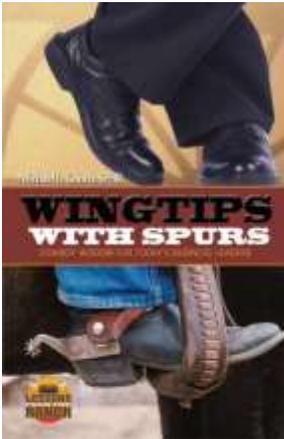


PM WORLD BOOK REVIEW



Book Title: **Wingtips with Spurs, Lessons from the Ranch**

Author: **Michael L. Gooch, SPHR**

Publisher: Multi-Media Publications

List Price: US\$24.95

Format: softcover; 280 pages

Publication Date: 2008 ISBN: 9781897326886

Reviewer: **Luke Martincevic, PMP**

Review Date: November 2013

Introduction to the Book

Michael Gooch is a Director of Human Resources, but also a rancher. This brings the timeless small town, rancher wisdom to the workplace in an easy read. Running a ranch as a business has many parallels to the corporate workplace, but emphasizes many undeniable truths in a down-to-home format, that simply makes sense. De-politicizing the corporate workplace with small business perspective is probably what the corporate environment needs. The book is fun to read, easy to apply, with memorable lessons in a package of great imagery.

Overview of Book's Structure

Broken out into chapters alphabetically by name, the author makes no pretense by attempting to prioritize content. All chapters are relevant in the workplace, and he's wisely left it to the reader to decide on their order of precedence. In this approach, it is probably more reference-able as the reader can dive directly into whichever topic is of particular interest at that time. However, the price paid for this, is that it lacks continuity as it doesn't lead the reader from one topic to the next. Also, it lacks the interconnectivity of many of the topics. Nonetheless, an entertaining and enlightening read.

Highlights: What's New in this Book

Based on home-town truths, the content is basically nothing new. Or at least, should be nothing new to any reader. The perspective though is totally new and refreshing. Michael brings the topics to life with real examples with which it is easy to relate. Also, Michael uses simple phrases to highlight important points for the most part, as these are

simple and easy to relate to, they are also easy to remember. This is important, as it changes the character of the book from being a dry basis of reference, to topics that the reader will easily remember and apply in his or her day-to-day business.

The author has, I believe intentionally, not focused on any particular discipline, profession, corporate structure or philosophy, except for home-grown common sense. By using examples and perspectives from a ranch or farm, he's effectively divorced the content from most business readers, but kept it close enough to experiences to which we all might relate.

Highlights: What I liked!

The author's frankness with real-life situations brings the book to life. His directness in his approach makes this no –nonsense and leaves the reader questioning why they're not viewing their corporate lives with the same eyes as they would use in any business. Without specifically stating as much, the author intimates that we are all so caught up in our big-business perspectives, that we allow these perspectives to cloud our judgment, and obscure our goals.

The down-home phrases and examples are easy to remember, easy to apply and easy to relate to. This approach is one that I myself have used to great benefit, and I'm pleased to see that reinforced. Having now, perhaps for the first time, being subjected to an approach that I use, I am glad to see its merits in action.

Shortfalls: What was Missing!

While this is a good general view of business as a whole, I found that its lack of reference to project-based business practices disappointing. More and more, businesses are using projects to leverage capability and gain advantage in the marketplace. This connection was missing, and because the format of the book appears to be more "operations based", left those connections untended.

Who might benefit from the Book

Anyone in business, whether as an employee of a mega-corporation, a sole-proprietor, or a consultant. The employee could certainly use the perspectives portrayed here, but would need to temper them to his or her own corporate environment. A sole-proprietor would do well to give these perspectives credence in building their own brand and reputation, and in managing his or her business to success. Consultants, would also benefit in being able to bring simple-truth based perspectives to bear in their clients environments.

Conclusion

A strongly recommended read! Fun, easy to digest, and easily applied. I find myself split between a desire to share the book with everyone, or to keep it to myself as a competitive advantage. Either way, I have benefited from reading this, and my customers and clients have benefitted from me reading it too.

Wingtips with Spurs. Lessons from the Ranch, by Michael L. Gooch, SPHR, published by Multi-Media Publishing, 2008 ISBN 9781897326886, \$24.95, 280 pages, soft cover. More at ...
<http://www.barnesandnoble.com/w/wingtips-with-spurs-michael-l-gooch/1009243870>

Reviewer's added note: The lure of the open plains, boots, chaps and cowboy hats makes us think of a different and better way of life. The cowboy code of honor is an image that is alive and well in our hearts and minds, and its wisdom is timeless.

Using ranch based stories, author Michael Gooch, a ranch owner, tells us how to apply cowboy wisdom to our everyday management challenges. Serving up straight forward, practical advice, the book deals with issues of dealing with conflict, strategic thinking, ethics, having fun at work, hiring and firing, building strong teams, and knowing when to run from trouble.

A unique (and fun!) approach to management training, Wingtips with Spurs is a must read whether you are new to management or a grizzled veteran

Editor's note: This book review was the result of cooperation between the publisher, PM World and the Dallas Chapter of the Project Management Institute (PMI Dallas Chapter – www.pmidallas.org). Publishers provide the books to PM World; books are delivered to the PMI Dallas Chapter, where they are offered free to PMI members to review; book reviews are published in the PM World Journal and PM World Library. PMI members can receive PDUs for PMP recertification by reviewing PM books. PMI Dallas Chapter members are generally mid-career professionals, the audience for most project management books. If you are an author or publisher of a project management-related book, and would like the book reviewed through this program, please contact editor@peworldjournal.net.