Written by Book Review by Kam Williams
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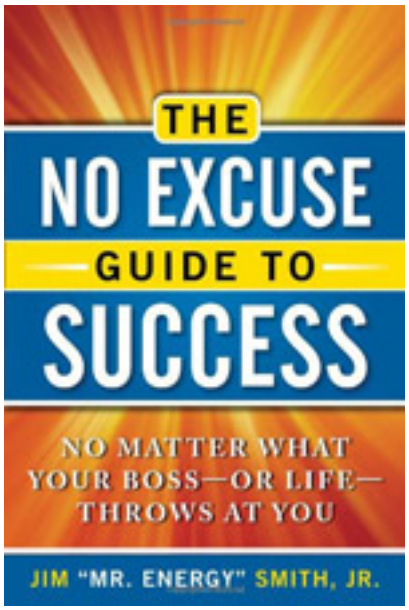

"Life is not what you've been taught; it's what you believe. It's not what you've experienced; it's the choices you've made as a result. It's not about what happened to you; it's about how you remembered it. It's not what challenges have come your way; it's what you've seen as challenging.

It's not what has appeared in your path; it is what you have accepted. When we accept personal responsibility for our lives, everything is possible... This book offers my 10 proven principles, Winning Ways that will help you move beyond making excuses and toward living the life you want."

-- Excerpted from the Introduction (pages 20 and 35).

Self-help gurus offer different paths to enlightenment, and those in need of a little tough love, might like to listen to Jim Smith, Jr. Also known as "Mr. Energy," for years Jim has led JIMPACT workshops and delivered inspirational speeches for both Fortune 500 companies and non-profit corporations.

Now Jim has distilled the essence of his message into The No Excuse Guide to Success, a how-to book extolling the virtues of his 10 practical principles. The thrust of the philosophy basically boils down to taking responsibility for your own life.

Chapter 1 suggests that you hold yourself accountable rather than blame others or outside forces for your failings. Chapter 2 resurrects the late Dr. Norman Vincent Peale's notion that positive thinking leads to positive outcomes.

Chapter 3 urges you to "Embrace the Uncertainty," meaning move out of your comfort zone, while Chapter 4 helps you reinvent yourself rather than search outside for the answers to your problems. Chapter 5 promotes the novel idea of listening with three ears which involves "connecting with another human being on an emotional, even spiritual level." And so forth.

Besides advice, each chapter includes a personal action plan with checklists and

fill-in-the-blanks worksheets to ensure that you start applying the author's tools and techniques to reach your goals. The guide's prefatory pages are replete with remarks from lots of Mr. Energy's success stories.

So, far be it from me to argue with course graduates, especially when the text reads like a plausible plan for folks ready to take charge of their lives, for better or worse.

The No Excuse Guide to Success:
No Matter What Your Boss—or Life—Throws at You
by Jim "Mr. Energy" Smith, Jr.
Foreword by Chad Hymas
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