

July 2017

BookSmart: Hundreds of real-world lessons for success and happiness by Frank Sonnenberg

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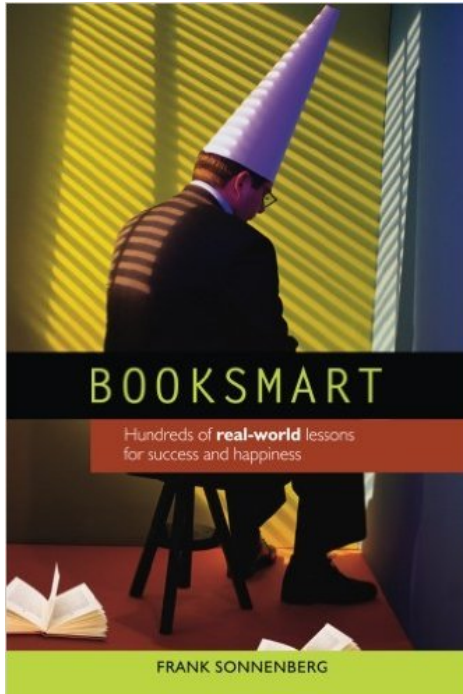
Recommended Citation

Sai, M. Ganesh and Sayee, M. Ramakrishna (2017) "BookSmart: Hundreds of real-world lessons for success and happiness by Frank Sonnenberg," *The Journal of Values-Based Leadership*: Vol. 10 : Iss. 2 , Article 15.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.22543/0733.102.1195>

Available at: <https://scholar.valpo.edu/jvbl/vol10/iss2/15>

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BookSmart: Hundreds of real-world lessons for success and happiness

by Frank Sonnenberg

Paperback: 314 pages

Publisher: CreateSpace Independent Publishing

Platform: (October 1, 2016)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1535233389; *ISBN-13:* 978-1535233385

URL: <https://www.amazon.com/BookSmart-Hundreds-real-world-lessons-happiness/dp/1535233389>

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“As a professional book reviewer for various eminent international journals, I read thousands of books. This is definitely one of the most inspiring! I strongly recommend it.” — Professor M. S. Rao

What are the Details of the Book?

If you want to understand life leadership, read this book. If you want to achieve success with integrity, read this book. If you want to grow as an ethical leader, read this book. If you want to provide meaning to your life, read this book. Frank Sonnenberg’s authored book *Booksmart: Hundreds of real-world lessons for success and happiness*, provides meaning to your personal, professional and social life.

What is Inside?

This book unfolds that there are a number of bad actors in every organization who advance their careers on the backs of others. Here are eight you may recognize:

Emperors. These people climb the corporate ladder by capitalizing on *who* they know rather than on *what* they’re contributing. They may have friends in high places, have their walls filled with diplomas, or have previously worked for blue-chip companies. They’re like an oasis. They may look wonderful from a distance, but the closer you get, the more obvious it becomes that it’s all a mirage. In this case, emperors truly have no clothes.

Pretty Boys (or Girls): These people really look the part. They are the trendiest dressers, belong to the finest country clubs, and look like they could be on the cover of *Vogue* or *GQ*.

Similar to Emperors, the Pretty ascend the corporate ladder based on appearance rather than performance. But their veneer is thin, and when challenges materialise, they often buckle and retreat.

A-Kissers/Sycophants. These people spend all their time fawning over their superiors. “You need to reduce costs? No problem. We just won’t give people raises this year.” (Too bad there’s only enough for management.) These A—Kissers spend 99.9 percent of their time in closed-door management meetings with little time to provide direction for their own teams – regardless of the impact that it has on results. In this case, it’s only a matter of time before their people say “ENOUGH” and tell THEM to kiss off.

Delegators. They say there are two kinds of people: those who are willing to work and those who are willing to let them. These counterfeit superstars are in the latter group. They have the power to say, “You want something done? No problem.” Then they mandate that their workers stay late while they leave at 5 pm. These people always volunteer for more and have the cleanest desks in the office. How’s that possible? It’s because they delegate everything! In this case, the only thing that stops at their desk is the credit they don’t deserve, not the work.

Schmoozers. These folks could win an award for Mr. or Ms. Congeniality. Everybody loves them. Schmoozers know all the ballgame stats; they know how to tell a joke; and they’re up-to-date on the inside dirt. Their colleagues like them so much that they don’t mind taking on their workload while the schmoozer is entertaining clients elsewhere. In this case, work is a party for schmoozers.

