



Everything I Learned About Business I Learned From the Grateful Dead, out now.

Credits: Grateful Dead

Book Review - Everything I Know About Business I Learned From the Grateful Dead

Everything I Know About Business I Learned From the Grateful Dead

By Barry Barnes

The jokes pretty much write themselves with this one. You can almost envision chapters like “How I Made My F Dirty Parking Lots”. But once you get past the jokes about endless jams and white-bearded, tie-dyed hippies, you’re more than a Grateful Dead obsessed fan and that the band knew how to make money – lots of it.

As far as business books go, Barry Barnes’ Everything I Know About Business I Learned From the Grateful Dead Moved My Cheese suits and tie journalism. A professor at Nova Southeastern University in Florida and an admitted story-teller, offering solid examples of The Dead’s business philosophy told through entertaining and telling anecdotes.

The band learned early on that it was ok to let their fans tape their shows, creating a loyal audience that was willing to follow the band from show to show (paying admission at each stop) and stock up on group memorabilia. The Dead also felt strongly that every member of the group, from Jerry Garcia and Bob Weir down to the folks who worked on the crew and handled things back at the office (yes there was a Grateful Dead back office) had an equal stake in the band and were consulted and polled on every big business decision.

Anyone who still thinks of the Grateful Dead as little more than drug-addled hippies too obsessed with peace and flowers to worry about anything as petty as finances should probably pick up Barnes’ book. Who knows, maybe even the tax-the-poor, spare-the-rich crowd that seems to make up the bulk of the Republican Party right now might discover their new favorite band. Doubtful, but stranger things have happened, like a bunch of hippies from San Francisco becoming millionaires several times over with 10-minute plus songs and little airplay.

Grand Central Publishing

256 pages/Hardcover

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