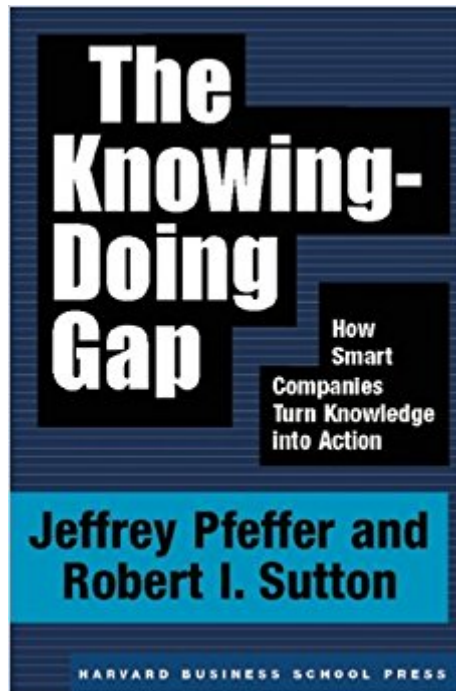


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# The Knowing-Doing Gap: How Smart Companies Turn Knowledge Into Action



## Synopsis

Why are there so many gaps between what firms know they should do and what they actually do? Why do so many companies fail to implement the experience and insight they've worked so hard to acquire? The Knowing-Doing Gap is the first book to confront the challenge of turning knowledge about how to improve performance into actions that produce measurable results. Jeffrey Pfeffer and Robert Sutton, well-known authors and teachers, identify the causes of the knowing-doing gap and explain how to close it. The message is clear--firms that turn knowledge into action avoid the "smart talk trap." Executives must use plans, analysis, meetings, and presentations to inspire deeds, not as substitutes for action. Companies that act on their knowledge also eliminate fear, abolish destructive internal competition, measure what matters, and promote leaders who understand the work people do in their firms. The authors use examples from dozens of firms that show how some overcome the knowing-doing gap, why others try but fail, and how still others avoid the gap in the first place. The Knowing-Doing Gap is sure to resonate with executives everywhere who struggle daily to make their firms both know and do what they know. It is a refreshingly candid, useful, and realistic guide for improving performance in today's business.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"I know kung fu." In the Matrix, when Neo wants to learn kung-fu all he has to do is upload a fighting module. A few seconds later and he's sparring with Morpheus in a virtual dojo. Living in a computer simulation and being bred as an energy source for a machine master-race has its disadvantages,

but at least you get to learn stuff fast. Here in the real world, much knowledge is gained the hard way - by doing. You can't just upload it. Or store it, index it or e-mail it around. This is one of the factors behind what Jeff Pfeffer and Bob Sutton call 'the knowing-doing gap'. In this book, Pfeffer and Sutton examine why companies don't do what they know they should. The first problem is language. 'Knowledge' is a noun, so we treat knowledge as a concrete object we can manipulate, like steel or books. In reality, it's a process; the process of riding a bike, speaking French or running a company. Hence companies don't truly know what they claim they do. They might have their mission statements written down on small, laminated cards; and they might say - and even believe - that people are their most valuable assets, but this isn't true knowledge, and won't become so until they act. Pfeffer and Sutton give plenty more reasons too. Here are just a handful: An emphasis on talk, rather than action. It's easier to judge people on what they say than what they actually do, and that's often how we hire, reward and promote. The guy with the quick put-downs, rapid-fire banter and sarcastic comments is perceived as smarter than the quiet one in the corner who bothers nobody, knuckles down and gets stuff done. If action is harder than talking, then mindless action is harder than thoughtful action.

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