Bystanders. These slouches do just enough to get by. They’ve been with the organisation for a zillion years, rarely speak up, and would make themselves invisible if they could. They spend their days moving piles of paper on their desks while they watch everyone else go crazy trying to get the job done. In fact, when they’re out on vacation, nobody even knows they’re missing.

Scavengers. These are the types who take the credit for everybody else’s work. They surround themselves with talented people and spend the day determining if there’s an idea worth stealing – while they fine-tune their personal PR machine. In this case, they’ll continue to rise up the company ranks as long as their “credit” remains good.

Busybodies. These individuals spend their whole day trying to prove how busy they are. Whenever they’re asked to do something, they spend 20 minutes describing how much work they have on their plate. In this case, if busybodies ever needed a role model, they could look to a turnstile – it’s out in front, goes around in circles, creates wind, but never gets anywhere.

Any of these personality types sound familiar? Don’t get angry – they’ll get their due. They think they’re fooling the world, but sooner or later, everyone catches on to them.

The fact is, by pulling their antics, these counterfeit superstars not only make colleagues row harder to compensate for their deficiencies, they steal the spotlight from very talented people who deserve the recognition. This destroys morale, hurts productivity, and damages competitiveness.

As time goes on, you’ll be able to look back on a life marked by honor and self-respect. Meanwhile, these counterfeit superstars will start to believe their own press, and they’ll get

sloppy. Or – ultimately – if they're not caught, they'll meet their match when they run into someone else who beats them at their own game.

This book outlines 14 guideposts for your journey through life:

1. ***Be your own person.*** Get real; be yourself. Consider the advice of others, but trust yourself in the end.
2. ***Make yourself proud.*** Do your best; nothing less. Set standards of excellence that make the most important person – *you* – proud.
3. ***Keep good company.*** Surround yourself with positive people who genuinely care about your well-being and bring out the best in you.
4. ***Find your passion.*** Pursue your dreams with fervor, and put your heart into everything you do. Everyone was put on this earth for a purpose ... what's yours?
5. ***Make a difference.*** Be a positive force in people's lives. It doesn't require a gift from your wallet but rather, a caring heart.
6. ***Prioritize your activities.*** Focus on the things that matter most. Everything on your plate isn't of equal importance.
7. ***Invest your time.*** Think of time as your most valuable currency, and invest it wisely.
8. ***Be accountable.*** Accept responsibility for your behavior. When things go well, accept your well-deserved rewards. When they don't, admit fault, learn from your mistakes, and move on.
9. ***Face reality.*** Be the change you want to be. If you look in the mirror and don't like what you see, don't blame the mirror.
10. ***Invest in yourself.*** Don't stop educating yourself. Learn something new every day. You'll be able to leverage that investment for the rest of your life.
11. ***Be grateful.*** Appreciate what you have, while you have it, or you'll learn what it meant to you after you've lost it.
12. ***Create lots of memories.*** Take time to smell the roses. *Possessions* age and lose value over time; *memories* last forever.
13. ***Remain true to your values.*** Compromise on your position, but not your principles. Listen to your conscience. That's why you have one.
14. ***Guard your reputation.*** Protect your reputation like it's the most valuable asset you own. Because it is!

Leadership Takeaways

- Follow your conscience. Sleep well.
- Make every moment matter.
- It's your life to live. Own it!
- You have to live with yourself for the rest of your life.
- The happiest people don't necessarily have the best of everything they just make the best of everything they have.
- People who live a life of purpose have core beliefs and values that influence their decisions, shape their decisions, shape their day-to-day actions, and determine their short and long-term priorities.
- Measuring progress is often like watching grass grow. While it's difficult to detect movement on a daily basis, it's simple to see growth over time.
- Checking items off a to-do list doesn't determine progress; focusing on your priorities is what counts.

