Business Made Simple: 60 Days to Master Leadership, Sales, Marketing, Execution, Management, Personal Productivity and More

As an author, speaker, and entrepreneur, Donald Miller's ability to break things down into manageable and understandable parts is on full display in *Business Made Simple: 60 Days to Master Leadership, Sales, Marketing, Execution, Management, Personal Productivity and More*. As the subtitle indicates, the book provides a truckload of practical advice on a wide range of topics related to running a business. One of the book's greatest values are the multiple constructs offered that cause the reader to step back and look at one's business realities through a new and fresh lens. And of course, one will find highly usable input on how to package and present the story of your organization—which is a key differentiator regarding what Miller brings to the conversation.

Check out these **Book Notes** to get a fuller picture of the wisdom you will find in this book.

Chuck Olson
Founder | Lead With Your Life

Title: ***Business Made Simple:*** *60 Days to Master Leadership, Sales, Marketing, Execution, Management, Personal Productivity and More*

Author: Donald Miller

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Book Description:

New York Times and *Wall Street Journal* bestselling author, Donald Miller knows that business is more than just a good idea made profitable – it's a system of unspoken rules, rarely taught by MBA schools. If you are attempting to profitably grow your business or career, you need elite business knowledge—knowledge that creates tangible value.

Even if you had the time, access, or money to attend a Top 20 business school, you would still be missing the practical knowledge that propels the best and brightest forward. However, there is another way to achieve this insider skill development, which can both drastically improve your career earnings and the satisfaction of achieving your goals.

Donald Miller learned how to rise to the top using the principles he shares in this book. He wrote *Business Made Simple* to teach others what it takes to grow your career and create a company that is healthy and profitable.

These short, daily entries and accompanying videos will add enormous value to your business and the organization you work for. In this sixty-day guide, readers will be introduced to the nine areas where truly successful leaders and their businesses excel:

- Character: What kind of person succeeds in business?
- Leadership: How do you unite a team around a mission?
- Personal Productivity: How can you get more done in less time?
- Messaging: Why aren't customers paying more attention?
- Marketing: How do I build a sales funnel?
- Business Strategy: How does a business really work?
- Execution: How can we get things done?
- Sales: How do I close more sales?
- Management: What does a good manager do?

Book Quotes:

This is the secret to success. If you want to succeed in work, love, friendship, and life, give the people around you a great return on whatever it is they invest in you. LOCATION: 276

No core competency can overcome bad character. If we don't have good character, we are going to fail in business and in life. And we will never become value-driven professionals. LOCATION: 302

How do most successful people view themselves? They view themselves as an economic product on the open market and, as mentioned in the introduction, they are obsessed with getting people a strong return on the investment made in them. LOCATION: 329

So, how do we become ridiculously successful? By making other people absurdly successful! LOCATION: 353

A value-driven professional sees themself as a hero, not a victim. If you asked me to predict whether somebody will be a success in life, I could do so by asking one question about them: How often do they position themselves as a victim? LOCATION: 375

Only you get to decide whether you are a victim or a hero. It's not an identity I or anybody else gets to place on you. It's all about how you see yourself. LOCATION: 417

Here's something you will notice about great leaders: They know how to de-escalate drama…The better you are at keeping your cool and helping others around you keep their cool, the more respected you will be and the more you will be chosen to move up. LOCATION: 433

We respect people who react a little under, not over, the level of drama a situation deserves. We trust people who can remain calm and de-escalate drama so that crucial energy needed to deal with a truly important situation is not wasted. LOCATION: 447

A crucial question to ask during a dramatic situation is this: How would a calm and calculated person handle this situation? LOCATION: 452

The truth is, none of us has to be a slave to our emotions. Our emotions do not have to become actions. LOCATION: 458

A value-driven professional knows feedback is a gift. LOCATION: 464

Value-driven professionals establish a routine in which they get feedback from people they trust. They then use

that feedback to grow in their career. LOCATION: 493

Understanding these four tactics will help anybody navigate conflict in order to succeed in their careers.

