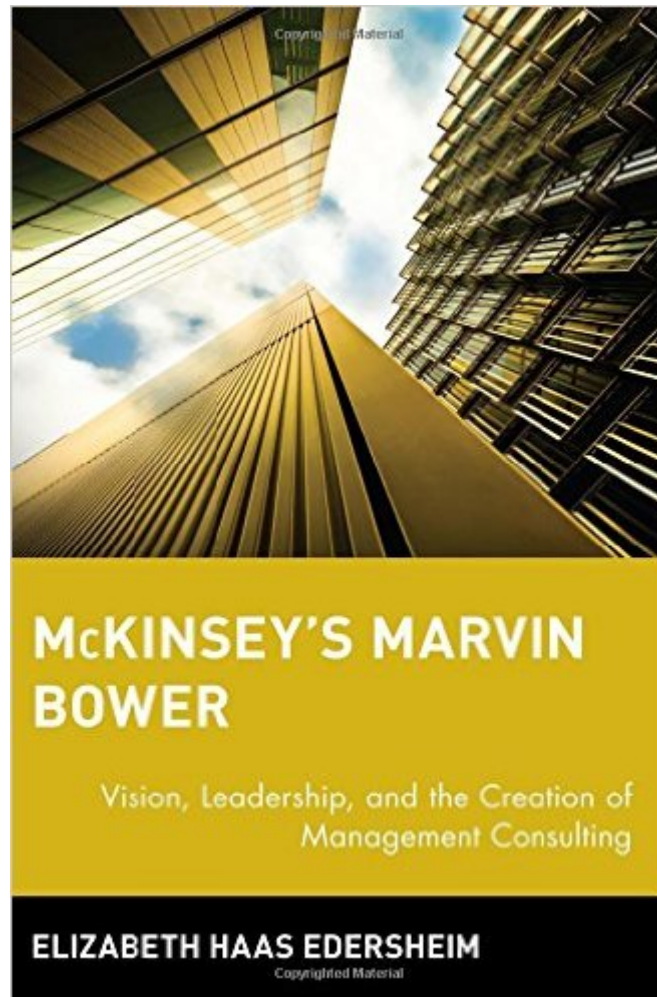


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McKinsey's Marvin Bower: Vision, Leadership, And The Creation Of Management Consulting



Synopsis

"I had the privilege of working closely with Marvin and McKinsey for many years. This book makes Marvin come to life and perpetuates him as a role model." -Peter F. Drucker "A wonderful book about a wonderful man. In many ways, Marvin's McKinsey framed the hypotheses in our own search for excellence-for example, passion for values, belief in people as the prime resource, and willingness to let people experiment. As well as I thought I knew Marvin, however, this remarkable book, drawing on the collective memories of those who worked most closely with him, taught me a ton about how extraordinary the man really was and what made him that way. Many have called Drucker the man who invented management; I think history will conclude that both he and Marvin Bower share that pedestal." -Bob Waterman, coauthor of *In Search of Excellence* "Marvin Bower became a legend, not just within McKinsey & Company, but within professional services and the business world more broadly. In everything he did and said, he embodied the professional approach and the importance of values. This book sheds remarkable insight on a remarkable man and on the power of constancy of purpose." -Ian Davis, Worldwide Managing Director, McKinsey & Co. "It is as Marvin would have wanted it-simple, honest, fact-based, wonderful stories with a long-term perspective. An insightful read about the father of management consulting." -Lois Juliber, retired COO, Colgate-Palmolive "This book provides fascinating insight into the early days of modern management consulting. It is an extremely enlightening look at the origin of one of America's most important professions and one of America's most innovative leaders." -Thomas H. Lee, founder, Chairman, and President, Thomas H. Lee Partners L.P.

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Customer Reviews

Having spent the past 20 years in consulting, I've read a lot of business books and always buy a new book with the expressed purpose of learning something new. McKinsey's Marvin Bower did not disappoint. Although I bought it to read about Marvin Bower, the myth, I learned much more about Marvin Bower the man and his impact on principles I had been practicing throughout my career, and without knowing why. This book provides the fundamental lessons on how to do it right -- from creating values that guide an organization to placing customer and client interests first. To me, McKinsey was a side bar, the real story is about Marvin Bower and his impact on 20th century business. As such, it's a must read for everyone and anyone interested in "getting it right" regardless of their profession.

