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The Charisma Myth: How Anyone Can Master The Art And Science Of Personal Magnetism

The Charisma Myth

How Anyone Can Master the Art and
Science of Personal Magnetism



Olivia Fox Cabane



Synopsis

What if charisma could be taught? For the first time, science and technology have taken charisma apart, figured it out and turned it into an applied science: In controlled laboratory experiments, researchers could raise or lower people's level of charisma as if they were turning a dial. What you'll find here is practical magic: unique knowledge, drawn from a variety of sciences, revealing what charisma really is and how it works. You'll get both the insights and the techniques you need to apply this knowledge. The world will become your lab, and every person you meet, a chance to experiment. The Charisma Myth is a mix of fun stories, sound science, and practical tools. Cabane takes a hard scientific approach to a heretofore mystical topic, covering what charisma actually is, how it is learned, what its side effects are, and how to handle them. Please note: The accompanying workbook for this title is available at AskOlivia.com/book/exercises/.

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Customer Reviews

I read a lot of books in this genre - call it "professional self-help." I've spoken professionally a few times now about leadership and communication, and for my most recent one just a few months ago I did a ton of reading research and a lot of it was books like this one. Most of them are mediocre. I began reading The Charisma Myth expecting more of the same, frankly: platitudes, some common sense stuff, the kinds of advice that will only make sense to people who don't need it. I was just hoping for a tidbit or two that would be useful. I don't really gush about things. If anything I tend to be very demanding and therefore very critical. Like I said, I think most books in this genre are essentially useless. The Charisma Myth is a truly phenomenal book. It's so good that I have

recommended it to several of my colleagues and it has already changed the way I manage my team and relate to my coworkers. In fact, my first gut reaction when I read it was "I guess I should stop speaking, now, because everything I'd want to talk about is covered in here." Here's the thing: most of these kinds of books give you a few things:

1. Platitudes: useless, pithy sayings.
2. Random Anecdotes: stories that don't really offer any takeaway you can act on.
3. Abstract Imperatives: things like "be a good listener!" If you're not already a good listener that's kind of like saying "Roast Beef Recipe: Get some beef and roast it." It's not helpful - it doesn't tell me what actual specific actions to take.

Here's what this book gave me:

1. Extremely concrete, specific actions: Every piece of advice about conduct or mindset is accompanied by direct actions to take. When you're in a conversation and find your mind drifting, bring it back to a physical sensation in the present, like the feeling in your toes. That's just one example of many, but they're all things you can actually DO, not abstract imperatives like "be a better listener" or pithy-but-vapid stuff like "smile more!"
2. Visualizations: I've never seen anyone push visualization like Olivia does. She makes the compelling point that visualization is something top athletes and actors have known about forever. In my talks I've always felt slightly uncomfortable urging people to do visualizations, but not anymore, not after reading this. She runs through a lot of specific visualizations, and they're immediately useful practices.
3. Taxonomies: Of the most useful business and management blogs I read, some of their most useful posts (I'm thinking of randsinrepose.com, for example) are taxonomies. "The five kinds of meeting attendees." "The four kinds of firefighting." Or whatever. These are helpful to me because by enumerating a problem space as a handful of distinct categories they help me crystallize my own thinking about it. Olivia does this when she enumerates the four kinds of charisma. Look, I think I'm a good manager and leader, an empathetic guy and good at my job, I'm not gonna lie, but I'd never thought about it in this way. This was pretty eye-opening to me. I read this part and thought, oh yeah, I've got the "focus" and "kindness" charisma but less of the "authority" and definitely least of all the "visionary" charisma. And that gives me specific things to work on, and a way to understand why I'm better at motivating people in certain circumstances rather than others.

To anyone who wants to be more charismatic: to be more successful at work, more able to positively influence those around them, more able to open up and make real connections with others, and just more able to lead a rich and happy life - and I know how this sounds, I swear I don't usually gush like this! - this book tells you everything you need to know. Everything! No other book I've read does that. To be clear, that's like saying Rippetoe's "Starting Strength" tells you everything you need to know to be a very good, extremely strong weightlifter. You still have to do a ton of really hard work! This book doesn't make you magically charismatic. But

it gives you direct, specific, applied practices that, if you do them, will make you more charismatic and enrich your life. Of all the pop psychology, management, leadership, and professional self-help books I've ever read, I cannot say that about a single other one. I give this book my absolute highest recommendation. It is absolutely superb. I don't say that lightly.

Probably the best business self-help book I've ever read and I read a lot of them. (How to Win Friends & Influence People may be a little better.) In fact, it took me forever to finish because every chapter had so much great, usable suggestions that it took a while to digest. Includes great exercises to make some of the messages sink in. And if you don't think you want to be charismatic I know I didn't. But if you especially need this book because charisma is about more than you think it is. This will help you in all facets of your life. Grade: A

This is like reading a book about how magicians perform their tricks, with lots of insights about what charisma is (learnable behaviour to project power, warmth and presence), that it's largely projected through body language and how control of internal thoughts is the way to get the right body language for stronger charisma. I like the insights given and the practical exercises and applications in this book. This has excellent summary of key concepts and the practical exercises at the back of the book, excellent and definitely worth keeping. The chapter on the downside of charisma (yes indeed there are!) is worth reading since charisma is a powerful tool and need to be used with care. Highly recommended and very readable with lots of examples the author collected from her executive coaching sessions.

Charisma is a tool available to us all but many don't realize this. This book is a must read if you goal is to improve relationships, interaction with others, confidence, leadership , LIFE

While many of the admonitions in the book amount to basic psychological hygiene, it's hygiene that a) very few people do, and b) increases your emotional literacy simply for having attempted it. This is, in essence, a book about hacking your own behavior and psychology with a particular goal in mind - to better connect with other people and to become more influential. Absolutely indispensable for anyone who relies upon interactions with other people to get what they want out of their everyday life & career - in other words, everyone!

This book contains a lot of practical gems that are very useful. The problem is that you have to dig persistently and patiently to find them. Were the book better organized around its key themes, it could easily have earned a five. "Power, presence, and warmth" is a catchy mantra that would be even more --how shall we put it?-- charismatic, if the entire book were better organized around those concepts. Instead, the concepts are discussed piecemeal and somewhat haphazardly. Positive psychology -- proactively putting yourself into the mood you seek to project -- underlies all of the book's themes. That Cabane provides a number of techniques for improving your mental milieu makes the book worth the purchase price. Ultimately, in order to develop your own charisma-style you will have to make your own framework for organizing the book's themes.

As a professional coach, I use this book successfully with individuals who are competent in almost every aspect of their lives except social interaction. The Charisma Myth helps my clients become an immediate success when they socialize. the Charisma Myth is possibly the best guide for introverts who need techniques that work immediately.

The chapter on presentations is outstanding. The organization makes it easy to plan and take specific actions. I'm already seeing a difference. It's obvious she speaks from extensive experience.

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