

Title: "It's Called WORK for a Reason! Your Success Is Your Own Damn Fault!"

Author: Larry Winget

Publisher: Gotham Books

Length: 240 pages

Reading time: 2 hours

Reading rating 10 (1 = very difficult; 10 = very easy)

Overall rating: 2 (1 = average; 4 = outstanding)

"It's Called WORK for a Reason! Your Success Is Your Own Damn Fault" is an irreverent, practical guide to work written by the "Pitbull of Personal Development,"[®] "The World's Only Irrational Speaker,"[®] —Larry Winget. If you've never seen Larry on A & E's reality series, "Big Spender," you can get a glimpse of him on the front cover: a big, bald, biker-type dude, wearing a custom cowboy shirt (bright red flowers on a bright blue fabric), matching cowboy boots, hoop earrings and several pounds of silver jewelry including a skull ring. Get the picture? He's in-your-face, opinionated, and right on target in describing the demise of the American workforce.

In a down-to-earth style that minces no words, Winget offers concrete suggestions for the disillusioned worker who thinks he's underpaid, underappreciated, and uninspired: "Pretend I'm your boss for a minute. Here is my position: Just do your damn job. And don't complain about it. And if you aren't willing to do that, then don't be surprised when I fire your lazy ass." Did I tell you? Winget's no shrinking violet.

What is surprising is that Winget is right on target on with the symptoms, diagnosis, and the prognosis for the diseases affecting the American worker. Symptoms include apathy, complacency, stupidity, and lack of personal responsibility. As Winget says, "If your life sucks, it's because YOU suck." The diagnosis? The Liar, The Cryer, The Bully, the Gossip, and the Ass (with lots of variations including the Dumb-Ass and the Kiss-Ass). The Prognosis? Poor.

No holds barred, Winget urges the reader to look in the mirror and accept that "Your results are your own damn fault." He continues: "So dump the excuses. It's not your stupid boss's fault. It isn't the fault of your asinine coworkers. Stop blaming your spouse, your brother-in-law, your kids, your first-grade teacher...." But here's the rub: we like our lives, even when they suck.

For those serious about stepping up to the plate and doing something to better their lives, Winget offers simple advice on "how you can rise from the depths of 'suckitude' to the pinnacles of success."

Simple? Yes. Easy? No.

If you want job security, then Winget suggests that you make yourself invaluable at work, take personal responsibility for your mistakes, get results, and do more than your boss

expects. In other words, be an overachiever but keep life in balance. Work is work. Your personal life is your own.

Winget believes in leadership without motivation. It's not the employer's job to motivate. It's his job to pay a fair wage for a fair's day work. But he does believe in being an Irrational Leader—one who “demands excellence to the point that if your employees aren't willing to give it, they will become so irritated with you that they will run from you and your company.” The Irrational Leader sets such high standards that only the best and the brightest are willing to work for her. Winget doesn't make an effort to motivate employees; he forces them to deal with the consequences of their own bad performance. If the consequences for poor performance are painful enough, then employees will comply, quit, or be relieved to be fired.

Winget breaks many of the traditional rules of management and has some pretty dubious management techniques. But there is no denying that when Winget puts these techniques into practice, they work for him. Does Winget think it will work for you? “It might. It might not. Stuff works only if you give it a try.”

“It's Called WORK for a Reason!” starts with a bang and ends with a fizzle. The last four chapters are simply lists of rules and sayings. But it's a quick, fun, thought-provoking read.

Jayne Elizabeth Zanglein is a Visiting Instructor of Business Law in the College of Business at Western Carolina University. For previously reviewed books, visit our Website at www.wcu.edu/cob/.