1. Expect conflict.
2. Control your emotions.
3. Affirm the person you are confronting.
4. Understand you could be wrong. LOCATION: 503-511

A value-driven professional wants to be trusted and respected more than they want to be liked. LOCATION: 520

What team members want most is clarity. LOCATION: 523

A value-driven professional earns their team's respect by setting clear expectations, providing accountability, and rewarding good performances. LOCATION: 545

A value-driven professional has a bias toward action. LOCATION: 547

Successful people do not live in confusion; they live in clarity. LOCATION: 581

It helps me in times of confusion to actually name what it is that is making me confused. Whether it's people pleasing, losing face, or fear, the confusion tends to subside the moment I give it a name. LOCATION: 588

A value-driven professional is relentlessly optimistic. LOCATION: 595

To transform from a fixed mindset into a growth mindset, Dweck recommends seeing the world differently in five distinct categories: 1.Challenges. We must embrace challenges rather than avoid them. 2.Obstacles. We must persist through obstacles rather than give up. 3.Effort. We must see effort as a path to mastery rather than as a fruitless endeavor. 4.Criticism. We must learn from criticism rather than ignoring useful feedback. 5.Success of others. We must be inspired by the success of others rather than feeling threatened. LOCATION: 646

The number one job of a leader is to wake up every morning, point to the horizon, and let everybody on the team know where the organization is going. The number two job of a leader is to explain, in clear and simple terms, why the story of going to and arriving at that specific destination matters. The number three job of a leader is to analyze the skills and abilities of each team member and find them an important role to play in that story. LOCATION: 676

Great leaders become great because their mission makes them great. There are no exceptions. LOCATION: 683

A good mission statement is short, interesting, and inspirational. Otherwise, it's worthless. LOCATION: 722

To unite a team, create a set of guiding principles that includes a mission statement that is short, interesting, and memorable. LOCATION: 753

The second component in your set of guiding principles is your key characteristics…When you list the key characteristics you and your people will need to embody in order to accomplish your mission, you're basically telling everybody on the team who they need to become. LOCATION: 763

This key characteristic was brilliant because it serves our two purposes: 1. It is aspirational. It helps the team know the kind of people they need to become in order to achieve the mission. 2. It is instructive. It tells the team the kind of people they need to be when the pressure gets high. LOCATION: 777

After we define our mission statement and key characteristics, we must move the story forward by defining the critical actions our people need to take every day to make the mission happen…Of course, every team member has a different list of actions to take, but by defining three critical actions every one of you can take, you create a sense of alignment you would not otherwise feel. LOCATION: 800

Telling the story of your company or project is important because in telling your story you attract resources. When you tell your story, people decide whether or not to buy from you, invest in you, or even spread word about what you're doing. LOCATION: 820

When you tell your story, do this: 1. Start with the problem you or your company helps people overcome. 2. Agitate that problem to make it even worse. 3. Position yourself, your company, or your product as the resolution to the problem. 4. Describe the happy ending people will experience if they use your product to resolve their problem. LOCATION: 843

Your theme is your purpose, and people need a purpose in order to passionately engage in their work. LOCATION: 898

I've met very few high-impact people who do not journal or in some way take time to reflect. It's by reflecting that we edit our actions and design our lives. Those who do not reflect neither edit nor design—they simply respond. LOCATION: 954

Create a routine of reflection by asking yourself the morning question: If I were living this day for the second time around, what would I do differently? LOCATION: 961

Your brain is like a smartphone battery. Specifically, your brain burns between six hundred and eight hundred calories each day processing the information necessary for your survival. While you sleep, your brain recharges and is ready to face the following day. LOCATION: 1010

The mental energy you have in the morning is stronger and more alert than the energy you'll have after lunch. LOCATION: 1012

A value-driven professional knows how to say no to distractions so they can say yes to priorities. LOCATION: 1031

The old proverb "time is money" isn't exactly correct. Time is worth much more than money. Time is, literally, life. And what we do with our time determines the quality of our life. LOCATION: 1064

A value-driven professional can get twice as much done in the same period of time as a professional who does not use time strategically. LOCATION: 1080

The only tool known to man that can stop people from daydreaming is story. When we start to hear a story, we stop daydreaming and pay attention. Story is that powerful. LOCATION: 1405