This is a truly outstanding book. It is very well-written and thoroughly presents the principles and experiences that made Marvin Bower one of the giants of management consulting. Even with 30 years experience in management consulting, I learned a great deal about client relationships and other aspects of consulting. Marvin Bower was truly a remarkable leader. For skills and ethics in management consulting, he rates at the top. The only negative about the book is that it's not balanced. No one is perfect- not even Mr. Bower or McKinsey- as the author might have you believe. And I don't think Mr. Bower was quite the non-autocratic and non-hierarchical leader as the author and others have asserted. Firing a partner because he was doing work for one client that didn't deal with "major problems;" firing an associate and ordering him to leave the firm and building in 30 minutes for a lapse in judgement (albeit a significant one); and putting the fear of God in associates if they were seen having a social rather than a business lunch or if they wore argyle socks sounds pretty autocratic to me. Even if he encouraged dissent in staff discussions. Also, I don't agree that Mr. Bower was the founder of professional management consulting. I believe Ed Booz of Booz, Allen and Hamilton was. Of course, as a former Booz Allen partner, I may be biased. Notwithstanding the above criticisms, this is one of the best books I've ever read.

A compelling portrait of a leader who seemed to find just the right combination for success - creating value for clients, unwavering integrity, leading from the front, selflessness in the interest of the business' sustainability, consistency of vision and personal actions and continuous communication with and interest in his people. Bower's vision, values and approach shaped a generation of

successful leaders. This book leaves you thinking about how you can be a better leader and wishing that you'd been fortunate enough to work for Marvin Bower. In an age of corporate scandals, it's refreshing and inspiring to read about a greatly successful leader with true integrity and how that integrity was an integral part of his success.

Marvin Bower may be the most influential businessman you've never heard of. The firm he shaped into an international powerhouse, McKinsey & Company, doesn't bear his name, and he never made splashy public gifts. Yet the company that spawned the management consulting industry would not exist today without this remarkable man's clear, compelling vision. Bower or his consultants transformed countless companies and executives for the better. Here, author Elizabeth Haas Edersheim assembles dozens of testimonials to Marvin Bower's integrity, honesty and drive to excel. Her book contains the story of his life, but it reads less like a biography and more like a Harvard Business School case study - a bit dry, and chock-full of interview transcripts rather than compelling narrative. However, its similarity to a case study is oddly appropriate, since Bower was one of the first graduates of the Harvard Business School and remained connected with it for many years, even defending its case study method of teaching when it came under attack in the late 1970s. We recommend this book to leaders, to those who aspire to lead and to consultants who want to study the best of their profession in action.

Marvin Bower. Having not worked in strategy consulting but preparing for interviews; this book was perfect. While many people feel that the big 3 have strayed from the values here in this book; I hope not. This is an extraordinary biography about a man who helped shape the modern business environment.

It is a great book for those who want to get an introduction on what it is McKinsey & Co. The book describe Marvin Bower's work throughout his life to build the greatest consulting firm in the world. The values, ethics and way of thinking for a firm that was thought to last for ever as a leader in the world. Great book.

This book is so much more than a simple biography. It explains the origin, aspirations, and workings of a leading professional firm and industry that now, 80 years later, has become truly global and developed into a successful multi-billion industry. Forget about today's many commercially run second and third rate consulting firms and any so-called "consulting scandals" of the last decade -

Marvin Bower was the real deal. For him, consulting was a profession with the highest standards and integrity. Why should you read the book? First, you will understand the fabric of McKinsey, the market leader. In order to do so, go right to Chapter 3 (The Profession and the Institution) - it tells you everything you need to know about what Bower had in mind when building The Firm. I use this chapter when giving guest lectures for MBA students on the topic of the consulting industry. Second, you will get inspired by a true visionary. In whatever business you are in, you can learn from Bower of how to think long-term, build and mold a new industry consistently and with success. A nice antidote to the many "get rich quick" schemes in today's Internet age.

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