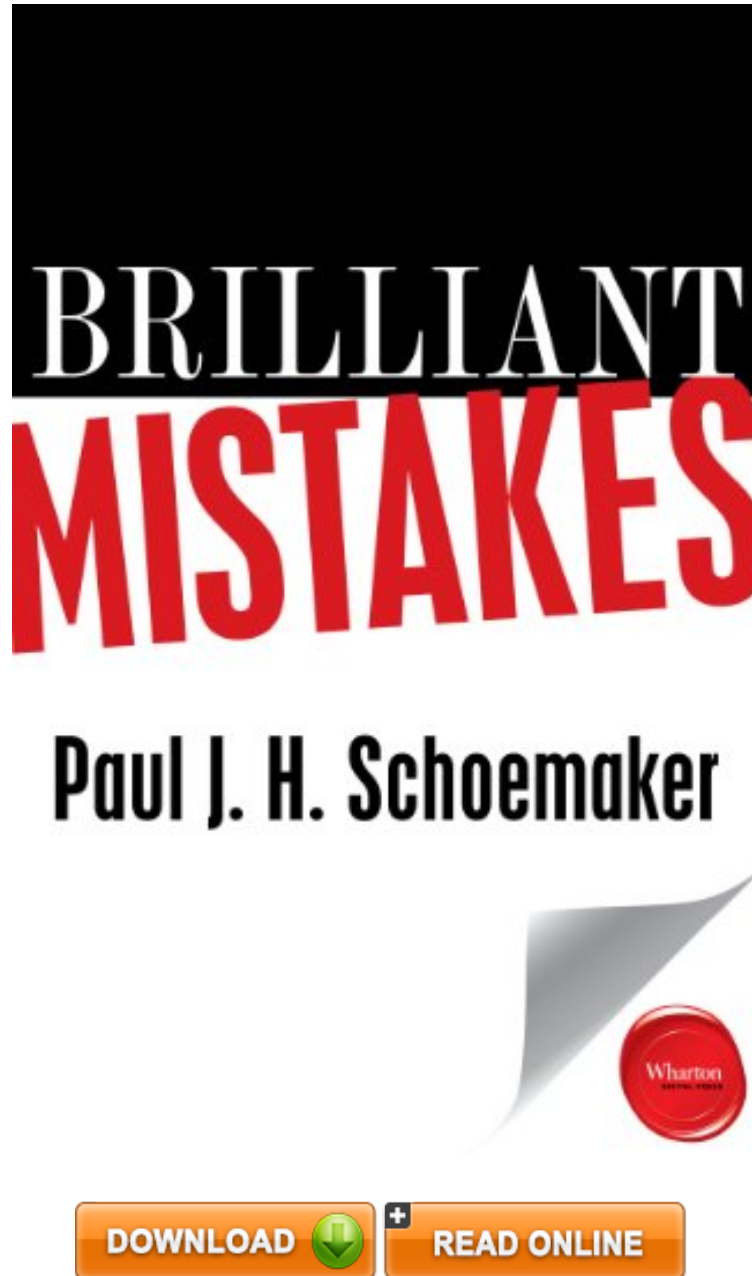


[DOWNLOAD] Brilliant Mistakes: Finding Success on the Far Side of Failure

## Brilliant Mistakes: Finding Success on the Far Side of Failure

*Paul Schoemaker, Paul J. H. Schoemaker*  
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**Paul Schoemaker, Paul J. H. Schoemaker : Brilliant Mistakes: Finding Success on the Far Side of Failure** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Brilliant Mistakes: Finding Success on the Far Side of Failure:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. How and why mistakes "enlarge our range of experience, shrink our ego, and thereby increase the chance of discovery."By Robert MorrisThe title of this review was excerpted from a longer passage worthy of inclusion now. Paul Schoemaker observes, "The great virtue of mistakes, whether they occur accidentally or by design, is their ability to enlarge our range of experience, shrink our ego, and thereby increase the

