

# Give and Take

## Why Helping Others Drives Our Success

Book review of Adam Grant's "Give and Take" by Orla Treacy

Adam Grant delivers fascinating insight into the popular cliché, "Nice guys finish last." In some cases they sure do, but in other cases these nice guys or "givers" as Grant coins them, rise to the top of their industries, ahead of their peers who practice, taking or matching.

Givers are defined as people who help others without expecting anything in return. Their motives are altruistic and they believe in "paying it forward". Takers on the other end are your typical "credit hogs" who although can be highly skilled, take as much as possible and contribute less in return. These people typically only help in highly visible ways to get credit and when the personal benefits exceed the costs. Matchers fall in the middle. They are guided by a sense of fairness and will help those who help them.

It might seem at first study that taking the matcher approach to life makes the most sense. However, Grant consistently shows where the matcher philosophy falls short. Matchers don't reach the same levels of success as effective givers. This is because they limit themselves to give and receive favors from people in a purely quid pro quo manner. Whereas givers reap the benefits of inspiring others and making connections that takers dismiss as not profitable enough and matchers dismiss as not ideal for reciprocity.

What's more compelling is that Grant is able to differentiate between the givers who ultimately end up as doormats and the givers who become shining stars. This book is truly a must read not only for employees looking to excel professionally by helping others, but also for employers who might be too quick to believe the self-promoting fallacies of takers, and overlook the givers who quietly and effectively get things done without constantly seeking the limelight.

As much as givers can benefit a company, takers can decrease office morale and foster an environment where ideas aren't being circulated because other workers are either afraid of being cut down by takers or have them take credit for their work. Grant quotes Simon Sinek who sums up the difference between givers and takers, "Givers advance the world. Takers advance themselves and hold the world back."