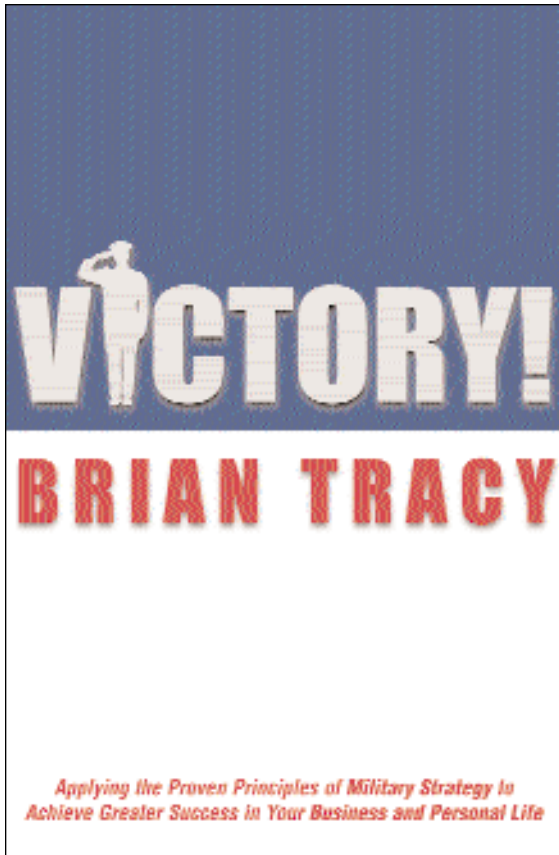


BOOKS



Victory!

By Brian Tracy

Reviewed by David Sandt Corderman

Directed at business leaders looking for a unique spin on traditional advice, *Victory* by Brian Tracy aims to teach readers how to benefit from the lessons learned in military combat. Descriptions of various battles, combined with inspirational quotes from military leaders, serve as the basis for advice on professional or personal improvement.

Penned in the oft-applied manner of many current bestsellers, the book uses 12 principles to serve as chapter themes. The insights gained from the “12 Principles of War,” suggests Tracy, can be applied to business and personal endeavors. The themes are supported by relevant

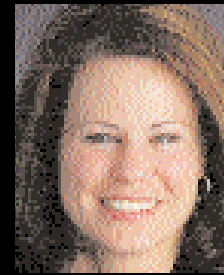
examples and appropriate quotations. The effective use of alternative typefaces emphasizes the relevant points. The main ideas, which relate to business and personal growth, are tied to and supported by combat experiences.

Tracy is an accomplished individual who has put together a credible read, one that adds to an already impressive list of professional accomplishments. *Victory* is recommended reading for people interested in improving their business acumen and personal well-being. Military history and military affairs buffs will also find this book of interest.

The 12 chapters delineate what Tracy

ON THE NIGHTSTAND

By Sabrina E. Hicks



Ah February, the month of love. Do you know what I love? I love daffodils; my cat, Jun-kets; and the poet John Keats. What I *don't* love is that empty, lost feeling

you get when you start a new job and your chosen organization doesn't have an employee orientation program in place. What's worse than being full of expectations and energy and having no other tasks than to pass eight hours surfing the Web and walking the hallways in search of a bathroom?

These books on my nightstand offer advice on how to be proactive and take control of your new environment.

Find the Bathrooms First! Starting a New Job on the Right Foot by Roy J. Blitzer and Jacquie Reynolds-Rush. The authors know that as a new employee you often forget about your needs when trying to impress the boss; thus, their focus is on how to get your needs met. Each chapter ends with a "Suggestions for Action" section that can help you overcome new job hurdles with ease.

Your First Thirty Days by Elwood N. Chapman. This book includes forms you can use to assess your progress. The practical tools, such as a Getting Ready Checklist and a Job Specification Worksheet, guide your efforts and help you create new, productive work habits.

Taking charge of your work environment eases new job stress and frees up your after-hours for concentrating on the nonwork elements of your life that you enjoy. What will I do with that time? I'm off to read the love letters of Keats: "My creed is Love and you are its only tenet." Beat that!

Sabrina E. Hicks, former T+D senior editor, has successfully survived more than 30 days in her new position as a technical writer at a different organization: sabrina_e_hicks@hotmail.com.

believes are the most important principles of war. The chapters, further divided into short sections a half-page to one-page each, describe battles, offer advice, or give ideas readers can relate to their personal or professional lives. Though somewhat choppy, the layout provides short bits of valuable stand-alone information.

Tracy uses examples ranging from the pre-Christian to modern eras, from Alexander the Great's defeat of the Persian army to the current war in Afghanistan. Though the depth is limited, the examples successfully illustrate the 12 principles, such as the Principle of the Objective, the Principle of the Offensive.

Tracy defines each principle, which will help readers unfamiliar with military strategy and jargon understand the concepts. The definitions are set off so they're easy to spot. Each principle is edified through military examples, and at the end of each chapter Tracy describes how readers can apply the principle to improve business or grow professionally.

The book isn't remarkable for any one battle or one principle. Its impact comes from the juxtaposition of historical references with advice on improving personal power, wealth, and business acumen. That's best demonstrated in the chapter on the Principle of Mass, in which Tracy begins with a quote from Napoleon about "dispensing with nothing if you must fight a battle" and continues with a brief description of the Battle of Isandhwana, in which the British were defeated because they divided their forces. That chapter ends with a discussion on how to mass forces for sales and profitability in business.

The one criticism I'd levy is that some information is repetitive, but Tracy may have intended for each chapter to stand alone.

Victory isn't a book to be read in one sitting. It's better used as a tool that should be marked and read repeatedly. Because of the quantity and quality of the ideas therein, readers should carry

it around and revisit it frequently or use it in conjunction with an audio program they can listen to on their commute to work.

Many of the chapters encourage readers to take pen in hand and write down their goals and dreams. The book's lesson is that by writing and rewriting about what you want to become and focusing on a main purpose, it's possible to achieve or become anything.

Tracy says, "If you think and act like a leader—if you learn the qualities and behaviors of great leaders and you apply them in your daily life—you will inevitably evolve and mature into a leadership position in whatever you do." He says that in order to become successful, an individual needs to focus on what other successful people do, whether in a business or personal setting.

Recommendation

I'd rate this book as excellent and place it on a list of books that should be read. It's well written and well edited and can be digested in small bits. It can also be used as a learning tool for self-improvement and leadership, with many valuable insights into personal growth and self-mastery. As such, it's a credible reference that can be used repeatedly for inspiration and as a guide to remain focused on self-development. It's highly recommended reading for anyone serious about improving his or her professional situation or quality of life.

Victory!: Applying the Proven Principles of Military Strategy to Achieve Greater Success in Your Business by Brian Tracy. Amacom.

304 pp. US\$24.95

Circle 290 on reader service card.

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