

Soon to be
The Ruth.



HOW TO SUCCEED IN BUSINESS WITHOUT REALLY TRYING

2024
SEASON

MUSICAL

PRODUCTION NUMBER 252

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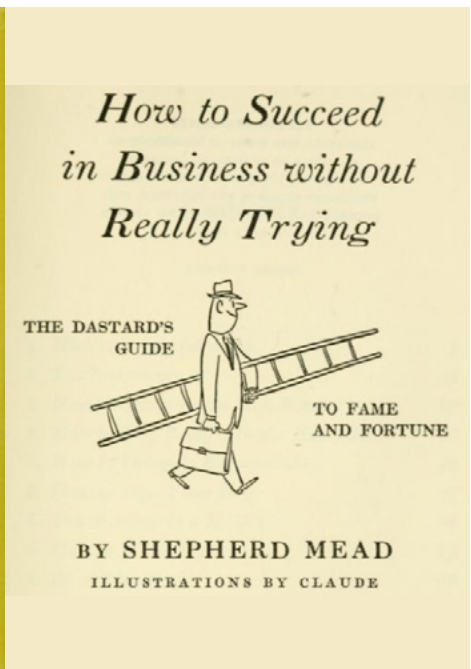
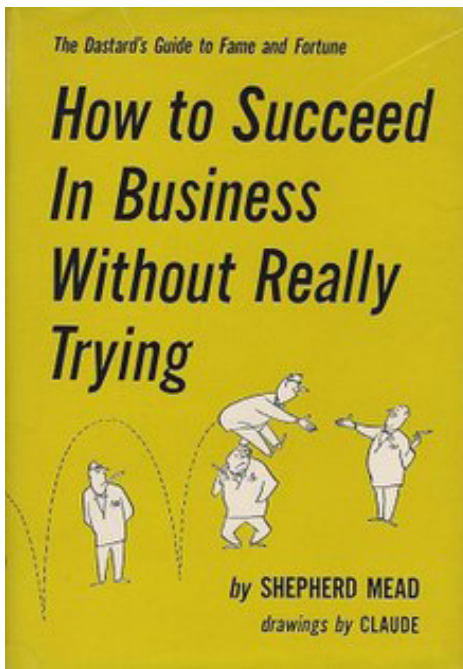
You may be familiar with *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying* from the 1967 movie starring Robert Morse, or you may know the 1961 Pulitzer Prize-winning stage musical it was based on. You may even have seen recent Broadway revivals starring Matthew Broderick, Daniel Radcliffe, Darren Criss, or Nick Jonas.

But did you know it's all based on a book? In fact, a book the Library of Congress considers a non-fiction business book covering "Success in business", "Management", and "Career development"?

How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying: The Dastard's Guide to Fame and Fortune by Shepard Mead was published in 1952. Mead based the book on his experiences working at a New

York advertising agency where he had worked his way up from mail-room clerk to vice-president. He wrote the satirical guide to climbing the corporate ladder in the early mornings before work and on the weekends, and after adding illustrations by the noted New Yorker cartoonist Claude Smith it became an instant best-seller.

With chapters including "The Meeting Is a MUST!", "How to Write Memos", and "How to Stop Being a Junior Executive", the book gives advice on climbing the ladder in the business world of the 1950s. While some of it is out of date (women only exist in this book as secretaries, wives, and mistresses), it's easy enough to replace "memo" with "email" and "bar chart" with "PowerPoint" and see his satire still ringing true after more than half a century.



How to Apply for a Job

“If you have education, intelligence, and ability, so much the better. But remember that thousands have reached the top without them. You, too, can be among the lucky few.”

“[The interviewer] will be interested in you as a *person*. Encourage this. But he may ask you questions about experience, just to make conversation. Parry these skillfully.”

“References: If few people will speak well of you, list uncles or cousins with different surnames. A good trick is to list a recently deceased tycoon, scratching his name off lightly. ‘Poor Bunny,’ you will say later in the interview, ‘I’ll take his name off my new résumé.’

“Be sure yours is a company that *makes* something, and that somebody else has to make it. Beware of organizations offering personal services, whether they be law offices, advertising agencies, or animal hospitals.”

How to Delegate Responsibility

“The Junior Executive is expected to suffer, and if you cannot manage it, you must at least *appear* to. An ulcer is excellent. Grow one if you can, but if you cannot, a bottle of milk placed conspicuously on the desk will do nicely, if accompanied by a slightly pained smile.”

“Keep in mind that your real function is Formulating Policy and Making Decisions, the work for which you were chosen and work which is best done in a relaxed, semi-reclining position. Therefore, your first duty is to find capable assistants who will do the actual routine work.”

“A Secretary is NOT a Toy. She will be entrusted to your care as a helpmate *in your work*, and should not be used for pleasure, except in emergencies.”

“Select a girl of ravishing beauty ... soon your little corner will become a mecca for influential men.”

“Send your secretary around occasionally to borrow Benzadrine tablets.”

“Remember, the American home is sacred, and it is a shoddy fellow indeed who uses his wife to further his own selfish ends. However, if you live in a small city or company town it is well to choose your wife carefully, as she, too, will have to play her part. Otherwise, you may be forced to replace her, and this should not be done frequently, and then *only between jobs*.”

How to Make More Money

“If you have a special knack, such as drawing or writing, forget it. It is the ability to Get Along, to make Decisions, and to Get Contacts that will drive you ahead. Be an ‘all-round’ man of no special ability and you will rise to the top.”

“Write memos. Write them on any subject. Small matter what you write them *about*, as long as you write them often. No one will read them, but someone will notice your name at the top.”

“A good man can expand the simplest subject into three or four closely written pages.”

“The object of a meeting is not, as the very young believe, to solve the problem at hand, but to impress the people there. And for this purpose, of course, the larger the meeting the better.”

“Your own mind must always be clear, and made up, whether or not you understand what everybody is talking about.”

“Many brilliant young fellows have risen rapidly to the top by remembering this cardinal principal: ‘The Primary Use of Research is to Prove Your Point.’”

“A good man with a bar chart can prove any point on either side of most arguments.”

“If one set of figures doesn’t prove your point there is usually another that will.”

“Others may try to force you to choose sides. Resist them! In short, steer a bold path, right down the middle.”

MARK FOSSEN, MFA

HCTO Guest Dramaturg