- A Character That Wants Something: A good story starts with a character. A character comes on the screen and within minutes we have to know what that character wants. Whatever the character wants has to be clearly defined. He has to want to marry the woman. She has to want to disarm the bomb. Whatever it is, it has to be specific or we will lose the audience.
- The Character Encounters a Problem: Next, we can't let the character get what they want or the story

won't be interesting. We've got to define some kind of problem the character is struggling with. The problem is the key. If we don't define the problem, people will stop paying attention.
• The Character Meets the Guide: Next, our hero meets another character called the guide who has overcome the same problem the hero is dealing with. The guide then helps the hero overcome their problem and win the day.
• The Guide Gives the Hero a Plan: Then, the guide gives the hero a plan they can use to overcome their problem. Usually this plan unfolds in a series of steps that defines the journey the hero has to take to win the day.
• The Guide Calls the Hero to Action: After laying out the plan, the guide challenges the hero to take action. They must make a move toward solving their problem and overcoming their challenge. Heroes don't take action unless they are challenged by the guide to do so. LOCATION: 1411-1421

Define the Stakes—Success: Once the hero takes action, there must be stakes in the story or it gets boring. What will life look like if the hero wins the day? Will he marry the girl? Will she save the village? The storyteller must paint a picture of what life looks like if everything goes well. LOCATION: 1423

Define the Stakes—Failure: It is equally important to let the audience know what life will look like for the hero if they do not win the day. Will the hero be lonely forever? Will the village suffer loss of life? If nothing bad can happen to our hero, the story is dull and boring. Something must be potentially won or lost or the story won't engage the audience. LOCATION: 1426

When clarifying your marketing message, never position yourself as the hero. Always position yourself as the guide. LOCATION: 1453

It's great to play the hero in life. In fact, we are all heroes on a mission trying to accomplish something. But in business, switch rolls and play the guide. Guides exist to help heroes win, and that's why businesses exist. They exist to solve customers' problems, help them win, and transform them into better (or more equipped) versions of their prior selves. LOCATION: 1458

Position your brand, your project, or yourself as the guide and people will follow your lead. LOCATION: 1474

How do you position yourself as the guide? Here are the two characteristics of a competent guide: 1. Empathy. The guide understands the hero's challenge and identifies with their pain. They care about the hero. 2. Authority. The guide is competent to help the hero solve their problem. The guide knows what they are doing. The one-two punch in communication as a professional is to say I know what you're struggling with and I can help you get out of it. LOCATION: 1475

So, how does this story truth translate into business? It means this: Until you start talking about your product, or your brand as the solution to somebody's problem, they won't be interested. LOCATION: 1489

What does this mean for our marketing message? It means that we have to keep talking about our customers' problems or they won't be interested in our products. LOCATION: 1495

When clarifying your marketing message, define the problem you solve. LOCATION: 1506

When clarifying your message, be sure to define what's at stake…If there are no stakes, there is no story. LOCATION: 1555

At Business Made Simple, we teach our students a basic marketing methodology called a sales funnel. A sales funnel is one of the simplest, most inexpensive, and yet effective marketing strategies you can implement. In fact, I consider a sales funnel to be the foundation of any good marketing plan. LOCATION: 1575

To create one sentence that piques a customer's curiosity, create what we call a Marketing Made Simple one-liner…Your one-liner has three components: 1. A problem 2. Your product as a solution 3. The result. LOCATION: 1655

Once you've created your one-liner, print it on the back of your business card. Use your one-liner as your email signature. Make sure to include your one-liner on your website. Memorize your one-liner so that when people ask you what you do, you give a clear answer that grows your business. LOCATION: 1670

Imagine handing a caveman a laptop that is open to your website and giving them five seconds to browse your landing page. In only five seconds, would the caveman be able to clearly state the answer to these three questions: 1. What do you offer? 2. How will it make my life better? 3. What do I need to do to buy it? LOCATION: 1684

Email marketing is simply too inexpensive and too profitable for you to ignore. LOCATION: 1706

Here are some rules for creating something people will exchange for an email address: 1. Make it short. You don't have to write an entire book or film a full-length documentary. 2. Give it a cover. Dress it up so the outside looks like it has as much value as you've put on the inside. White papers don't collect very many email addresses. 3. Make it solve a specific problem. People will give their email addresses in exchange for something that lessens frustration or pain in their lives. LOCATION: 1722

