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Plugged: Dig Out and Get the Right Things Done

Aug 7, 2010 by Louie Strike In Business Books 3

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We've all struggled with procrastination in one form or another. It's not about getting everything done, it's about getting the right things done. And this brings us to a wonderful book I picked up recently written by my colleagues Krissi and Dan Barr called "*Plugged: Dig out and Get the Right Things Done.*"

Plugged is a short business novel that runs long on lessons in how to keep your head on straight in a crisis.



A word of warning before we begin. This is a book that is heavy on golf terms, stories and concepts. You don't have to be a golf pro to enjoy the book, but you do have to know a few basics about the game.

A Summary of the Story - Spoiler Not Included

This is a tale about Chet McGill, VP of sales at a small company, Alpha Max. When the CEO leaves town for a rare vacation, Chet is put in charge.

It's Friday around noon when Chet learns that they missed an important delivery to their major customer *and* that same customer is in discussions with a competitor to move all their business from Alpha Max! How great it is to be in charge.

What follows are carefully crafted scenes which take the reader through an action packed eight-day period. It really moves. It ought to be made into a screenplay-

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that good.

Who Should Read This Book?

1. Anyone who sells business to business.
2. Anyone who's faced the stress of losing a major client or account.
3. Anyone who's ever wondered about the risks of playing golf with your biggest customer.

There are a lot of us in these categories.

To make matters worse, Chet's unsure how to deal with the crisis and how his peers and associates will respond to his attempts to lead.

There's a further complication: Chet has invited the head of operations of that big client to play with him in a golf tournament at Chet's club. How awkward will that be? The tournament is next weekend. The fellow in question, Reggie Ward, is a business friend—but business is business in good times and bad.

Chet's golf game has been terrible. He just bought an expensive putter, which isn't working out.

Important Lessons From a Mysterious Source

Chet can't think about golf now, but decides to make the after-work practice rounds, including Saturday morning's. He can't give up on that, too. Without the energy of hope, where does he begin? He finds an anonymous note on his locker that morning: *Prioritize*.

Monday, his fears of the lack of peer support are borne out: He's treated to a game of "blame shifting" by the other vice presidents in their first meeting. After a weekend of stress, Chet responds with anger. He orders an all-hands meeting to explain the crisis and convey that the very existence of the firm is in jeopardy. He then takes out a pad and asks for suggestions. Thirty minutes later, Chet has six pages of ideas and many good ones. Further, all of senior management gets on board. (Try this from time to time. Do it *before* a crisis. This works!)

This is an important lesson in crisis management: You have only one or two days to put together the crisis team and begin executing a good plan before irreversible damage ensues. Running a small business facilitates that process as all your people and resources are at hand.

The events and the week's progress are important elements of the story and well told. What's the result? Trust me, you'll enjoy it.

Back to the golf. The new putter fails Chet, but he discovers an unclaimed and woefully out-of-date putter in the course of a practice round. Desperately, he gives it a try. How this element plays out includes an ethical dilemma that pops up in a critical moment in the tournament.

Be careful playing golf with clients. Some use golf as an ethical litmus test. If you have a temper or do not count all your strokes, it will not be read charitably. You don't have to be a good golfer to enjoy golf. But you have to be a good person observing the etiquette of golf to have others enjoy their time with you on a golf course. Golf with clients either builds trust or erodes it. Know yourself.

In the course of the week, Chet is rewarded with two additional anonymous notes: *Adapt* and *Be Responsible*.



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This set of three memory aids–Prioritize, Adapt and be Responsible–form the acronym PAR, the measure of an excellent score on a round of golf. The authors provide a closing chapter called the 19th hole with recommendations as to how you and your team can adapt these lessons to excel in your business life.

About the Authors

If you haven't guessed by now, Krissi and Dan Barr are avid golfers and savvy businesspeople. Dan is a senior executive at Cintas. Krissi works with a wide range of companies, both private and Fortune 500, guiding senior executives to higher-level performance. Together, they leverage their work experience and passion for golf to deliver lessons and entertainment in under 120 pages.

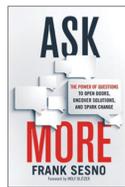
This is a great story with solid lessons packed into a small space. Krissi and Dan Barr are a husband and wife team, real people with proven business records. This is their first book. They have many more ideas to share. Look for their next one.

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Louie Strike is President of Strike & Company, Inc., a firm providing advisory services to CEOs and Boards of Directors. Louis is a member of the National Association of Corporate Directors (NACD), he has a combined experience as an outside director of over fifty years for nine unrelated firms; and over twenty years experience as a CEO. He is a CPA (Inactive). He has public and private sector experience and has been involved with the administration of pension and profit sharing plans for thirty years. Visit Louis at [Louis Strike](#).

3 Reactions



Martin Lindeskog

August 10, 2010 at 4:40 am

Louie Strike: I am not a golfer myself yet, but the book sounds like a neat read. I have to put it on my future reading list.

Have you read Eli. Goldratt's Critical Chain?

Louie Strike

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August 23, 2010 at 8:44 am

Even non-golfers can benefit from this book, the tale has crisis management implications and a killer memory aid for all of us:

P-A-R.

You can also get some rudimentary knowledge about golf without buying one golf ball. Please re-read my review. Also, you can recommend this book to golfers as a SBT selection or make a gift of the book to avid golfer-business people. Doing so is very friendly. Louie

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