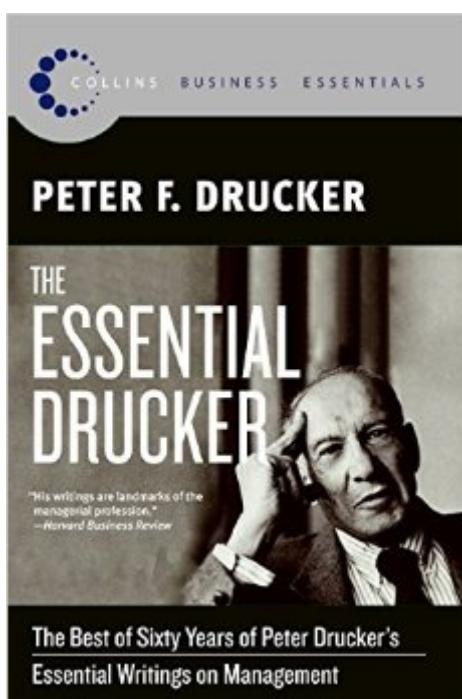


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The Essential Drucker: The Best Of Sixty Years Of Peter Drucker's Essential Writings On Management (Collins Business Essentials)



Synopsis

Father of modern management, social commentator, and preeminent business philosopher, Peter F. Drucker analyzed economics and society for more than sixty years. Now for readers everywhere who are concerned with the ways that management practices and principles affect the performance of organizations, individuals, and society, there is *The Essential Drucker* "an invaluable compilation of essential materials from the works of a management legend. Containing twenty-six core selections, *The Essential Drucker* covers the basic principles and concerns of management and its problems, challenges, and opportunities, giving managers, executives, and professionals the tools to perform the tasks that the economy and society of tomorrow will demand of them.

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Customer Reviews

Before going further, let me note that this book is mislabeled. The excerpts in this book are from only ten of Professor Drucker's more than 30 management books. Although there is some reference to nonprofit management (where he spent half of his time), this volume does not encapsulate all of his ideas in that sphere. Many of his early ideas about society are also missing. As great as his ideas about management are, his observations about how to think are even more valuable. The book contains no material from his autobiography, *Adventures of a Bystander*. You cannot hope to fully appreciate this material until you read that book. What the book does contain is a fairly easy to follow series of 26 excerpts from the ten books, organized into three sections: Management, Individual,

and Society. These books date back to 1954, so you get an overview of part of his work over the last 47 years. This overview will mainly be valuable to managers who have read very little Drucker, since there is essentially no new material in the book. The excerpts are also not connected by any transitions, so there is no additional perspective available from the book's organization. Here are the sources of the chapters: The New Realities, Chapters 1 and 26; Management: Tasks, Responsibilities, Practices, Chapters 2, 3, 5, and 18; Managing for the Future, Chapters 4 and 19; Management Challenges for the 21st Century, Chapters 6, 15, 21; Managing in a Time of Great Change, Chapters 7 and 23; Practice of Management, Chapter 8; Frontiers of Management, Chapter 9; Innovation and Entrepreneurship, Chapters 10-12, 20, and 24; The Effective Executive, Chapters 13, 14, 16, and 17; and Post-Capitalist Society, Chapters 22 and 25.

The late Peter F. Drucker invented the discipline that we know as Management. This book is an excellent compilation of his best works, written over six decades and published in journals, magazines and over 30 books. I am amazed at the breadth and depth of this compilation. It includes several topics (categorized in sections for Management, The Individual and Society). In the first few chapters Drucker defines management through its tasks and states that "there is only one valid definition of business purpose: to create a customer" (page 20). In the other chapters you will learn Management by Objectives (MBO), the process of making effective decisions, the importance of focusing on contributions and results, get introduced to the "knowledge worker" (page 304), a term Drucker created in the 60s, and learn about the "post-capitalist society" with knowledge as the central resource (page 288). This book has five chapters on Innovation & Entrepreneurship. And more. While there is a lot of wisdom in each chapter, I will share below my thoughts from 4 chapters that were originally published in "The Effective Executive" (1966): In Chapter 13: Effectiveness must be Learned, Drucker explains the difference between efficiency and effectiveness - efficiency is doing things right; effectiveness is doing the right things. For manual work, efficiency was enough. In today's world, the center of gravity has shifted from the manual worker to the "knowledge worker". For knowledge work, effectiveness is more important than efficiency. An executive is ... a knowledge worker who is ... responsible for contributions (decisions, actions) ... that have significant impact on ... performance and results of the whole organization (derived from Chapter 13).

REVIEW: While I only rated this book 4 stars, keep in mind that this is a relative rating and that Peter Drucker's primary competition is himself. Drucker's books are always full of great thinking and great content, but I'm not sure that this book is for everyone interested in Peter Drucker (at least it's

not one that I'd recommend first). First of all, the idea of distilling Drucker's work into a single book of material is hard for me to accept because he has so much great material that was already written fairly concisely (though there is some overlap in his works). Does having the Essential Drucker mean you can read it and skip the original books? Certainly not if you're serious about becoming a more effective person/executive. It is sort of like picking one Shakespeare or one Mozart, you'll get a good piece of work, but you're still missing a whole lot of important stuff. Anyway, I think there are a couple of situations for which this book will be especially useful. First, it may be most valuable to people (like me) who have read a number of Drucker's books. In essence, the Essential Drucker can act as a short refresher on many of Drucker's important concepts without having to go back and reread all of the original books. For this purpose the book was highly valuable to me. Also, the book may be valuable to those that have read a little Drucker and want to read more, but are unsure which of his many books to start with. Since the introduction lists the book that each chapter was originally published in, you can easily go to the source to expand upon something that interests you.

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