- A positive mental attitude can improve your health, enhance your relationships, increase your chances of success, and add years to your life.
- If you stop focusing on all the reasons why you can't do it, you just may surprise yourself to see what you can do.
- There's more to life than increasing its speed.
- Moral character is the DNA of success and happiness.
- Every time you give your word, you're putting your honor on the line.
- Mistakes don't make you a failure, but beating yourself up makes you feel like one.
- Learning is as much an attitude as it is an activity.
- We're so busy keeping busy that we fail to see the error of our ways.
- Being frugal doesn't mean slashing your spending or depriving yourself of things that you enjoy. It means knowing the value of a dollar and making every effort to spend it wisely.
- People who are frugal understand the value of a dollar and make informed and thoughtful decisions. People who are cheap try to spend as little money as possible.
- While social media helps us keep in touch with our casual acquaintances, meaningful relationships require something more.
- You may not have the control to lengthen your life, but you can do much to deepen it.
- Failing one time – or even several times – doesn't make you a failure any more than losing one game makes you a loser.
- Appreciate what you have, while you have it, or you'll learn what it meant to you after you lose it.
- Don't wait a lifetime to satisfy your needs or you may live to regret it one day.
- Although the costs of not delegating may be invisible, the price that you pay is real.
- Take ownership of your life decisions rather than relinquishing that responsibility to others.
- If we disregard our values, we'll open our eyes one day and won't be able to recognize "our world" anymore.
- Many people are actually poor because the only thing they have is money.
- Most people know how to put on a show when a situation matters; the key is to behave properly even when you think it doesn't.
- Life is like playing musical chairs – you never know when the music will stop.
- Shared beliefs and values form the heart of every successful relationship and ultimately determine its success.
- Don't wait until you desperately need a social network to begin developing one.
- Keeping score, in friendships, is a losing game.
- Forgiving doesn't mean forgetting, nor does it mean approving of, what someone did. It just means that you're letting go of the anger toward that person.
- People stop trying when there's no benefit for being exceptional and no consequence for being mediocre.
- Feedback is helpful and constructive; criticism is hurtful and damaging.
- Being a good loser helps build character, provides valuable lessons, and helps you become mentally prepared for your next challenge.
- The best networkers have learned that, as with anything in life, what goes around comes around.

- We've become so addicted to instant gratification that we're blind to the impact it has on our lives.
- Taking a calculated risk is not the same as gambling. One is taking a risk after considered judgment; the other is leaving everything to the roll of the dice.
- When you make a promise, you're not giving your word in erasable pencil, you're inscribing your commitment in indelible ink.
- Knowing what's right isn't as important as doing what's right.
- Ask yourself whether the problem will matter in a year or two. If not, it may be a trivial issue unworthy of your concern.
- There are simply no shortcuts in the long run.
- Having kids is not the same as being a parent.
- Life is a classroom.
- Trust is like blood pressure. It's silent, vital to good health, and if abused it can be deadly.
- Moments, rather than possessions, are the true treasures of life.
- Achieving success is hard; staying successful is even harder.
- You send a message by what you say and what you do. If words aren't supported with consistent actions, they will ring hollow.
- We place artificial demands on ourselves that undermine our happiness. These demands force us to work harder and harder to cross a finish line that keeps moving.
- Honest people never fear the truth.
- Your life is determined by the sum of the choices YOU make.
- Moments don't last forever, but their memories do.
- Without trust, no company can ever hope for excellence.

This book outlines 10 tips to create better life balance; 11 ways to earn respect; 13 ways to prove your honesty; 17 action steps to take during tough times; 50 shades of waste; 40 questions every leader should answer; 20 common decision-making mistakes to avoid; 50 ways to lose trust and credibility; 50 questions to unlock your potential; 50 insane mistakes companies make; and 52 ways to be rich without being wealthy; and 8 ways to build a great reputation; and 46 ways to improve relationships and foster teamwork.

What is the Recommendation?

This book outlines inspiring quotes. It emphasizes ethical values and implores you to achieve success with integrity. The language is conversational, and the leadership ideas and insights are well punched. Most books emphasize knowledge but this book emphasizes ideas and insights that will change the way you think and look at others. It improves your attitude, personality and behavior. It is an inspiring book on life leadership, and a must read for everyone to lead their lives with dignity and honor.

This book is useful for learners and leaders at all levels. You can gift this book to your friends and they will thank you forever for your kind gesture. Strongly recommended reading this book!

About the Reviewers

M. Ganesh Sai is the author of five books, including *Success Can Be Yours*, *Short Stories to Share, Get Inspired*, *Smartness Guide – Success Tools for Students*, *Skills for Your Career Success: Touch Your Tipping Point*, and *Soar Like Eagles! Success Tools for Freshers*. His articles have been featured in international publications including *Personal Excellence* and the *Journal of Values-Based Leadership*, <http://scholar.valpo.edu/jvbl/vol7/iss1/10>. His areas of interest include Success, Leadership, Motivation, Career, and Personality Development.

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