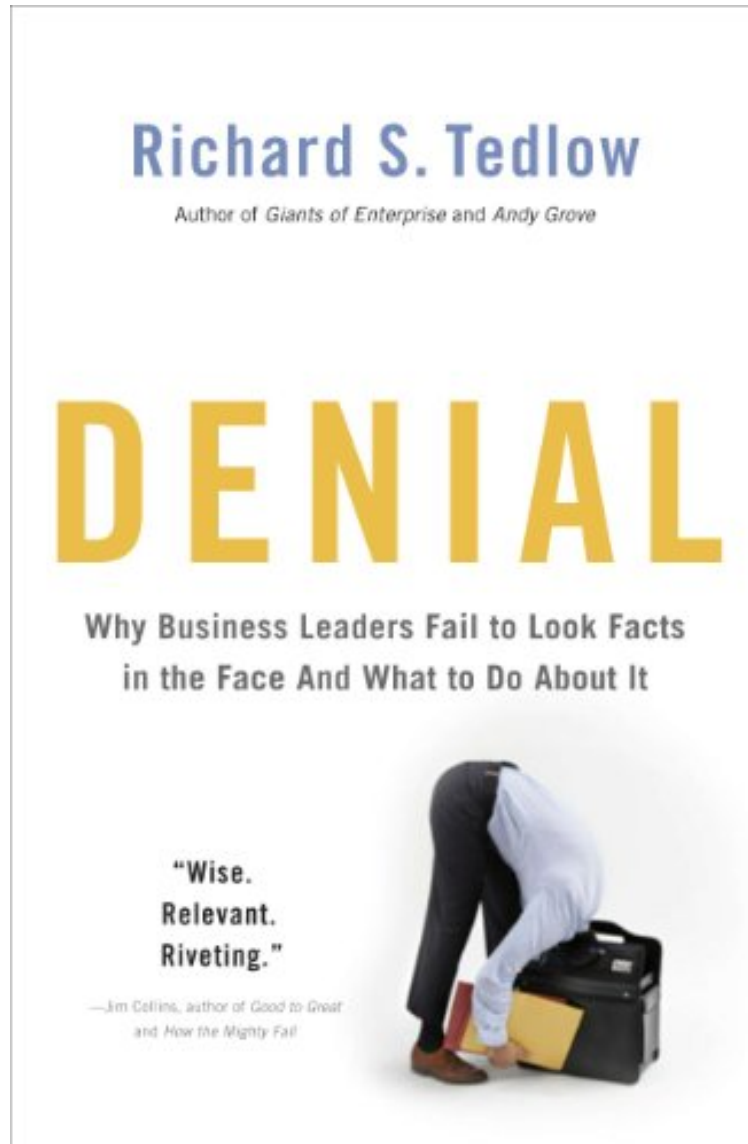


Denial: Why Business Leaders Fail to Look Facts in the Face--and What to Do About It

Richard S. Tedlow

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Richard S. Tedlow : Denial: Why Business Leaders Fail to Look Facts in the Face--and What to Do About It before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Denial: Why Business Leaders Fail to Look Facts in the Face--and What to Do About It:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. start battle denial right nowBy Mikio MiyakiRichard S. Tedlow says human nature has a tendency to put aside unpleasant realities in favor of more palatable or convenient narratives. We

ignore the obvious at a certain moment because we simply don't want to confront it. It is the unconscious calculus to avoid pain. Denial allows us to live in a convenient world we create as long as it lasts. However, we, no doubt, fail when we deny hard truths in front of us. Denial is simultaneously the safe and the wrong way to handle a problem. He says denial is a process over which we sometimes can exercise some measure of control. When we're not in control, it is denial. Episodes in this book are quite familiar to business person. However, replacing our position to their's, we have not an inch of confidence in solving these problems. Our sense of urgency might be easily blunted by the business upturn. We might miss the strategic inflection point by denying the needs from the market. Tedlow assures us we can arm ourselves against denial through self-knowledge, openness to criticism, receptivity to facts and perspectives that challenge our own. Eight lessons in this book to avoid denial shows the true nature of the problem. With our own efforts, we can improve our ability to perceive the danger of denying. There are no mature markets, only tired marketers. Let's start life-work battle denial right now!

