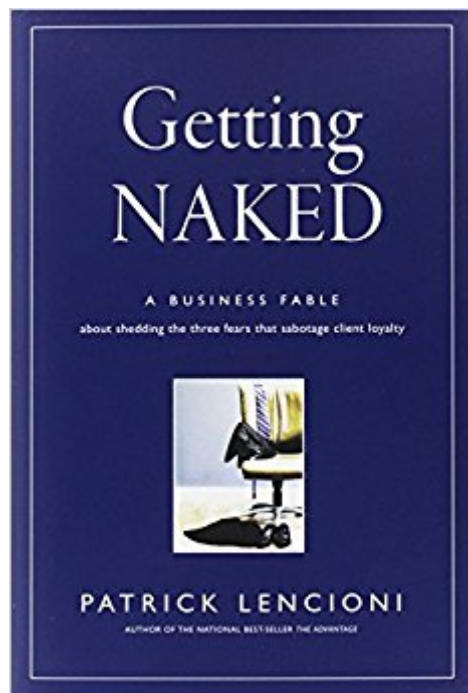




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Getting Naked: A Business Fable About Shedding The Three Fears That Sabotage Client Loyalty



Synopsis

Another extraordinary business fable from the New York Times bestselling author Patrick Lencioni
Offers a key resource for gaining competitive advantage in tough times Shows why the quality of vulnerability is so important in business Includes ideas for inspiring customer and client loyalty
Written by the highly successful consultant and business writer Patrick Lencioni This new book in the popular Lencioni series shows what it takes to gain a real and lasting competitive edge.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Written in the same dynamic style as his previous bestsellers including *The Five Dysfunctions of a Team*, Lencioni illustrates the principles of inspiring client loyalty through a fascinating business fable. He explains the theory of vulnerability in depth and presents concrete steps for putting it to work in any organization. The story follows a small consulting firm, Lighthouse Partners, which often beats out big-name competitors for top clients. One such competitor buys out Lighthouse and learns important lessons about what it means to provide value to its clients. Exclusive: Q&A with Patrick Lencioni

Q: Why do you use the term naked and where does it come from? A: Naked consulting is a term that refers to the idea of being vulnerable with clients, being completely open and honest with no sense of pretense or cover. The concept comes from the approach that we adopted more than a decade ago to work with our clients at The Table Group. We help CEOs and their teams build healthy organizations, and we found that by being completely transparent and vulnerable with clients, we built levels of trust and loyalty that blew us away. Q: What makes naked service different from the way most people provide service? A: So many service providers and

consultants feel the need to demonstrate that they have the right answers and that they don't make mistakes. Not only do clients see this as inauthentic, they often feel that they are being condescended to and manipulated. We've found that what clients really want is honesty and humility.

Q: What are the three fears? A: People spend most of their lives trying to avoid awkward and painful situations – which is why it is no surprise that we are all susceptible to the three fears that sabotage client loyalty. They include:

- 1) Fear of Losing the Business – No service provider wants to lose clients or revenue. Interestingly, it is this very notion that prevents many service providers from having the difficult conversations that actually build greater loyalty and trust. Clients want to know that their service providers are more interested in helping succeed in business than protecting their revenue source.
- 2) Fear of Being Embarrassed – This fear is rooted in pride. No one likes to publicly make mistakes, endure scrutiny or be embarrassed. Naked service providers are willing to ask questions and make suggestions even if those questions and suggestions turn out to be laughably wrong. Clients trust naked service providers because they know that they will not hold back their ideas, hide their mistakes, or edit themselves to save face.
- 3) Fear of Being Inferior – Similar to the previous fear, this one is rooted in ego. Fear of being inferior is not about being intellectually wrong (as in Fear of being Embarrassed) it is about preserving social standing with the client. Naked service providers are able to overcome the need to feel important in the eyes of their client and basically do whatever a client needs to help the client improve – even if that calls for the service provider to be overlooked or temporarily looked down upon.

