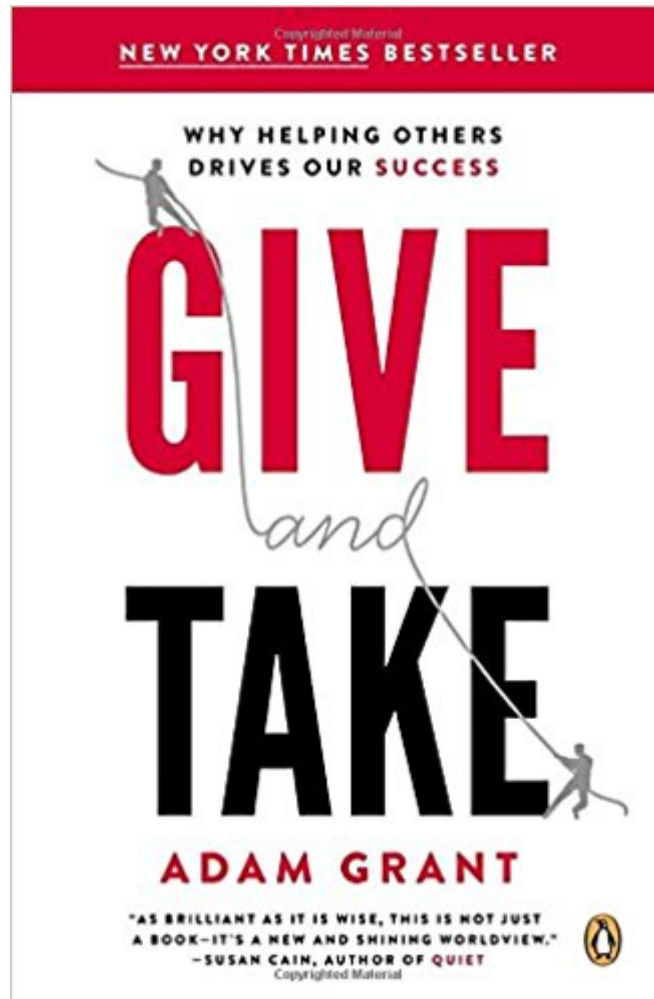


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# Give And Take: Why Helping Others Drives Our Success



## Synopsis

A groundbreaking look at why our interactions with others hold the key to success, from the bestselling author of *Originals*. For generations, we have focused on the individual drivers of success: passion, hard work, talent, and luck. But in today's dramatically reconfigured world, success is increasingly dependent on how we interact with others. In *Give and Take*, Adam Grant, an award-winning researcher and Wharton's highest-rated professor, examines the surprising forces that shape why some people rise to the top of the success ladder while others sink to the bottom. Praised by social scientists, business theorists, and corporate leaders, *Give and Take* opens up an approach to work, interactions, and productivity that is nothing short of revolutionary.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I've been reading this book for a few days now - finished it yesterday - and I am already finding myself changing a bit of how I operate. According to the book, I am usually a matcher - one who gives reciprocally, when I figure I can receive in return. And there isn't much wrong with that. But, according to Adam Grant and his bevy of research, otherish givers are usually the most successful. So, let me explain. There are three broad styles of interpersonal dealing: taking, matching, and giving. Takers are those who try to take more than they give. Matchers are those who try to give and take proportionally and conditionally. Givers are those who give more than they take. Takers are primarily self-oriented, matchers are other-oriented as a means to being

self-oriented (I'll help you when I think you will help me) and givers are primarily other-oriented. Here's the counter-intuitive part. If we look at the most successful people - the happiest, the most likely to be promoted, etc - they are generally givers, and if we look at the least successful, they too often tend to be givers. (Takers do moderately well, but over time, few want to deal with them. Matchers do okay too.) This book is an attempt to explain why being a giver is a good 'strategy' for success, as well as under what conditions giving is a failing 'strategy.' First, the positive: simply put, people appreciate givers and giving often makes people want to give back. Since givers help others and often put others' needs as a priority, givers often garner (without deliberately trying - AND THAT IS KEY!) a network of support from others they've helped. Want to communicate most effectively? Ask more questions to others than you give answers, ask for advice, and be aware of how you can help others.

I have been looking forward to this book because I have heard so many positive things about it leading up to its release. It is a very well written book, and I am looking forward to reading more from Adam Grant in the future (a business professor who is a professional magician too . . . only good things can come from that combination). As talented as Grant is, and you can tell just from reading it how much work he poured into the book, I felt that it fell short in ways that other recent books have succeeded. The basic premise of the book is that "Givers" are more successful in the long run, for a variety of reasons. This is especially true now in the United States because so many people, up to 80%, work in a service industry. Giving pays huge dividends, and Grant proves his theory with anecdotal evidence backed up by research studies. What I Liked: \* The first chapter was very good. The argument that givers are more successful across a wide variety of fields is made succinctly, and the evidence is hard to argue with. \* Love all the practical tools in the last chapter. \* Stories chosen throughout the book are all new to me - no rehashing from other business books, which is a plus. What I Didn't Like: \* Though the stories are different, I was not compelled by most of them. They were interesting, but the connection to the chapter material lacked in some places. \* The first and last chapter were great, but I would rate the middle as mediocre. Every chapter felt like it was just too long, like the publisher had a quota to fill and just stretched the material as far as it would go to get up to 300 pages. \* While I agree with the premise, I'm not sure I would be convinced if I hadn't already been on his side before reading the book.

In reading reviews of this book, ask yourself whether it is the book being reviewed, or is it the premise (concept) of the book. I re-read the reviews that enticed me into reading this book and

found that, under a critical reading, they seemed to be predominantly the latter. And when you encounter a review that lauds the book as "new", "revolutionary"... while also contrarily reporting its content as "well-known", "proven" or an established part of the reviewer's professional life, be skeptical.\*My background: I am in my 60s and I now read this category of book not for myself, but to assist in my mentoring of others. I spent my career in high tech, 30 years in Silicon Valley. At the core of my negative reaction to this book is a difference in world view. The book claims that "givers are a rare breed of people" (inside of jacket). My experience is that they are hardly rare\*\*, and there are daily reminders of that -- for example the response to the recent Boston Marathon bombing. What you see are many people who are reflexively givers (no pause for calculation). Note: I am not denying the existence of "takers" and "matchers", but take issue with the book's estimates of their numbers as being too high. The book's subtitle "A Revolutionary Approach to Success" reveals how divorced from reality it is. The characteristics of the "giver" have long been taught in a wide range of leadership courses -- the only thing new here is the name. The "Servant Model" of Christianity (and other religions) is often invoked in these leadership courses, including some by the US military. The book even argues against itself: It opens with a study claiming that "givers" dominate the group of most successful people and later argues that this is not invisible.

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