thing to help the reader understand what the results mean. And that's what Friedman did here. And don't let the title fool you - this book is not just for managers. This is a book that nearly anyone can benefit from. Whether you are an executive, a ground-level employee, an intern, a student, an academic researcher, a stay-at-home dad or mom, a retiree, or just somebody looking to improve their lot in life, then this book is for you. I personally found value in thinking about how to run my academic lab as a small business - how to motivate my undergraduate research assistants in ways that we both benefit, how to create an atmosphere conducive to excellence, and how to operate in ways that everyone functions at their highest levels of performance. I give this book a hands-down two-thumbs-up. A truly wonderful read, and an admirable way to share science in a way that readers will appreciate, understand, and hopefully apply! Other things I liked: contextualizing many processes as unconscious and evolved in nature, which does a huge service to the theories behind the results. Reporting studies by sharing the methods and not just the results. Interesting storytelling at the beginning of each chapter that motivates the topic.

This book takes an incredible amount of recent research in several different areas of psychology, recaps it in a style that's really easy for anyone to understand, and talks directly about how these findings can impact us all at work. The topics cover just about every work-related angle you can think of, including office space design, navigating job interviews, the benefits of office relationships, and even why other things we DON'T always associate with success at work (like sleeping, working out, and screwing up) are actually really important. Not only is this book really fun to read (I honestly couldn't put it down until I finished a chapter), but it's completely practical. There are clear pointers at the end of each section on how you can use this research at your own job. You'll be able to take something important from this book no matter what field you're in, or what kind of job you have. It doesn't matter if you're a manager, an aspiring manager, or the kind of person who wants nothing to do with management - as long as you HAVE a job (or even if you don't at the moment, but might like one in the future), you'll get plenty out of this book. This is one of the most engaging books I've read in a while. Highly recommended.

In essence, this is a pretty simple book. Ron Friedman sifted through an enormous amount of research on human motivation, then distilled it into a series of best practices for creating a "great" (as in effective, positive, efficient, successful) workplace. As an avid reader of this type of business book (I've probably read 20 of these in the last three years), I give it very high marks for both the content and the writing itself. It's fun to read. It's brisk, well-paced and well-constructed. Parts had me laughing out loud. But it's also fascinating and loaded with actionable insights that I was immediately able to use. (The section on the failings of job interviews should be a must-read for anyone looking for a job). My biggest criticism of the book is that the title is a little misleading. Yes, this book is essentially a guide for creating "the best place to work." But it's not just for senior executives, entrepreneurs and HR people. Anyone seeking to get more out of their work experience should read this book.

The Best Place To Work draws together research from a variety of disciplines within psychology to explain how we can implement scientific findings to cultivate the best possible work environment. Friedman not only discusses psychological research that directly speaks to employee satisfaction and productivity, but also masterfully integrates scientific findings from areas of psychology that one might not intuitively connect to enhancing office conditions. Not only does this book offer a wealth of scientifically-based practical solutions for business owners, managers, and CEO's, it also provides

insight to the average employee -- it sheds light on why we may or may not enjoy going to the office everyday, and what we could do to make our own day-to-day work life more pleasurable. Friedman weaves science with personal narratives, humorous anecdotes, and world events making this an engaging and enjoyable read.

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