To give a good presentation, we need to understand the five questions every audience secretly wants a presenter to answer. If you don't answer these five questions, the audience will tune out. If you do answer them, and you answer them creatively and memorably, the audience will like your presentation…The five questions are: 1. What problem are you going to help the audience solve? 2. What is your solution to the problem? 3. What will my life look like if I take you up on your solution? 4. What do you want the audience to do next? 5. What do you want the audience to remember? LOCATION: 1785

A great communicator starts their presentation by talking about the problem their presentation will help the audience solve. LOCATION: 1824

The most powerful last line of your presentation should be the theme of your talk. LOCATION: 1942

Selling is really about clearly explaining to a person how your product or service can solve their problem and then guiding them through a process that leads them to make a purchase. LOCATION: 1973

To create a custom story arc for every one of your clients, you will want to use this formula: 1. I see you are struggling with X problem. 2. I see that X problem is causing Y frustration. 3. Our product or service resolves Y frustration by resolving X problem. 4. We've worked with hundreds of clients with X problems and here are their results. 5. Let's create a step-by-step plan so your problem and frustration get resolved. LOCATION: 2034

The goal of a good salesperson should not be to be liked; it should be to be trusted. We like just about anybody who is nice to us, but we trust and respect people who can ease our frustrations by helping us solve problems. LOCATION: 2046

So, what does a guide do? Well, as it relates to selling, a guide does three things: 1. Reminds the hero what the story is about. 2. Gives the hero a plan to resolve their problem and win the day. 3. Foreshadows the climactic scene of the story. LOCATION: 2062

The key to inviting customers into a story is to figure out the talking points that define the story and then repeat them in lunch meetings, emails, proposals, phone calls, and more. LOCATION: 2078

Here is a template for a good proposal: 1. The customer's problem 2. The product that will solve the problem 3. The plan to implement the solution (product) into the customer's life 4. The price and options 5. The climactic scene (the result of the resolution of the problem). LOCATION: 2113

A good negotiator understands the two different kinds of negotiations, collaborative and competitive…A win/lose mode of negotiation is called competitive while a win/win mode is called collaborative…When in a collaborative negotiation mode, however, the negotiator is looking for both parties to benefit from the deal. LOCATION: 2202

The number one job of a manager is to have a crystal clear understanding about their division's priorities. LOCATION: 2330

When deciding what your division (or your company) produces, it is important that whatever you choose has three characteristics: 1. It must be measurable. 2. It must be profitable. 3. It must be scalable. LOCATION: 2345

Once you define what it is your department produces, you'll want to figure out the lead indicators that are causing that production. Lead indicators are the actions that lead to success while lag indicators are the measurements of that success. LOCATION: 2398

The difference between a coach and a cheerleader is that while a cheerleader cheers you on, a coach gives you specific instructions and objectives that help you succeed, then helps you learn and employ those frameworks on the job. LOCATION: 2512

Clarity is a prerequisite for commitment. Unless you are clear about what needs to be done, by whom, and by when, the project will fail. LOCATION: 2596

To turn actions into habits, every pertinent member of a team should review their actions and priorities in a weekly meeting called a speed check. The meeting is called a speed check because it's designed to keep momentum going by being fast and focused. Think of a speed check as not unlike a huddle in a football game. This is not a strategy session. This is a quick meeting to make sure everybody on the team knows the play and their specific role in the play. Hold the speed check at a fixed time each week and don't skip it. It's better to hold the meeting standing so it doesn't go long…1. Answer the question "What has each team member gotten done?" 2. Answer the question "What is each team member going to do next?" 3. Answer the question "What's blocking any team members from making progress?" LOCATION: 2644

You will be tempted to measure lag measures, but don't. Again, lag measures are measures like total sales, new leads, products shipped, and so on. Once total sales are in, there's nothing you can do to increase those sales. It's too late. Instead, measure lead measures. Again, lead measures are actions your team members can take to affect lag measures. If your lag measure is total sales, a lead measure might be sales calls that cause total sales to happen. So measure sales calls on your scoreboard rather than sales. LOCATION: 2675

Note: should you wish to find any quote in its original context, the Kindle "location" is provided after each entry.