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Great read!

By Nick Definitely recommend this book. After the first three chapters, I googled to find the other books this author wrote. The book has a fascinating approach to analyzing failures from a point of perception between truth and false beliefs.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Praise for Denial

By Becky Turns out to be the exact information I needed to help a businessman friend. It might not save the business, but it is sure helping the person understand what has happened.

An astute diagnosis of one of the biggest problems in business Denial is the unconscious determination that a certain reality is too terrible to contemplate, so therefore it cannot be true. We see it everywhere, from the alcoholic who swears he's just a social drinker to the president who declares "mission accomplished" when it isn't. In the business world, countless companies get stuck in denial while their challenges escalate into crises. Harvard Business School professor Richard S. Tedlow tackles two essential questions: Why do sane, smart leaders often refuse to accept the facts that threaten their companies and careers? And how do we find the courage to resist denial when facing new trends, changing markets, and tough new competitors? Tedlow looks at numerous examples of organizational catastrophes crippled by denial, including Ford in the era of the Model T and Coca-Cola with its abortive attempt to change its formula. He also explores other companies, such as Intel, Johnson Johnson, and DuPont, that avoided catastrophe by dealing with harsh realities head-on. Tedlow identifies the leadership skills that are essential to spotting the early signs of denial and taking the actions required to overcome it.

From Publishers Weekly Starred . Author and Harvard business administration professor Tedlow (Andy Grove: The Life and Times of an American Business Icon) asserts that "denial goes hand-in-hand with short-term thinking," a problem that arises when a business "that once might have focused on getting the job done now is concerned with getting done with the job." The history of industry is rich with such cases, a number of which Tedlow examines with thorough understanding of both business and psychology: the initial brilliance of Henry Ford's Model T assembly lines gave way to significant setbacks when they failed to take the threat of Europe's radial tires seriously; the "great" grocery chain AP was sunk by executives who "celebrated the statistics they liked." Tedlow also surveys the "edifice complex," in which struggling but respected companies erect monuments to themselves (like the Sears Tower) rather than tackling real challenges. Contrasting successes include tenacious DuPont, Intel's chief truth-seeker Andy Grove, and Johnson Johnson, which faced almost insurmountable challenges head-on during the toxic Tylenol crisis. Tedlow discusses ways to overcome the denial inherent to human nature as well as the institutional variety, cautioning against "yes" men, the vocabulary of euphemisms, and trash-talking the competition: "What am I using this derision to hide—perhaps from myself?"

Richard Tedlow blends historical rigor with practical insights useful to today's leaders—a rare and wonderful combination. His huge lesson—that the seeds of tragic demise are almost always visible, if only leaders would face them square-on—should terrify any successful person.

Jim Collins, author Good to Great and How the Mighty Fall

This lucid and scary history of our proclivity to deny uncomfortable truth is Richard Tedlow at his analytical best. But plan ahead before you pick it up. It is very hard to put down.

Clayton M. Christensen, Author of The Innovator's Dilemma

In this absorbing study, Tedlow makes the case that the willingness to face harsh facts is what distinguishes great leaders from merely adequate ones. A must-read.

Sheryl Sandberg, COO of Facebook

Tedlow's book forces the business executive to ask: "Is this about me?" If the answer is yes, you've got a problem. The stories presented here can help you work your way out of it.

Suzy Welch, author of 10-10-10

Tedlow's book is a fascinating look at the phenomenon of denial. It's a great explanation of why smart leaders act dumb, and what you can do about it.

Scott Adams, creator of Dilbert

About the Author Richard S. Tedlow is the Class of 1949 Professor of Business Administration at Harvard Business School and the author of Giants of Enterprise (one of BusinessWeek's ten best books of 2001) and The Watson Dynasty.