Q: What is the impact of naked service on a firm's bottom line? A: Consulting or service firms that practice the naked approach will find it easier to retain clients through greater trust and loyalty. That is the first and most obvious benefit. But they'll also be able to attract clients better because naked service begins before a client actually becomes a client. It allows firms to be more open, more generous and less desperate in the sales process, and creates great differentiation from more traditional sales approaches. Finally, firms that practice the naked approach will attract and retain the right kind of consultants and professionals who yearn for an honest, natural way of working, both with clients and with one another.

Author, speaker and management consultant Lencioni (The Three Signs of a Miserable Job) preaches a business model that may seem antithetical to many, which he calls "getting naked": being unafraid to show vulnerability, admit ignorance, and ask the dumb questions when dealing with clients. Lencioni's central argument is that by focusing on sales, rather than communication, consultants miss the key part of their job-consulting-and therefore lose out on valuable long-term

client relationships. Presented mostly as a parable about a management consultant trying to reconcile two firms in a merger, Lencioni's latest is entertaining as well as informative, with a message that sticks (heavy-handed though it may be). Straightforward and widely applicable, Lencioni's advice should prove useful not only for business consultants, but anyone trying to build long-term client relationships. END

I purchased this book for a training course at work and I expected to either outright dislike it, or be bored to death. I ended up being drawn in by the author's conversational style and way of conveying his message through telling a story. Instead of merely providing a top 5 or 10 list and then hammering home why this list is better than other lists, Patrick Lencioni takes his readers through a practical investigation and application of his method by translating it into a "business fable." The result is a rather enjoyable and quick read that gave me more to think about than I expected. It was also relevant to my current and future job duties as a CPA, so I appreciated the advice presented in the book. I highly recommend this and his other books on management for others looking to change their leadership and client service game to be more effective.

I am a consultant and I was assigned this book by my management. At first, I really didn't like its story-telling format, but I have to admit that it did make the book a lot easier to read and remember. Once I got past the information being presented as a fable, I have to say that content-wise, I already belonged to the choir that Lencioni is preaching to, I just didn't know it. And his advice can help me push it a little more. So I can highly recommend the book. Leave your numbers, metrics and measurements aside for a bit and read this to help put them in some context. I have worked with big engineering and science clients for several years now, so I'm pretty used to feeling dumb. With a clientele like I've worked with, trying to come across as a know-it-all would be impossible and pathetic. I would be seen through in an instant. So I've long since conquered any fear of feeling inferior or being embarrassed. In these complex, collaborative environments it is critical to get over yourself and focus on the work. What I've added to my thinking after this read is the attitude of "always be consulting" (to crib a line from Glengarry Glen Ross), or what Lencioni refers to as giving away the business. Don't waste time talking about what you can do, just start doing it. I now see myself, as a consultant, as part of my employer's "offense". At the point I'm called in to a project, we have the ball and our job is to advance it as soon and as far as we can. As long as we can keep doing that, there's no need for sales, which is the "defense" of the business. Sales' job is to get the ball back over to us when we don't have it. When he talks about consultants

"doing the dirty work", "taking a bullet" and "making everything about the client" it is this view of my role as an "offensive" player in my business that ties it together for me. These things are done with a smile because they advance the ball, aka the client's interests.

I am usually skeptical of these types of books from management consultant types, but this one was recommended to me so I gave it a try. To my surprise I found it to be very engaging and filled with useful insights for someone in my client oriented line of work. The book is relatively short and only took a few hours to read which made it even better. I would recommend anyone in a client or customer facing role to check this book out.

Great book, an entire department at my work requires this book for new team members and I can completely see why. It really helped changed my perspective and even helped me embrace newer, less corporate, ideas that I've been leaning towards for years. Ultimately it's played a part in me determining where they best place and role for me to work in is.

An easy read that changed the way I interact in an effort to foster strong relationships not only in a business and sales environment but also in everyday life. True to Patrick Lencioni's style, the message is delivered via a fictional story that is (apparently) indirectly related to some past experiences over his successful career. While the story helps convey the message, you can easily get just as much value by reading the summary/overview that's provided in the last few pages of the book.

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