

ARE YOU READY TO BREAK FROM THE PACK?

Oren Harari's book "Break from the pack" focuses on how to break away from – and then stay ahead of -- "the pack" and thrive in what will probably continue to be a "Copycat Economy," even as a process of natural selection seems to eliminate faster than ever, those organisations that are unwilling and/or unable to adapt to new (albeit painful) realities in their competitive environment.

Through entertaining chapters with names like "Welcome to Commodity Hell," "Consolidate for Cool," and "The Madonna Effect and the Willie Nelson Principle: The Power of Calculated Re-Invention," Business Professor Harari takes you on a fascinating ride to find out how to stay ahead of the pack. He demonstrates what makes companies like Google, GE, Starbucks, Apple, Wal-Mart and Toyota so successful, as well as cutting-edge businesses. To stay ahead in today's market, it's imperative that businesses be fresh, innovative and compelling. Clinging to old habits and methods, Harari argues, can be deadly.

After framing his argument in the prologue, Harari divides the rest of his book into three parts:

- The first is resisting the pull of the pack.
- Part 2 provides a series of six chapters on how to break from the pack
- The third part is a chapter on a 12 step recovery program so you can become the Leader of the Pack and an epilogue.

In Part One, Oren encourages the reader to identify their own "copycat" behaviour, by listing and describing in detail "The Ten Compulsions guaranteed to keep you mired in the pack". These include "The Compulsion to Cut Costs" as well as "The Compulsion to ask customers what they want." Just as we are forced to question all of our pre-conceived business ideas, we are presented with an image of success to emulate. Harari cites Madonna as the supreme business

success – a brand whose consistent reinvention provides the key to resisting the pull of the pack.

Part Two offers six courses of action to “copy-proof” your organisation. Harari uses several David and Goliath examples to demonstrate the triumph of diversity over grandeur, including that of Disney–Pixar, in which Pixar profit’s are six times that of Disney’s. Harari also uses the example of Cirque du Soleil to demonstrate the positive effects of inquisitive, imaginative leadership and the embracing of diversity to help the organisation find its “higher cause.”

Part Three of the book lists 12 steps to help your career and your organisation “break from the pack.” One of the most interesting is “Team up with Aliens” encouraging us to embrace new and original business partners. We are told of the example of 3M, who worked with Hollywood make-up artists and veterinary surgeons to research their new products.

"Oren Harari has done it again! He has produced a fascinating book that inverts the rules and that will keep you up at night remaking your management strategy and tactics."

- Karen Ignagni, CEO, American Health Insurance Plans (AHIP)

"Break From the Pack is a refreshing look at the fundamentals of business success, written in clear, concise language with real content and practical advice."

- Gordon Bethune, retired former Chairman and CEO, Continental Airlines, Inc.

This is quite an enjoyable book for those of us who are interested in business and what it takes to win in the marketplace. Why slog it out when you can be out front where the air is good and no one is stepping on your feet?

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