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## Book Review: The Daily Drucker

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366 Days of Insight & Motivation for Getting the Right Things Done

Peter F. Drucker with Joseph A. Maciariello

New York: HarperBusiness, 2004

429 pages including annotated bibliography, index by title and topic

ISBN: 0-06-074244-5.

“Which of your twenty-six books are you most proud of Mr. Drucker?” “The next one” says Peter Drucker. This demonstration of the quintessential Drucker wit is cited in the foreword by Jim Collins. Acknowledged to be the most influential management thinker, Drucker has contributed to almost every facet of business management. From path breaking ideas to practical business dilemmas – his thinking continues to inspire managers of the world.

With 39 published books and hundreds of articles, it leaves one in a fix on what to read and where to start. The Daily Drucker is an answer to this. Printed in a simplistic ‘a page a day format’ – ideal to be read anytime and anywhere, without getting bogged down by continuity, it contains extracts his best thinking and philosophizing collected from his lifetime work. Peter Drucker always emphasized that management is a liberal art, since it deals not only with business and values, but also about people, knowledge and humanity as a whole. This book is a good proof of that.

Each short essay comprises of a central idea or thinking followed by a few lines to elucidate it. 1<sup>st</sup> January starts with ‘*Integrity in leadership*’ and 31<sup>st</sup> December ends with ‘*From data to information literacy*’. The variety in the selection is astounding, to say the least. His uncanny knack of finding relations to seemingly diverse disciplines has lead to many a breakthrough management thinkings.

Some classics which are too valuable to be missed out: *The practice of abandonment*, *Economics as a social dimension* – whose theme is the tenet of marketing: “*Keynes was interested in the behavior of commodities, while I was interested in the behavior of people*”

*Crossing the divide* speaks of societal changes, which is now central to disruptive technologies. *Test of innovation* is a simple 2 paragraph guide for any business. Recommended readings for entrepreneurs – *Understanding what the customer buys*, *Innovation and risk taking*, *The purpose of profit*, *The succession decision*, *Tunnel-vision innovation* and scores of others. Indeed, each one of us will find more than a few pages of immense value. Drucker speaks in plain language that resonates with Managers, and calls for action.

The annotated bibliography provides a short note on each of Drucker’s published books, most useful for those wanting to read further. The book is indexed in two ways - ‘Sources by book or internet module’ and ‘Sources by day and parallel passages’ an excellent cross reference for researchers. Full credit then to Joseph A. Maciariello, Drucker’s colleague at the Peter F. Drucker

& Masatoshi Ito Graduate School of Management, Claremont Graduate University, USA. Maciariello has sieved through Drucker's complete works, and distilled it into these 366 pages.

During his career, Drucker faced some criticism of oversimplifying and philosophizing without backing statistical data. His 'Management by Objectives' is one of his more criticized tools. Throughout his career, Drucker limited himself mainly to large enterprises, understandably then, this book offers little for small businesses. And this is perhaps the only real criticism of him that is universally accepted. Criticisms notwithstanding, Drucker was one of the most sought after

management consultants in the world. He worked with several of the world's largest corporations as well as governments of USA, Canada and Japan. During the latter part of his career, many non-profit organizations benefitted from his ideas.

The Daily Drucker is a concise management reader and a recommended reading for the management student and practitioner alike. It will doubtless provoke the reader to do what Drucker used to recommend his students "*Look out of the window, not in the mirror*"