

The Challenge Of Change: Leadership Strategies For Not-For-Profit Executives And Boards

By Philip Coltoff

(New York, NY: Children's Aid Society, 2006)

One of the greatest gifts an experienced executive can bestow upon another is the experiences, ideas, and advice that he or she has accumulated over the decades. Coltoff has done exactly that.

Philip Coltoff, Executive Director of The Children's Aid Society from 1981 to 2005, led the Society for nearly a quarter of a century growing budget from \$10 million to \$80 million annually. He is an executive-in-residence and visiting professor at New York University School of Social Work.

The Challenge of Change is the capstone to an executive's lengthy career at one of the nation's largest not-for-profit organizations in the nation. Coltoff shares, clearly and concisely, his experiences in everything ranging from working with a Board, leadership, and fundraising to his own formula of "service plus advocacy equals change and succession planning."

The Challenge of Change is a very quick read and can easily be consumed in a couple of hours. However, do not let the speed of the read fool you. The organization of the text begins with the fundamentals of the organization's key issues, discusses leadership, talks about the external factors, eventually pulling back to take a look at the big picture finishing on what ultimately happens at the end of a career and the continuation of the organization.

Coltoff's experiences, on occasion, dwells upon a single not-for-profit sector, but one can almost effortlessly see the similarities and correlations in his teachings and appropriate apply them to any organization whether for profit or not-for-profit. His ideas are not necessarily profound or thought provoking, but a fantastic re-assurance of what to do, all the while, giving the reader the confidence to maintain, manage, and lead an organization.

This book is probably best intended to be used by new or future executives as Coltoff's experiences are those lessons that one will come up against eventually and in lieu of learning for one's self, if the reader takes these lessons to heart, it would probably expedite their personal and professional success.

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