chance of discovery. If you accept that humans are myopic and largely unaware of their own bounded rationality, then some degree of mistake-making is appropriate and welcome. This is especially hard in organizations but leaders can start by instituting awards like the Golden Egg." That is, view mistakes as (potentially) valuable assets, not as "failures." Schoemaker notes that one CEO obtained some empty L'eggs pantyhose plastic eggs, sprayed them with gold paint, and used them when awarding the "best mistake of the month." That is, the mistake from which the most valuable information was obtained. As Thomas Edison never missed an opportunity to point out, understanding what doesn't work is critically important to determining what does. Several passages caught my eye. For example, "Four Factors Impacting a Decision's Outcome," each of which has the potentiality to "blind us about the quality of a decision, to lead us away from the path of truly understanding another person's judgment toward quick but potentially false and unfair conclusions." (Pages 14-22) Another, "Conditions That Favor Deliberate Mistakes," offers invaluable advice when mistakes should be encouraged because long-term learning is more important than short-term results. "Consider the strategy of deliberate mistakes as one of many tools that managers can employ when operating on the right side of the knowledge spectrum." (Pages 88-92). Still another, in Chapter 7, traces "the pathway of a brilliant mistake" that led a Scottish scientist, Alexander Fleming, to the eventual discovery of penicillin. (Pages 120-126). When concluding his brilliant book, Schoemaker asserts, "The key question companies need to address is not *Should we make mistakes?* but rather *Which mistakes should we make in order to test our deeply held assumptions?*"

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Looking at the "F" word

By Dr. Michael Shaner I teach a University management class on "Failing Forward" where we look at individual, group, and organizational failure. This is a good book with numerous examples of failures that were turned into successes. Failure must be talked about because it is part of life. This book can inspire people to keep trying when faced with failure.

2 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Significant insights for decision makers

By John Gibbs All mistakes are not created equal; it is possible to design for brilliant mistakes - those that accelerate learning and lead to breakthrough innovation - and to avoid tragic ones, according to Paul Schoemaker in this book. Some mistakes have high cost and offer little learning value, but others cost little and produce deep valuable insight. Those are the ones which need to be embraced and fostered. Some of the insights contained in the book:

- \* To learn from mistakes, it is important to separate the decision process (which you control) from the outcomes (which are usually influenced by external factors)
- \* Humans have a tendency to seek confirming evidence, whereas the whole truth can often only be discovered by deliberately seeking disconfirming evidence
- \* To make better decisions, we must adopt a humble view on how much we know about the world around us; we must frequently challenge and test potentially outdated assumptions
- \* Organizations should identify their assumptions and deliberately set up experiments to challenge some of them where there is low risk and high potential gain
- \* It is wise to establish a varied portfolio of potential failures to increase the chances of some turning out to be brilliant mistakes

While I do not particularly like the term "brilliant mistakes", I found the author's arguments persuasive. Beneficial innovations can only arise as a result of doing something differently, and that usually involves challenging the established wisdom of departing from the established procedures. Often such deviations will be based on the contrarian "hunch" of an individual and so are deliberate although established wisdom might view them as mistakes. This book is suitable for leaders of all types of organizations, not just those who aim to be innovators, because all organizations benefit from a decision-making process that takes into account the role of mistakes.

If you have ever flown in an airplane, used electricity from a nuclear power plant, or taken an antibiotic, you have benefited from a brilliant mistake. Each of these life-changing innovations was the result of many missteps and an occasional brilliant insight that turned a mistake into a surprising portal of discovery. In *Brilliant Mistakes*, Paul Schoemaker, founder and chairman of Decision Strategies International, shares critical insights on the surprising benefits of making well-chosen mistakes. *Brilliant Mistakes* explores why minimizing mistakes may be the greatest mistake of all, situations when mistakes are most beneficial and when they should be avoided, the counter-intuitive idea that we should deliberately permit errors at times, and how to make the most of brilliant mistakes to improve business results. *Brilliant Mistakes* is based on solid academic research and insights from Schoemaker's work with more than 100 organizations, as well as his provocative Harvard Business Review article with Robert Gunther, "The Wisdom of Deliberate Mistakes." Schoemaker provides a practical roadmap for using mistakes to accelerate learning for your organization and yourself.

