



The J.E.D.I. Leader's Playbook: The Insider's Guide to Eradicating Injustices, Eliminating Inequities, Expanding Diversity, and Enhancing Inclusion

Omar L. Harris

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Making a practical case for attending to DEI in every workplace, The J.E.D.I. Leader's Playbook is a fun and persuasive business guide.

Omar L. Harris's business book *The J.E.D.I. Leader's Playbook* covers justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion in the workplace.

Intended as a roadmap and forwarding concrete advice on subjects including navigating charged situations, empathizing with employees, and resisting compassion fatigue, this is a business book that argues for positive changes across industries. It includes a wealth of strategies for initiating cultural transformation in companies, advancing causes including justice, fairness, and opportunity. Such changes, it says, also represent a solid foundation for greater innovation and productivity.

After its expository, tone-setting *Star Wars*-inspired beginning, the book is divided into two parts featuring short, punchy subchapters. The first focuses on discovery and definition and the second on development and delivery, showing how to put the book's ideas into action. Why DEI—and the addition of “justice” to the acronym—is important is established before the book tackles arguments for change and practical matters including beliefs, biases, and behaviors—as well as listing action items, like defining a company's goals, priorities, and capabilities.

Allusions to popular culture and sports help to make this information more accessible, even fun: Harris draws a distinction between karate and judo to describe two different approaches to DEI, and he says that justice, equity, diversity and inclusion (JEDI) leaders are like knights who live by particular codes. Here and elsewhere, the prose is lively, clear, and shows a flair for the dramatic, using attention-grabbing terminology like *WIGs* (Wildly Important Goals) alongside more familiar jargon.

Indeed, the book's showmanship makes an indelible impression and undergirds its thorough case for corporate transformation well. There are keen observations throughout, including that “just as every company had to make the painful shift into a digital economy, so shall every company have to embrace this crucial work” and “the ground of the old business model is quickly crumbling underneath us, and we are facing a crisis of shift or perish.” Citations of expert sources bolster its credibility too; references to the work of Malcolm Gladwell punctuate points as of how quick decision-making can reveal unconscious biases. Ample evidence of issues of implicit bias is also provided.

Idealistic and action-oriented, *The J.E.D.I. Leader's Playbook* is a high-minded business guidebook that's replete with instructions for combating inequality and promoting diversity and inclusion in the workplace.

JOSEPH S. PETE (January 26, 2024)

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