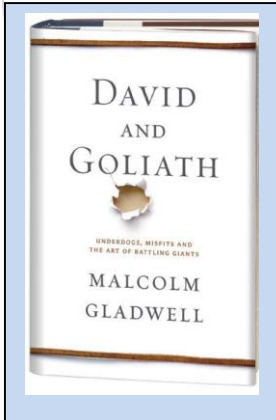


David and Goliath Malcolm Gladwell



Why read this book?

“David and Goliath is a book about what happens when ordinary people confront giants. Each chapter tells the story of a different person...who has faced an outsize challenge and been forced to respond.” “I want to explore two ideas. The first is that much of what we consider valuable in our world arises out of these kinds of lopsided conflicts... and second, that we consistently get these kinds of conflicts wrong. We misread them. We misinterpret them. Giants are not what we think they are. We need a better guide to facing giants.” (P. 5-6)

“The duel reveals the folly of our assumptions about power...and...the powerful and the strong are not always what they seem.” (P. 13-15)

Key Quotes

“Underdog strategies are hard” (P. 32) (You have to do what others won’t do)

“Innovators and revolutionaries tend to have a very particular mix of...traits – openness, conscientiousness, and (dis)agreeableness.” P. 116

“The conquering of fear produces exhilaration. AND: The contrast between the previous apprehension and the present relief and feeling of security promotes a self-confidence that is the very father and mother of courage.” (P. 149)

“The difference between the dull and the interesting lies in the element of surprise. When an idea affirms what we already believe, we’re bored – we call it obvious. But when an idea is counterintuitive, we’re intrigued. Our curiosity is piqued, and we’re motivated to ask questions: how could this be? Is it really true? What else might this explain? Challenging our assumptions is what Malcolm Gladwell does best.” (What makes Malcolm Gladwell Fascinating?, Adam Grant, Oct 7, 2013)

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Braeuler Consulting works with organizations to leverage Strategic Thinking and Execution Planning and we encompass many of the principles in these books into our Four Decisions™ methodology and development of company's One Page Strategic Plans. Whatever system or systems you decide to use, I encourage you to understand them fully, implement them slowly and completely and maintain the discipline and rhythm necessary to see concrete results. Employees tire of “Flavor of the Month” initiatives. They also thrive on organizational alignment, execution of plans and achievements that garner a sense of accomplishment.



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The advantages of disadvantages (misleading nature of advantages)

Who wins depends on how you play the game

What happens in wars between the strong and the weak when the weak side does as David did and refuse to fight the way the bigger side wants to fight, using unconventional or guerrilla tactics? The weaker party's winning percentage climbs from 28.5% to 63.6% (P. 22).

Coach Vivek Ranadive played a full court press ALL THE TIME and took his team to the national championships.

"There is a set of advantages that have to do with material resources, and there is a set that have to do with the absence of material resources – and the reason underdogs win as often as they do is that the latter is sometimes every bit the equal of the former." (P. 25)

The thing we're convinced is such a big advantage might not be such an advantage at all

Which size classroom will provide a better education? 6 or 12 or 18 or 24 or 32?

"My own instinct is that it's much harder than anybody believes to bring up kids in a wealthy environment." (P. 47). More is not always better. "No we won't is much harder. No, we can't is simple." (P. 51)

"That's the lesson of the inverted-U-curve. It is good to be bigger and stronger than your opponent. It is not so good to be so big and strong that you are a sitting duck for a rock fired at 150 miles per hour." (P. 62)

Do you want to be a Little Fish in the Big Pond or the Salon or a Big Fish in a Little Pond of their own choosing?

"The impressionist made the right choice, which is one of the reasons that their paintings hang in every major art museum in the world." (P. 68) [Monet, Renoir, Bazille...]

Brown University may be "best" Ivy League school vs. University of Maryland. We experience "Relative deprivation" (P. 77). "We form our impressions not globally, by placing ourselves in the broadest possible context, but locally – by comparing ourselves to people 'in the same boat as ourselves.' Our sense of how deprived we are is relative." (P. 79). This is the Big Fish – Little Pond Effect. "What matters...is not how smart you are. It's how smart you FEEL relative to the other people in your classroom." (P. 84). [Comparison of Hartwick vs Harvard SAT scores and those that obtain science degrees.]

The Theory of "Desirable Difficulties"

"Dyslexics compensate for their disability by developing other skills that – at times – can prove highly advantageous."

Dyslexia: Richard Branson, Charles Schwab, David Neeleman (JetBlue), John Chambers (Cisco), Paul Orfalea (Kinko's). David Boies – world famous trial lawyer developed a formidable memory by focusing on what was being said and committing what he heard to memory. P. 109.



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Capitalization Learning – we get good at something by building on the strengths that we are naturally given (e.g. Tiger Woods). P. 112.

Compensation Learning – compensating for something that has been taken away.

