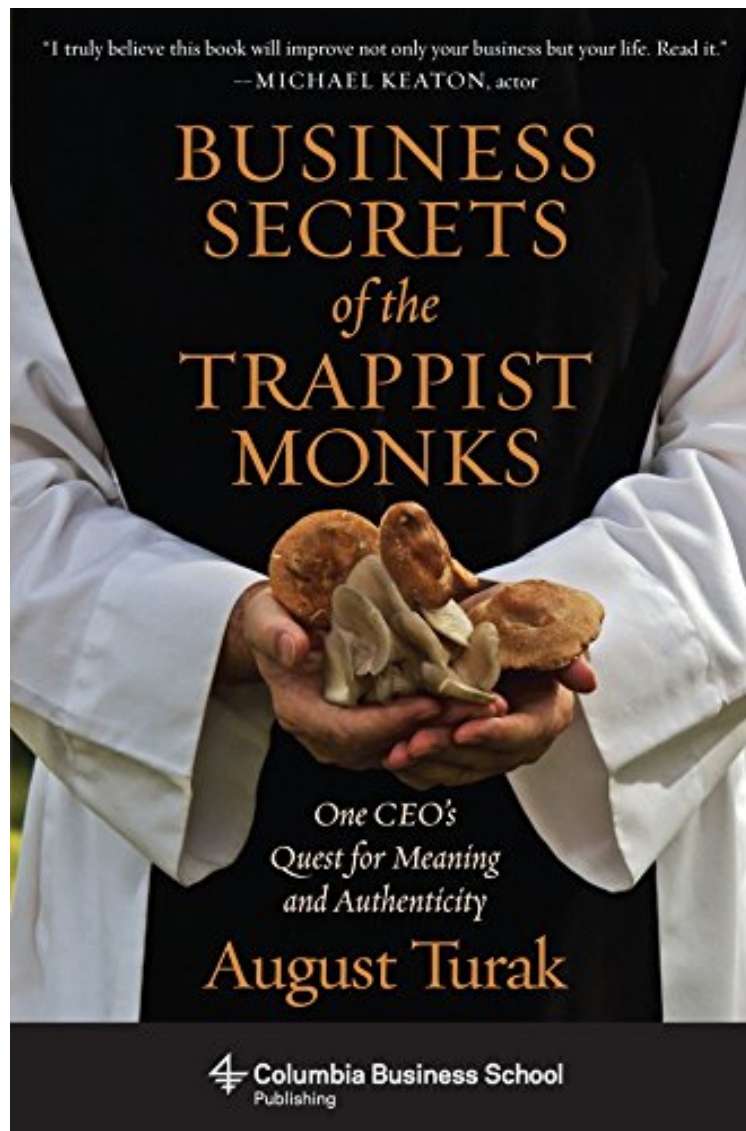


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Business Secrets of the Trappist Monks: One CEO's Quest for Meaning and Authenticity (Columbia Business School Publishing)

August Turak

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August Turak : Business Secrets of the Trappist Monks: One CEO's Quest for Meaning and Authenticity (Columbia Business School Publishing) before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Business Secrets of the Trappist Monks: One CEO's Quest for Meaning and Authenticity (Columbia Business School Publishing):

34 of 35 people found the following review helpful. An amazing mix of spirituality, psychology, and businessBy

Kenny Felder It's hard to describe this book because I've never read another like it. It's deeply personal and completely universal; it's nuts-and-bolts business insight and it's profound spiritual insight; it's ancient philosophy told through the lens of "Star Wars" and "The Devil Wears Prada." The best review I can give, I think, is a direct quote. Watch how he starts with a fairly commonplace psychological insight about money, moves to a concrete business application that most businesses could benefit from tremendously, twists it into an unusual look at the entertainment industry, and then (as he would say) "transcends" all that as he brings it back to his overarching theme of selflessness.-----One of the most useful things I learned as a sales and marketing executive is the concept of "dollar votes"...if we really want to understand what motivates people, we should look at how people actually spend their money...I may argue quite persuasively that helping others is my top priority, but if I donate far more money to my favorite casino than to my favorite charity, I shouldn't be surprised if you remain unconvinced. In my own company, after some disappointing forays with surveys, we dispensed with this type of market research altogether. Instead, whenever we had a new product idea, we would presell the product into our customer base with a discount for prerelease software. Only if our customers were willing to pony up cold, hard cash would we in turn invest in full-blown product development. If the requisite number of sales was not forthcoming, we gave refunds to the disappointed few and headed back to the drawing board. This approach guaranteed that every product we introduced had a market, and it was actually less expensive and time consuming than traditional forms of market research. When we look at the world through the lens of dollar votes, we see an almost insatiable human demand for stories. Books, movies, and television are multibillion-dollar industries...The fact that we spend so much money on stories--in good times and bad--demonstrates that stories offer something we really want, not just something we like to say we want. And what most stories offer is the vicarious experience of transformation. We all learned in English 101 that in every compelling story, the main character must be transformed over the arc of the story...According to dollar votes, the fact that we spend so much time and money watching others being transformed proves that it is this essential transformation from selfishness to selflessness that we all really want. Of course the tragic part of this analysis is that for most of us, this urge toward transformation remains vicarious...deep inside we realize that just as we can't pay someone else to go to the gym, we can't be transformed secondhand either.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Work is a spiritual endeavor. By Pete Reilly, Author of A Path With Heart At its heart work is a spiritual endeavor. Most of us spend much of our waking lives at work. It's a place where our values and beliefs are revealed and manifested, for no matter how hard we may try to compartmentalize our work lives from our home lives, in truth we have only one life...and one self. August Turak takes us far beyond the typical leadership tips and techniques so common in business books to examine the inner currents of successful organizations. At the heart of this book is a deep rooted belief that life, and therefore work, is a spiritual quest, a yearning for transformation. Turak shows how "transformational organizations" ...those that pursue service and selflessness as their main goal, reap success as a by-product. By embodying our values and beliefs and pursuing spiritual growth...and selflessness, we can find meaning in our lives and also professional success. "The Business Secrets of the Trappist Monks" is insightful and transformative. Turak's amazing life story takes us behind the scenes at Mepkin Abbey, MTV, and his two highly successful software businesses, Raleigh Group International (RGI) and Elsinore Technologies to see how service and selflessness can thrive in the marketplace and bring meaning to our personal lives as well.

