



5 out of 5 Suns



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## Written Rules

The First in the Second series of: ***An Executive Summary for Busy Managers.***

Who is Bill Swanson and why should we play by his rules?

**Karibuni (Welcome) 2006! I just started teaching a graduate level Strategic Management class in this New Year. I am sure all of our regular readers can guess which company I assigned as the first case study... you guessed it, Starbucks. We now have a strategic action plan for drowning the Coffee Mermaid (that's who is on the logo) and taking over the extremely lucrative coffee brewing business. So stay tuned and if you know where I can get \$2B in venture capital...**

*It is not too often that a CEO will publish a book for public consumption that is not only free, but displays the very basis upon which he or she makes decisions.*

William H. Swanson is the Chief Executive Officer and Chairman of the Raytheon Company. Raytheon is an industry leader in defense and government electronics. Mr. Swanson is also the author of Swanson's Written Rules of Management. I am not really sure what his exact motivation was for putting his thoughts on paper for all to see and then publishing a book that is available free to anyone that requests it from the Raytheon website. Perhaps he has some Machiavellian motivation like luring us into a false sense of security that makes us believe we know how he thinks. Or, maybe he is trying to gain publicity for the Raytheon Company. For the record he states his passion for education as his sole motivation. *Regardless of his true purpose, we all benefit from a well devised handbook that makes a great desk reference.*

I first learned about this book from a friend who is well aware of my thirst for knowledge on the topic of management. Actually, she does not make it sound quite as noble... she calls me a "management nerd". Either way, I got the weblink and ordered the book.

Swanson offers thirty-three different rules of management (one for each of his years with Raytheon). My personal favorite is number 33. "Never be afraid to try something new. Remember, an amateur built an ark that survived a flood while a large group of professionals built the Titanic!"

Along with each rule is a short narrative about why the rule has been of particular importance throughout his career. You can read this book in under an hour. But I do recommend that you go back and re-read it a few times. It is amazing what you will find in there.

***This book is an excellent tool for anyone new to the management ranks.***

This book is an opportunity to learn, first-hand, what someone with thirty-plus years of extremely successful experience considers to have been the most important lessons learned throughout his career. If we can learn from history, we are no longer destined to repeat it. If we can learn from the best and the brightest that America has to offer, then perhaps we can move along quicker in our careers by reaping the benefits of their documented mistakes. Nowhere is it written that we must personally burn our hand on the stove before learning not to touch the burner. Good parenting can help

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prevent physical harm in the same way that good, practical education helps us avoid making the same mistakes in business.

***Rumor has it that Raytheon is going to start charging for the book so get your copy soon!***

Raytheon has mailed out (free shipping too) over 100,000 copies of this little book. USA Today calls it the “Hottest Underground Leadership Book in Memory”. Hmm... didn’t Thomas Paine have a similar success on his hands around 1776? Many folks on both sides of the legislative aisle have been calling for a corporate leadership revolution. I am not exactly sure what that is, but maybe this is the start?



The book in a nutshell:

- Confidence
- Dedication
- Integrity
- Love

*The website is [www.raytheon.com](http://www.raytheon.com) and the link is directly in the middle of the page. There is no direct link because they want people to navigate through their site and not a bunch of automated search and order computer programs.*

Just my opinion and we all know what “they” say about opinions...

Thanks

JB

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