



Rookie Smarts: Why Learning Beats Knowing in the New Game of Work

By Liz Wiseman

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Rookie Smarts: Why Learning Beats Knowing in the New Game of Work By Liz Wiseman

Wall Street Journal Bestseller

Is it possible to be at your best even when you are underqualified or doing something for the first time? Is it still possible, even after decades of experience, to recapture the enthusiasm, curiosity, and fearlessness of youth to take on new challenges? With the right mindset—with *Rookie Smarts*—you can.

In a rapidly changing world, experience can be a curse. Careers stall, innovation stops, and strategies grow stale. Being new, naïve, and even clueless can be an asset. For today's knowledge workers, constant learning is more valuable than mastery.

In this essential guide, leadership expert Liz Wiseman explains how to reclaim and cultivate this curious, flexible, youthful mindset called *Rookie Smarts*. She argues that the most successful rookies are hunter-gatherers—alert and seeking, cautious but quick like firewalkers, and hungry and relentless like pioneers. Most importantly, she identifies a breed of leaders she refers to as “perpetual rookies.” Despite years of experience, they retain their rookie smarts, thinking and operating with the mindsets and practices of these high-performing rookies.

Rookie Smarts addresses the questions every experienced professional faces: “Will my knowledge and skills become obsolete and irrelevant? Will a young, inexperienced newcomer upend my company or me? How can I keep up?” The answer is to stay fresh, keep learning, and know when to think like a rookie.

Rookie Smarts isn't just for professionals seeking personal renewal; it is an indispensable resource for all leaders who must ensure their workforces remains vital and competitive.

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Editorial Review

Review

“Given the author’s experience it’s no shock that she offers an exceptional guide to staying vital in the changing marketplace. . . . For readers who are struggling to catch up with changing business needs, this book is a must read.” (Publishers Weekly)

“Wiseman masterfully shows why novices can outdo veterans, expertise blinds us to fresh ideas, and the brilliance of newbies remains untapped. With sage insights and fascinating examples, *Rookie Smarts* is a must-read.” (Adam Grant, Wharton professor and bestselling author of *Give and Take*)

Rookie Smarts gives you a practical roadmap to rediscovering the open, curious, creative mind inside you. If you want to be a learning machine, improving and growing every year, this is the book for you. (Laszlo Bock, SVP of People Operations, Google, Inc. and author of *Work Rules!*)

Agility, resilience, grit, and a growth mindset—these are the skills effective leaders need in a changing world. In *Rookie Smarts*, Wiseman shows leaders at every age and at every stage of their careers how to master these skills (Dave Ulrich, Rensis Likert Professor of Business, University of Michigan & Partner, the RBL Group)

Wiseman’s brilliant and unusually imaginative gem shows you how to keep learning and questioning even your most prized beliefs, how to avoid becoming a boring clone condemned to marching in lock-step with your equally dull colleagues, and how to build vibrant workplaces (Robert Sutton, Stanford Professor and co-author of *Scaling Up Excellence*)

“...both a rich and rewarding read and a practical guide for individual leaders and for those responsible for developing talent in their organization.” (Developing Leaders)

From the Back Cover

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In this essential guide, leadership expert Liz Wiseman explains how to reclaim and cultivate the curious, flexible, youthful mindset called *Rookie Smarts*. Wiseman reveals the different modes of the rookie mindset that lead to success:

- **Backpacker:** Unencumbered, rookies are more open to new possibilities, ready to explore new terrain, and don't get stuck in yesterday's best practices.
- **Hunter-Gatherer:** Rookies seek out experts and return with ideas and resources to address the challenges they face.
- **Firewalker:** Lacking situational confidence, rookies take small, calculated steps, moving fast and seeking feedback to stay on track.

- **Pioneer:** Keeping things simple and focusing on meeting core needs, rookies improvise and work tirelessly while pushing boundaries.

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About the Author

Liz Wiseman is the president of The Wiseman Group, a leadership research and development center headquartered in Silicon Valley. She advises senior executives and leads strategy and leadership forums for executive teams worldwide. A former executive at Oracle Corporation, she worked as the vice president of Oracle University and for seventeen years as the global leader for human resource development. She holds a BS in business management and a master's in organizational behavior, each from Brigham Young University.

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Roxanne Mazon:

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