“The one trait in a lot of dyslexic people I know is that by the time we got out of college, our ability to deal with failure was very highly developed. And so we look at most situations and see much more of the upside than the downside.” (P. 123).

Near miss experiences leave you devastated; remote misses often leave you stronger

Blitzkrieg – MacCurdy’s theory of morale: affected population divided into 3 groups: those killed (experience is most devastating yet corpses don’t spread panic); Near misses (feel blast, horrified, wounded results in shock); remote misses (listen to sirens, watch bombers, hear explosions, survivors – creates excitement and invulnerability. (P. 131-132). Note that one group is profoundly damaged and the other is better off as a result.

The lessons of the trickster tales is the third desirable difficulty: the unexpected freedom that comes from having nothing to lose.

“King and Walker were under no illusions that they could fight racism the conventional way. They could not defeat Bull Connor at the polls, or in the streets, or in the court of law. They could not match him strength for strength. What they could do, though, was play Brer Rabbit and try to get Connor to throw them in the briar patch.” (P. 173)

“We (22) were supposed to march at something like two-thirty and we didn’t march until about four. In that time, people, being aware of the demonstration, collected out on the streets. By the time they got ready to march, there were a thousand people up and down this three-block area, lining up all along the sides as spectators, watching.” And the media got it all wrong. Saying eleven hundred demonstrators had marched in Birmingham. (P. 181).

The famous photograph of a young boy being attacked by a dog was not at all what the world thought it was. It was a little bit of Brer Rabbit trickery. (P. 192)



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The Limits of Power

Northern Ireland

“What should have been a difficult few months turned into thirty years of bloodshed and mayhem.”

“In Northern Ireland, the British made a simple mistake. They fell into the trap of believing that because they had resources, weapons, soldiers, and experience that dwarfed those of the insurgent elements that they were trying to contain, it did not matter what the people of Northern Ireland thought of them. General Freeland believed Leites and Wolf when they said that ‘influencing popular behavior requires neither sympathy nor mysticism.’ And they were wrong.” (P. 203)

“When people in authority want the rest of us to behave, it matters – first and foremost – how they behave. This is called the “principle of legitimacy,” and legitimacy is based on three things. First of all, the people who are asked to obey authority have to feel like they have a voice 0 that if they speak up, they will be heard. Second, the law has to be predictable. There has to be a reasonable expectation that the rules tomorrow are going to be roughly the same as the rules today. And third, the authority has to be fair. It can’t treat one group differently from another.” (P. 208)

J-RIP

Officer Joanne Jaffe and the J-RIP (Juvenile Robbery Intervention Program) in Brownsville Projects. “What Jaffe proved was that the powerful HAVE TO worry about how others think of them – that those who give orders are acutely vulnerable to the opinions of those who m they are ordering about.” (P. 217)

Three Strikes Law

In 1992 Kimber Reynolds was shot in a senseless carjacking in Fresno California and as a result of Mike Reynolds efforts the Three Strikes Law was enacted. 72 percent of the state’s voters supported its passage. California’s prison population doubled in 10 years and crime rates dropped dramatically. He has saved countless lives but did he get what he wanted?

The inverted U curve reminds us that past a certain point – cracking down on crime stopped having any effect on criminals. First many crimes are impulse driven; second longer sentences don’t reduce crimes because most crimes are committed in the mid-twenties range; and third it deprives families of their fathers for much longer and increases juvenile delinquency 300 to 400 percent. (P. 245). Locking up too many people for too long results in collateral damage outweighing the benefits. Some studies argue that Three Strikes actually raised crime rates. It was radically scaled back in 2012.



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"Gladwell's books make us care. He challenges us to rethink how we raise our children, how we build our workplaces, and how we live our lives. He gives us hope that if we practice enough, we can become great musicians or athletes. That if an idea is worthwhile, we can make it take off. That if we change the way we evaluate people, we can overcome stereotypes and give disadvantaged people an equal chance. That if we face disadvantages of our own, we can draw strength from them." (Adam Grant, P. 6/6)

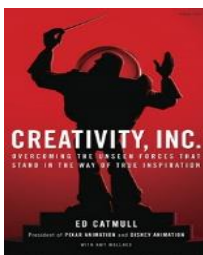
Actions to take from the book

- What "disadvantage" do you have that you can turn into finding an advantage?
- What popular belief do you hold on to that may in fact be negatively impacting your effectiveness?
- Who is your Goliath and how can you defeat them or win them over?
- Are you swimming in a Big Pond or a Little Pond? Is it the right pond?

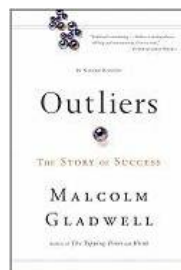
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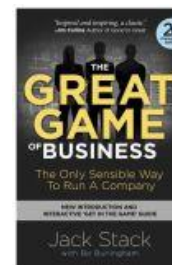
Friday April 24th



Friday May 22nd



Friday June 26



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