"A roadmap for using business failures to generate path-breaking innovations.... Schoemaker presents broad and deep perspectives on why mistakes remain underutilized portals of discovery in most organizations. Although it may disrupt your mental models, this engaging, wide-ranging, and innovative book is a must-read."—Clayton Christensen, Kim B. Clark Professor of Business Administration, Harvard University, author of *The Innovator's Dilemma*, *The Innovator's Prescription*, and *The Innovator's Solution*

"All of us, from educators to CEOs, will profit from taking to heart Schoemaker's messages—this book is both brilliant and fun to read."—John Seely Brown, Co-Chair, Deloitte Center for the Edge, Visiting Scholar Advisor to the Provost, University of Southern

California; Coauthor, *The Power of Pull and A New Culture of Learning* “In *Brilliant Mistakes*, Schoemaker brilliantly pulls off a tricky three-way balance: a solid grounding in behavioral and managerial research, engaging and entertaining examples from many endeavors (business, sports, physics, medicine, music, art, literature), and clear and concrete recommendations for how to make the right kind of mistakes and how to extract the gold that’s in them.” —Joshua Klayman, Founding Partner, Humanly Possible, Inc.; Professor Emeritus of Behavioral Science, University of Chicago Booth School of Business “Elegantly combining stories, personal insights, and practical models, Schoemaker offers both notable inspiration and fine guidance to those in pursuit of true innovation. Not reading this book will be a mistake—and not a brilliant one!” —Carsten Bjerg, CEO, Grundfos, Denmark “*Brilliant Mistakes* tackles the hardest stage of the innovation process, namely challenging the current business model and seeing opportunities before others do (box 3 in my terminology).” —Vijay Govindarajan, Professor at Tuck School of Business at Dartmouth College, Coauthor of *Ten Rules for Strategic Innovators* and *The Other Side of Innovation* “This is a must-read for anyone seeking both perfection and innovation; short-term performance and long-term learning; the pride of excellence and the humility to make deliberate mistakes; and the tolerance for many dumb mistakes to produce a few brilliant ones.” —Steve Bonner, President and CEO, Cancer Treatment Centers of America “Essential.... With his customary wit and analytic sharpness, Paul Schoemaker explains how to identify and encourage the sort of high-risk, high-return ‘mistakes’ that can open up new markets, create strategic opportunities, and invigorate organizations.” —Michael Mandel, Chief Economic Strategist, Progressive Policy Institute, and Former Chief Economist, *Business Week* “Mining mistakes often yields great value immediately, but more importantly, it will change your company’s culture to embrace innovation and risk taking over the long run.” —F. Mark Gumz, Retired President and C.E.O. Olympus Corporation of the Americas “*Brilliant Mistakes* offers a creative and practical road map for designing for and learning from mistakes.” —Yoram (Jerry) Wind, Lauder Professor, Director of SEI Center for Advanced Studies in Management, Academic Director of The Wharton Fellows Program, The Wharton School; Coauthor of *The Power of Impossible Thinking* “In intriguing style—and with examples from many fields—Paul Schoemaker shows not only how to profit from mistakes but also what kinds of mistakes can lead to better learning and innovation.... A great read. Bravo!” —Robin M. Hogarth, ICREA Research Professor at Universitat Pompeu Fabra, Barcelona, author of *Educating Intuition, Judgement and Choice*, and *Dance with Chance* “Schoemaker lays the foundation for corporations to fundamentally alter their DNA by teaching us how to reframe our thinking about mistakes by making them a part of our accepted ‘rules of engagement’.... A DIY handbook for every leader seeking to make a difference.” —Govi Rao, CEO, Noveda “An utterly brilliant book... Kudos to Schoemaker for highlighting such an important aspect of creating value from unexpected outcomes! It is a must-read for every researcher and innovation leader in every organization.” —Larry Huston, CEO, 4iNNO, and Former Innovation Officer, Procter Gamble