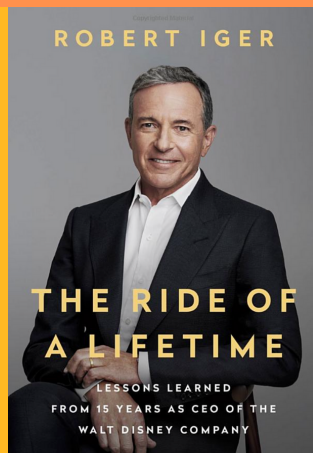


Book Review

# RIDE OF A LIFETIME

## ROBERT IGER



### RESPECT YOUR EMPLOYEES AND THEIR PERSONAL LIVES

Iger's account of working with Roone Arledge at ABC Sports details how the latter did not respect deadlines or the work-life balance of his employees but was otherwise brilliant

Iger's account provides a negative example for how not to treat your employees; outstanding work performance is not enough, social skills and respect for employees is required!

### IN RESEARCH ADMINISTRATION

Walk the halls - get to know your employees

Respect your staff as individual human beings

Respect a work-life balance

### GOOD IS NEVER GOOD ENOUGH: DO YOUR BEST IN ALL YOU DO

In part, Roone Arledge's behavior was driven by the belief that "just good is not good enough" – in all that you are doing strive to do your best. "Good should never be good enough".

### IN RESEARCH ADMINISTRATION

In everything you do, always do your best. That's all you can do.

Don't be content with "status quo" - there is always something that you can improve upon on!

### THE RIGHT PERSONALITY AND MINDSET ARE MORE IMPORTANT THAN KNOWLEDGE OF SKILLS

Throughout his career, Iger's bosses recognized that he had the right personality and mindset to advance, and they groomed him for leadership.

Personality and the right fit with your organization is more important than pre-existing skills – those can be learned.

Given that Iger worked his way up through various positions and ranks, he was exposed to and obtained experience with many different tasks and responsibilities that helped him develop his leadership style and ultimately manage one of the best-known companies in the world

### IN RESEARCH ADMINISTRATION

Recognize potential in others and provide them with opportunities to apply their skills and also advance to ranks they can aspire to

If you have an opportunity to work at different types of institutions (doctoral-research vs. high research vs. highest research), and work at different ranks, it can be quite beneficial to your experience.

Provide shadowing opportunities

Hire for personality that matches your culture rather than just skills

## IGER'S TEN PRINCIPLES

OPTIMISM

COURAGE

FOCUS

DECISIVENESS

CURIOSITY

FAIRNESS

THOUGHTFULNESS

AUTHENTICITY

INTEGRITY

THE RELENTLESS PURSUIT OF PERFECTION

### DON'T BE PESSIMISTIC OR DISDAINFUL IN FRONT OF YOUR STAFF

In his second decade as CEO, Eisner became more and more anxious and pessimistic. This created a poor work environment for others. Similarly, the director of Strategic Initiatives did not take kindly to others who he viewed as "less". Again, this created a work environment in which individuals were not free to voice their opinions and be creative. When either left their position and restructuring occurred, these barriers were lifted.

### IN RESEARCH ADMINISTRATION

While transparency is important, do not communicate with your staff in an "end-of-the-world" fashion

Do not treat any of your staff as if they are "less" - less important or less intelligent. EVERYONE fulfills an important role. Just imagine what would happen, if the janitor stopped working

Treat everyone with respect and recognize each individual's importance through recognition in newsletters, private messages and highlights in front of all staff

# "Fear of Failure Destroys Creativity"

### PLAN FOR THE FUTURE, NOT FOR TOMORROW

Part of Roy Disney's accusation of Michael Eisner before his resignation was that he was too focused on short-term success rather than planning for a long-term future of the company.

Metrics are not always the way to go  
The Department of Strategic initiatives was a 65-person group when Iger "inherited" it and had gained a lot of control over all new initiatives. The group did market analyses to predict the success of a new idea. However, such lengthy analysis of metrics cost a lot of time. Iger reduced the group to 15 people and re-focused them on one specific project. Other decisions were moved outside of this group to make faster decisions.

### IN RESEARCH ADMINISTRATION

When you set your goals in your research administration office, make sure that your goals are visionary and look out for the future. Short-term success rarely provides that kind of vision.

Research Metrics at best represent short-term goals, mostly milestones on the way to a goal. Do not mistake them for an actual goal.

Find a balance between planning and time-effective decisions.

### THERE ARE NO DO-OVERS, DON'T WASTE TIME ON THEM

During Iger's 15 interviews that led to his appointment of CEO of the Walt Disney Company, he was repeatedly asked about the alleged mistakes of his predecessor. Rather than going there, Iger decided to focus on the future and not rehash a past that could not be altered.

Don't lose yourself in other's opinions of yourself or your work  
In a discussion with Katzenberg, as well as many others who provided, often unsolicited feedback on Iger's candidacy for the CEO position, it would have been easy to fall victim to other's perceptions of him and what they believed to be true.

### IN RESEARCH ADMINISTRATION

When taking over a new position, or even just discussing goals, remember that there are no do-overs, so focus on what you will do for the institution or the office, focus on your strategic goals moving forward.

Be true to yourself, and do not self-doubt because others have different opinions.