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Book Review: *Secrets of the Young and Successful: How to Get Everything You Want without Waiting a Lifetime* by Kushnell, Jennifer and Kaufman, Scott M. 2003, New York: Fireside, 317 pages, paperback. ISBN 0-7432-2758-1

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Summary

This book provides several 'success secrets.' The introduction follows a description of young and successful people and their accomplishments. Further, it teaches how to assess individual capacity, how to build a vision for an 'ideal life,' and how to write a grand plan. A lot of emphasis is given to "stimulators" which are the key factors that help to achieve the "ideal life" (Kushnell & Kaufman, 2003, p. 19).

Introduction

The authors Jennifer Kushnell and Scott M. Kaufman are co-founders of the Young and Successful Media Corporation (Y & S Media). Ms. Kushnell is the President of Y & S Media and is actively involved in many business partnerships across the globe. Mr. Kaufman is the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Y & S Media and has previously worked as a consultant in strategic development.

The authors encourage young individuals and entrepreneurs to pursue the impossible. The objective of the authors is to help readers learn the secrets of young people who have exploited unconventional opportunities to achieve early success in life.

The book has a simple, informative, and easy-to-read format. It starts with part 1: a chapter presenting the characteristics of young and successful people. It is followed by part 2 which comprises three chapters: the first analyzes peoples' personal strengths and weaknesses, the second discusses factors that motivate and bring fulfillment to entrepreneurs, and the third discusses how to create a plan of action. Part 3 consists of the seven chapters discussing the success factors or as the authors call it, "the stimulators" (Kushnell & Kaufman, 2003, p. 19).

Analysis and Evaluation

The authors' objective is "to enable [us] to make as many rights moves as [we] can from the beginning, and for as much of [our] life as possible" (Kushnell & Kaufman, 2003, p. 256). This is made possible through the guidelines on how to reach the 'ideal life'.

Instead of the traditional view where success is measured based on money, power, position, fame, or business, this book promotes reaching success in whatever someone wants to do. This is supported by examples from history of young people who have reached significant achievements (Kushnell & Kaufman, 2003, pp. 7-8). The writers discuss how to be yourself, to persevere, to be honest, to love what you do, to make use of your competencies, and to be content (Kushnell & Kaufman, 2003, pp. 89-93). Biographies of persons with disabilities

and of those who have faced difficult circumstances in life are included to show that achieving success despite challenges is possible (Kushnell & Kaufman, 2003, pp. 47-50).

The way the authors describe the characteristics of successful individuals, their aspirations, and qualities instantly grabs the readers' attention. The success stories are of people who are 15-35 years old. They are unfazed by challenges and are intrinsically motivated, which is highly inspiring.

Chapter two discusses self-reflection and personal progress assessment. The chapter discusses "writing books, building an impressive client list, researching untapped niches, appearing in prominent publications, sitting on corporate and non-profit boards, and speaking at industry events," which help to "build credentials" (Kushnell & Kaufman, 2003, p. 28). The writers also emphasize the importance of "reinvesting in ourselves through time," "making sacrifices," "being guided towards where we want to go early in life," and "celebrating our accomplishments" (Kushnell & Kaufman, 2003, p. 46, p. 51, p. 31).

A major part of "reflecting", is "visioning", which means writing down "indicators or measures of success of our vision in life to check on our direction and progress" (Kushnell & Kaufman, 2003, p. 55). This practice concretizes our vision. The book advises "to write the top five ideas for [three] professional items, [i.e., major milestones, accomplishments and benchmark events]" (Kushnell & Kaufman 2003, p. 80). This helps to realize our vision.

