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Why is a book on the brain in the top 25
of Amazon's leadership books?

By James Brown, PhD

I believe personal productivity and performance as a project manager are directly correlated. Just like we have to lead a project team, we have to lead ourselves to a higher level of a productivity and effectiveness. In all of the leadership classes I teach, emphasis is placed on knowing yourself. When you know yourself it provides you the ability to adapt to weaknesses and leverage your strengths (increase your personal productivity and effectiveness).

Knowing how your brain functions is part of knowing yourself.

I just read the book *Brain Rules*, ISBN 0-9797777-0-4 and found it so insightful and valuable that I sent a copy to my select clients. The value of the book hinges on the understanding of the brain and how it works which allows me to leverage that knowledge for increased personal productivity and in my interactions and relationships with others.

Myth Busters for the brain!

The book is a fairly easy read because the author, John J. Medina, uses stories to illustrate the functionality of the brain. This book is not a “*leadership-lite*” book filled with cute and truthful antidotes, but a book with hard science communicated in an interesting way. Dr. John J. Medina is a developmental molecular biologist. He also shares what scientists don't know about how the brain works!

Brain Rules provides twelve principles...

1. Exercise - Exercise boosts brain power.
2. Survival - The human brain evolved, too.
3. Wiring - Every brain is wired differently.
4. Attention - We don't pay attention to boring things.
5. Short-Term Memory - Repeat to remember.
6. Long-Term Memory - Remember to repeat.
7. Sleep - Sleep well, think well.
8. Stress - Stressed brains don't learn the same way.
9. Sensory Integration - Stimulate more of the senses.
10. Vision - Vision trumps all other senses.

11. Gender - Male and female brains are different.
12. Exploration - We are powerful and natural explorers.

This book gave me many, many take-aways and here are just six ...

- I. Some parts of the brain are just like a baby's and can grow new connections and strengthen existing connections. We have the ability to learn new things our entire life. Medina states this was "not the prevailing notion until 5 or 6 years ago." So much for the "you can't teach an old dog new tricks excuse." The old dog line is exposed for what it really is...an excuse.
- II. Humans can only pay attention for about ten minutes and then need some kind of reset.
- III. The brain can only focus on one thing at a time. This is further rationale on the futility of multi-tasking.
- IV. Exercise increases brain power and aerobic exercise twice a week reduces the risk of general dementia by 50% and Alzheimer's by 60%.
- V. There is a biological need for an afternoon nap. (Yes, when not with a client I am now taking a thirty minute nap and find my afternoon is much more productive. I would waste thirty minutes just fighting the urge to take the nap)
- VI. The brain is very active during sleep and loss of sleep hurts cognitive and physical ability. (I am actually solving problems during my nap. Although true...this rationale may not work with your boss.)

Buy and read *Brain Rules*. It will benefit you.

One of the reasons I read leadership books is to learn new things but also to get old truths hammered into my thick skull so they result in action. So you may know or have heard of some of the truths in "Brain Rules" but I guarantee the author brings them to you in a unique and interesting way with solid depth that will allow you to easier implement those truths into how you handle yourself and others on a daily basis.

About the Author:***James Brown, PhD****Author*

Dr. James T. Brown, president of SEBA[®] Solutions Inc., a Registered Education Provider for the Project Management Institute, has provided training and consulting services for dozens of companies nationally and internationally. SEBA[®] Solutions also provides OnePdu.com <http://onepdu.com> for online project management training. A recognized authority in project management, Dr. Brown is a frequently invited speaker on project management areas of interest. He is the author of *The Handbook of Program Management* published by McGraw Hill and is a member of the Project Management Institute and the National Speakers Association. Dr. Brown has a patent for a project scheduling methodology, and has received numerous awards including "Engineer of the Year" from the Cape Canaveral Technical Societies and is a recipient of the "NASA Public Service Medal" for exceptional contributions to NASA's mission. He is a member of the Project Management Institute and the National Speakers Association. He has a Ph.D. in Industrial Engineering from the University of Central Florida, a MS in Engineering Management from Florida Institute of Technology and a BS in Electrical Engineering from Tennessee State University. He is a licensed Professional Engineer (PE), a certified Project Management Professional (PMP) and a certified speaking professional (CSP). To learn more about SEBA[®] visit www.sebasolutions.com. You can contact James directly at jtbrown@sebasolutions.com.