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The Difference: How the Power of Diversity Creates Better Groups, Firms, Schools, and Societies

Scott E. Page

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Scott E. Page : The Difference: How the Power of Diversity Creates Better Groups, Firms, Schools, and Societies before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Difference: How the Power of Diversity Creates Better Groups, Firms, Schools, and Societies:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Great Thoughts About Modeling, Perceptions, and Heuristics By James Igoe Generally, I found the book most engaging for understanding perception, heuristics and decision making,

although this did not seem to be the primary premise of the book. As for the writing, it was a bit long-winded, using analogies to make points, even though the concepts themselves are readily accessible without elucidation. As to its purported focus, it provides academic, empirical, and statistical support for diversity, not necessarily racial or ethnic, with the premise being that diversity of viewpoint within groups is powerful, so much so that it trumps individual excellence. 1 of 2 people found the following review helpful. A good surprise By Customer Not what I expected but it did make some big changes in the ways in which I think about things Well worth most people's time. Looking at some of the reviews now (2017) I see that a number of folks missed a critical item in team building/group selection: diversity of view point cannot come at the price of ignorance. If one is working in, say, genetic engineering, it is pointless -- and not within the paradigm of Page's "diverse group" -- to add an art student or a dog trainer if that person is without a useful background in genetics or engineering. As it has turned out, a knowledge of nanobots -- this year they are chemical but in a decade or four, perhaps they will be some other substance-- has proven to be very useful, as has expertise in virology. But both need to be combined with at least a speaking acquaintance with genetics. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Great, easy book to read By David D. Great, easy book to read. Very useful information on diversity and the importance of diversity in problem solving. For any philosophy student or anyone working with diverse/problem solving groups, this is a must read.

In this landmark book, Scott Page redefines the way we understand ourselves in relation to one another. The Difference is about how we think in groups--and how our collective wisdom exceeds the sum of its parts. Why can teams of people find better solutions than brilliant individuals working alone? And why are the best group decisions and predictions those that draw upon the very qualities that make each of us unique? The answers lie in diversity--not what we look like outside, but what we look like within, our distinct tools and abilities. The Difference reveals that progress and innovation may depend less on lone thinkers with enormous IQs than on diverse people working together and capitalizing on their individuality. Page shows how groups that display a range of perspectives outperform groups of like-minded experts. Diversity yields superior outcomes, and Page proves it using his own cutting-edge research. Moving beyond the politics that cloud standard debates about diversity, he explains why difference beats out homogeneity, whether you're talking about citizens in a democracy or scientists in the laboratory. He examines practical ways to apply diversity's logic to a host of problems, and along the way offers fascinating and surprising examples, from the redesign of the Chicago "El" to the truth about where we store our ketchup. Page changes the way we understand diversity--how to harness its untapped potential, how to understand and avoid its traps, and how we can leverage our differences for the benefit of all.

The Difference is brimming with so many intriguing insights and findings that I cannot do justice to them all. From the Back Cover "Scott Page has brought to our attention a practically important proposition: diversity of viewpoints is of the greatest importance in solving the problems that face us individually and collectively. Diversity among a group of problem solvers is more important than individual excellence. Page's exposition remarkably combines lightness and breadth of knowledge with rigor and evidence."--Kenneth J. Arrow, Nobel Prize-winning economist "Scott Page knows more about diversity than anyone anywhere. In The Difference, he shows why diversity matters, how it leads to better outcomes, and most importantly why achieving the significant benefits of diversity requires thinking well beyond traditional categories such as race, gender, or ethnicity. Knowledge of this book should be a litmus test for educators and diversity trainers--if you haven't read it, you are just talking metaphor. Stop playing defense and start playing offense by buying this book."--Bill Miller, Chairman and Chief Investment Officer, Legg Mason Capital Management "Does diversity trump ability when it comes to problem solving? Scott Page shows that the answer is, at least sometimes, yes. You'd do better to add more diversity of perspectives to your problem-solving team than to increase the average ability of individual team members. Diversity in both experience and identity can spark a group's creativity. Page pursues the logic of diversity and shows why and when hiring people who differ can lead to a better bottom line."--Ian Ayres, coauthor of Why Not? How to Use Everyday Ingenuity to Solve Problems Big and Small "The book is brilliant. Page has a dazzling eclecticism."--Max Bazerman, Harvard Business School About the Author Scott E. Page is Professor of Complex Systems, Political Science, and Economics at the University of Michigan and an external faculty member at the Santa Fe Institute. He is the coauthor of "Complex Adaptive Systems" (Princeton).