The "stimulators" (Kushnell & Kaufman, 2003, p. 19) discussed in the book are truly important to succeed. However, there are basic intrinsic qualities and personality traits required to activate the "stimulators" (Kushnell & Kaufman, 2003, p. 19). An individual should have the passion or a deeply rooted interest to be inspired and motivated, and to identify and pursue what they want to accomplish. Also, they should have the determination and discipline to develop the willpower to take initiative to apply the "stimulators" (Kushnell & Kaufman, 2003, p. 19). Without these basic intrinsic qualities and personality traits, the individual could not start or sustain their 'ideal life'.

"Researching or studying and understanding different industries, communities, cultures, people, places, and other information" (Kushnell & Kaufman, 2003, p. 127) is the initial

step to pursuing our vision in life. But most of the time, this step is overlooked. Most consider it time consuming and prefer to conveniently copy others. Such behaviour could be misleading as it may result in trial-and-error, which in turn becomes time consuming and unhelpful in achieving the 'ideal life'. Complementary to research, the "experiences we gain by testing and discovering" (Kushnell & Kaufman, 2003, p. 169, p. 189), "learning time management, learning from other experienced people from different disciplines and occupations" are equally helpful in achieving the 'ideal life' (Kushnell & Kaufman, 2003, p. 198, p. 214, p. 193).

Two "stimulators" (Kushnell & Kaufman, 2003, p. 19) manage our emotions and test our discipline, which is of utmost importance in handling challenges. The book advises on how to strengthen our "foundations and roots" [by] "establishing credentials, expertise, and experiences" (Kushnell & Kaufman, 2003, pp. 230, 231) and "to use our personality and take action to expect and confront fear, failure, mistakes, and challenges" (Kushnell & Kaufman, 2003, p. 252). The test of discipline in managing finances helps us control our urge to spend for leisure and pleasure. The book provides excellent tips on how to "generate income from different sources," (Kushnell & Kaufman, 2003, pp. 263-264), to "allocate 10% of our salary as savings," (Kushnell & Kaufman, 2003, p. 266), to "view and use money as a tool" (Kushnell & Kaufman, 2003, p. 266), and "to resist money's interference with life" (Kushnell & Kaufman, 2003, p. 267).

The last two "stimulators" (Kushnell & Kaufman, 2003, p. 19) teach how to enhance our "inner circle of confidants" (Kushnell & Kaufman, 2003, p. 270). One piece of advice is to "create a network and support group consisting of mentors, a personal board of advisors, and others who can support us" (Kushnell & Kaufman 2003, pp. 272-273). The writers also advocate being a part of "key players in offices with key decision and policy makers," (Kushnell & Kaufman, 2003, p. 312).

Conclusion

The book teaches the secrets of the young and successful, through guidelines on how to research, take time to reflect, and activate the 'stimulators'. These guidelines are supported by exercises, methods, techniques, and tools. The book also discusses intrinsic qualities,

personality traits, taking action, and relating to others as major contributory factors to success. Thus, by practicing these guidelines, anyone could achieve success at a relatively young age.

Reference

Kushnell, J. and Kaufman, S. M., (2003). *Secrets of the young and successful: How to get everything you want without waiting a lifetime*. New York: Fireside. ISBN 0-7432-2758-1

Biographical Note

Dr. Raymund Sisenando R. Mercado completed the Doctor of Communication, Master in Business Management and Human Resources Development, and the Bachelor of Science in Tourism degrees from the University of the Philippines. He holds a Postgraduate Certificate in Intercultural Management from the Japan-America Institute of Management Science, Hawaii, USA. For more than 25 years, he has assisted numerous international and national private and development-oriented organizations. He was a former manager in Far Eastern University at Manila, St. Paul University at Quezon City, and University of the East at Caloocan City; a manager at a savings bank at Pasig City main office; and a Development Consultant for Asia Africa Pacific, a Manila-based international development training and consulting firm. He has received recognitions and awards and has presented research papers in Japan, South Korea, Singapore, Indonesia, Malaysia, India, Italy, Greece, United States of America, and Mauritius. He has researched in the areas of work productivity and human resource development, general management, marketing, tourism, and capacity development.