

Book Review

The Professional

Author: **Subroto Bagchi**

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“Believe passionately in what you do, and never knowingly compromise your standards and values. Act like a true professional, aiming for true excellence, and the money will follow.”

– **David Maister**

At first glance, these quotations might appear somewhat at odds with each other and yet, I think they both define different moments of professionalism. It is not contradictory to have an enduring passion about one's career and not feel like engaging in that passion at a particular moment.

So, what is professionalism or perhaps, what is it NOT? By my thinking, professionalism has nothing to do with the profession — it's all about the person

Let me introduce to the author of the book Subroto Bagchi, Founder Chairman, Mindtree who wrote this book with a hope that the reader will find informative, sometimes stimulating, but mostly useful in professional lives. He wrote this book for everyday needs of the people who wish to be true professionals. Because, life actually depends on how well such people do their jobs.

This book gives an insight about what it means to be a professional- ideas and practices that is universally applicable, across callings.

The author answers most of the questions of people who face the following dilemmas in

their professional lives of doctors, engineers, journalists, architects, teachers, lawyers, etc such as: Am I a true professional? What qualities would make me a better professional? What is professional ethics? What does it mean for me? Faced with a difficult decision and multiple options, how do I know I am making the right choice?

The book is presented in seven parts and each part has its own essence and learning.

These seven parts are as follows: integrity, self-awareness, professional qualities, managing volume, managing complexity, new world imperatives and the professional's professional.

Part I presents the idea of integrity which gives the lessons of professionalism without which any profession is like a body without soul. Any professional should have these two important qualities one is the ability to work unsupervised and, two, the ability to certify the completion of one's work. Without integrity, a professionally qualified individual is a danger to the society.

Part II of the book tells about self-awareness, it covers the following: what constitutes self-awareness? How do we build self-awareness? What signs indicate the evolution of this idea in our journey to becoming a true professional? The author tells about individuals can acquire self-awareness by knowing who you are, being authentic, being comfortable, seeking help, not suffering false comparisons, having a reasonable view of the future, being deeply self-observant, welcoming feedback, being proactive, etc.

Part III of the book relates to basic professional qualities which professional should have such as time management, keeping good health, moderate eating habits, sleep well and sleep adequately, setting benchmarks, prioritize the work, saying no, etc. These qualities make someone a well-rounded individual who can perform the responsibilities that come with the tag 'professional'.

Part IV, the author looks into how one can manage volume. This is especially important for middle level management positions. The book also speaks on that our capacity to deal with increasing volume of professional load is directly linked to the size of our vision and how we relate to our values.

Part V, the book discusses on the professional qualities senior managers and top management requires to deal with complex situations and problems, both at work and in their personal

lives. Those qualities include whether the person should take decisions based on logic or emotion, the person should have the ability of critical questioning and also the person should have equanimity in dealing with personal pain.

In Part VI, the author focuses on presenting the five important emergent concepts to the readers these are: inclusion and gender, cross-cultural sensitivity, governance, intellectual property and sustainability.

Part VII, discusses on what it means to be a professional's professional by deeply admiring the professionalism in Japan.

I would like you all the readers to read this book once as it covers wide range of positive examples and negative examples to give the true picture of the professional and distinguishes with unprofessionalism.

The development of a professional is not a linear progression. Even though the ideas presented in this book are arranged sequentially, in a structured form, there is truly no beginning or end in being a professional. Because, ultimately, being a professional is a matter of personal choice and the values we opt to live by.

Reviewed by:

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