



# How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying: The Dastard's Guide to Fame and Fortune

*Shepherd Mead*

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## How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying: The Dastard's Guide to Fame and Fortune

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From applying for a job to playing company politics, this delightful, satirical guide for the ambitious and the lazy is just as relevant--and funny--today as when it was first published in the 1950s, spelling out with rich irony how anyone without skills but with a lot of nerve can rise to the top. Illustrations.

## How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying: The Dastard's Guide to Fame and Fortune Details

Date : Published November 9th 1994 by Simon & Schuster (first published 1952)

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Author : Shepherd Mead

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**Megan Brauner says**

<http://one-hundred-books.blogspot.com...>

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**Michaela says**

I picked up this little gem of a book, because I had the pleasure of seeing Daniel Radcliffe live in the Broadway version. Daneil did such a wonderful job, especially with comedy (getting the timing just so) that I figured I would see where the inspiration came from. I was not disappointed, many of the words in this book were recycled in the play, and I had a great time remembering each scene. This book is an easy-read and quite humorous, and yet, you realize how true some of these "how-tos" are. It is quite satirical and hilarious, and I bet some of these will work... I bet most did anyhow :)

\_I realize that I'm the president of this company, the man that's responsible for everything that goes on here. So, I want to state, right now, that anything that happened is not my fault. \_

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**Kiran says**

I read the version with the introduction by Stanley Bing, who warned about the many changes that have occurred in the workplace since the book's 1958 release. I would have preferred to continue reading the introduction. *How to Succeed in Business without Really Trying* is short and undoubtedly humorous, but time has diluted Shepherd Mead's tips for success to only a handful that can actually be applied to the modern world.

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**Valerie says**

This is not the edition I read: that one I read in my teenage years. Several decades after the first edition, in other words, but long before the present day.

Most people seem to compare this to dramatic (well, musical) versions, which they saw before they read the book. I think I've seen part of a staged (movie?) version, but I KNOW I read the book first.

I approached this book in the period when I was reading the 'gamesmanship' books: and in the same spirit. That spirit was sort of a combination of bemusement, amusement, and transfixed horror.

Indeed, I was reluctant to read the book, because it started with the assumption that I WANTED to 'succeed in business', which I most emphatically did NOT.

Reading it, I concluded, as others have, that there's more truth in this book than there should be. I found it

too realistic to be really funny, and it more than confirmed my strong reservations about 'business' as a way to run a railroad...or ANY social process.

It's sort of a midrange amalgam between Murder Must Advertise and Dilbert. Funny...but with a bitter aftertaste.

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### **Maddison Holland says**

So funny! I've been listening to the musical - now I can't wait to watch it! A short satirical book about bypassing the normal process of success and quickly making your way to the top. Hilarious - made me laugh out loud. Especially working in an ad agency (basically) and having exposure to the scene it's making fun of. Thankfully I work in a very different environment!

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### **Sheela Word says**

"The Prince" for middle-class America and not much like the musical it inspired. I first read "How to Succeed" as a teenager and found it absolutely hilarious. It still is, but now feels a little dated, because its purported target audience is ambitious young corporate men (the women are either wives or secretaries). This is excusable -- in the 1950's, when the book was published, that's the way things were. The satire is so sweeping and on-target that it doesn't really matter anyway.

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### **shanghao says**

Brit Mad Men style humour. Blatant misogyny abound, most probably a by-product of its time. The names are amusing enough and because of that Dan Radcliffe cover somehow he just kept showing up during Ponty's scenes.

The Brit humour quotient increases exponentially the more one reads into this, and despite some repetitive yodelling, it's breezy and theatrical enough to entertain.

According to the blurb, Stanley Bing, who gave an updated foreword, is adept at delivering good strategic advice behind a mask of humour; this book delivers good humour behind the mask of strategic advice.

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### **Carolyn Page says**

Okay, this book is hilarious. I haven't seen the musical or the stage production, but if it's anything like the book I can see why it's such a hit. It's all about how to get the most credit for doing the least amount of work - and wit aside, you can see the glimmer of truth behind it. Office politics, yo!

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## **Kat says**

I saw the Broadway musical revival and the Robert Morse film of *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying*, so I figured I might as well read the book that inspired the hit musical that won a Pulitzer Prize. It reads like a typical "how to" guide, with chapters covering topics like how to get a job, how to get a raise, etc. But it does so in a humorous manner — definitely not to be taken seriously.

I laughed at a lot of the references to the advertising agency, because of my own experience in the field. "Agencies employ people who do nothing but sit around and think up ideas." Too true. The section on interoffice memos is particularly hilarious as well because, even though Mead writes about memos in an overtly funny way, a lot of what he says is true — no one ever really reads memos! I know that when I get a memo in my mailbox at the office, I just look at the subject and who it's from, and then toss it in the recycle bin.

While not an exact copy of the Broadway musical, *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying* does contain a lot of quotes and situations that are in the show/movie. The character names are the same as well (e.g., Pierrepont Finch, J.B. Biggley, Hedy LaRue). Even if you haven't seen the movie or musical inspired by this book, it's a good read if you've ever had an office job at a big corporation...or *want* an office job at a big corporation. Who knows? Some of the ideas in here could actually work!

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## **Ron II says**

This is the definitive textbook for how to finagle your way to the top of the corporate food chain. You don't need credentials, connections or anything else. Just some wits, charm and lots of strategic acting. Hey, that sounds a lot like how your boss became the boss, doesn't it?

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## **ALLEN says**

This is the late-1950s parody of a self-help manual that became the hit B'way musical and movie starring Robert Morse, later revived with Matthew Broderick. It reminds me of a similar British parody-turned-movie, "Gamesmanship," better known in movie form as *SCHOOL FOR SCOUNDRELS*.

HOW TO SUCCEED was very New York, very Fifties, with all the casual misogyny and blinkered Gothamite point-of-view that went with it. Good fun to read, but I'm of the opinion that adding tunes and dancing did the book a big favor.

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## **Joe Hill says**

A marvelous sendup of corporate culture. In many ways the satire continues to hit home 60+ years later.

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**Alex Nagler says**

Before you jump for joy / Remember this my boy / A secretary is not / A tinker toy

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**Shelley says**

I knew that the musical was based on a book, but I hadn't realized the book was actually the guide itself. Absolutely hilarious, and I loved seeing how they framed the musical around this, with quotes (opening lines, secretary is not a toy, etc) and creating a story from the anecdotes used to illustrate the examples.

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**Bücherfranz says**

Gehört in jedes Büchergestell, ein Nachschlagewerk für einsame Schreibstunden. Die Einführung durch Stanley Bing ist Co-genial, eine Erleuchtung!

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