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Invaluable Advice By Frank Sonnenberg Have you ever wondered, What's the secret to success in business and life in general? If so, read this book. It's AWESOME! Business Secrets of the Trappist Monks is not your run-of-the-mill business book. August Turk is a highly successful executive and entrepreneur who was a frequent monastic guest and worked alongside the Trappist monks of Mepkin Abbey for 17 years. This book applies the lessons he learned on how to succeed in business and in life. The message of the book is fascinating and the examples are poignant. While the solutions may seem counterintuitive, I believe August is spot-on. Business Secrets of the Trappist Monks provides real-world advice. August offers examples from diverse organizations -- such as the monks of Mepkin Abbey; Microsoft (where he served as a consultant during its early years); a major software organization (that he founded); and, believe it or not, The Devil Wears Prada -- to highlight why authenticity, service, and selflessness are winning ingredients for success. The book is practical, well written, and refreshing. I believe it should be read by leaders from all walks of life and made must-reading for every MBA student. Leaders of tomorrow who heed his advice will be well rewarded. His advice is invaluable.

Frank Sonnenberg Author, Managing with a Conscience

August Turak is a successful entrepreneur, corporate executive, and award-winning author who attributes much of his success to living and working alongside the Trappist monks of Mepkin Abbey for seventeen years. As a frequent monastic guest, he learned firsthand from the monks as they grew an incredibly successful portfolio of businesses. Service and selflessness are at the heart of the 1,500-year-old monastic tradition's remarkable business success. It is an ancient though immensely relevant economic model that preserves what is positive and productive about capitalism while transcending its ethical limitations and internal contradictions. Combining vivid case studies from his thirty-year business career with intimate portraits of the monks at work, Turak shows how Trappist principles can be successfully applied to a variety of secular business settings and to our personal lives as well. He demonstrates that

monks and people like Warren Buffett are wildly successful not despite their high principles but because of them. Turak also introduces other “transformational organizations” that share the crucial monastic business strategies so critical for success.

I truly believe this book will improve not only your business but your life. Read it. Apply what you learn and then, in keeping with the very spirit of the book, pass it on to someone else. (Michael Keaton, actor) Business Secrets of the Trappist Monks is an eye-opening read. August Turak delivers a timely, insightful message about the power of purpose and the surprising ways that service can fuel success. The engaging narrative—which is grounded in Turak's rich, diverse experiences as an entrepreneur, corporate executive, and monastic guest—paints a picture of a path to profits that is both pioneering and provocative. (Adam Grant, author of Give and Take: A Revolutionary Approach to Success) This book is both quietly provocative and groundbreaking. With great simplicity, August Turak unlocks these monastic 'secrets' that go to the core of succeeding in an economic era in which authenticity and passion have become key. Who knew the monks had so many things right? (Tom Freston, former CEO of Viacom and MTV Networks) The Business Secrets of Trappist Monks is sure to be a business classic. It is a compelling and important tutorial on how to build authentically sustainable companies. August Turak's stories and examples are magical, yet the philosophical ideas they're founded on resonate with truth. It is a must read for the thoughtful executive. (Mark Booth, former chairman and CEO of NetJets Europe) This is an eloquent, powerful book that accentuates the power of trust and the surprising gift that selfless leadership can bring to institutions. August Turak expertly shows how Trappist ways and wisdom connect character to the art of leadership, and how this unique approach can be helpful in our current thinking about leadership, business, and the meaning of our own lives. New insights and ancient truth blend in this remarkable book by a remarkable teacher. (Will Willimon, Duke Divinity School and author of Sinning Like a Christian: A New Look at the Seven Deadly Sins) This is an inspirational book that presents a different view of business leadership and success that is important for serious and aspiring business leaders to take into consideration. August Turak also has a narrative voice that is both genuine and authoritative, and he has thoughtfully organized 'take-aways' throughout the book into lists that will be extremely useful for readers. (Lindsay Thompson, John Hopkins University- Carey Business School) The book is an inspirational, provocative and ground-breaking tour-de-force and should be required reading for business leaders and in business schools. (Ray Williams Psychology Today) Part philosophy, part economics, and very much about service The Business Secrets of the Trappist Monks will guide you to a better understanding of why you do what you do. (1-800-CEO-Read) A quite serious and often fascinating read. (Chief Executive) Turak has done an excellent job of identifying and articulating the homegrown and unique business model the Trappists use... interesting and unique... It's a book worth reading. (Cistercian Studies Quarterly) About the Author After a corporate career with companies like MTV, August Turak founded two highly successful software businesses, Raleigh Group International (RGI) and Elsinore Technologies. He received a B.A. in history from the University of Pittsburgh and is pursuing a Masters in theology at St. John's University, Minnesota. Turak's essay "Brother John" received the grand prize in the John Templeton Foundation's Power of Purpose essay contest. He has been featured in the Wall Street Journal, Fast Company, Selling Magazine, the New York Times, and Business Week, and is a popular leadership contributor at Forbes.com. His website is www.augustturak.com.