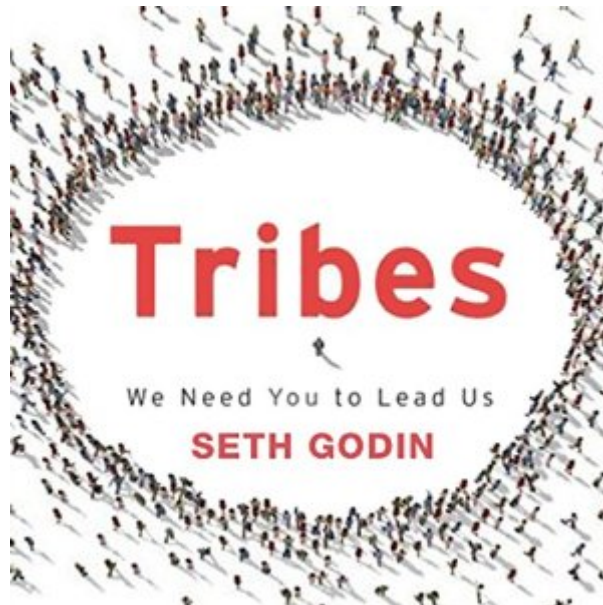# Tribes: We Need You To Lead Us

Synopsis

A tribe is any group of people, large or small, who are connected to one another, a leader, and an idea. For millions of years, humans have joined tribes, be they religious, ethnic, political, or even musical (think of the Deadheads). Itâ ™s our nature. Now the Internet has eliminated the barriers of geography, cost, and time. All those blogs and social networking sites are helping existing tribes get bigger and enabling new tribes to be bornâ ”groups of ten or ten million who care about a political campaign, or a new way to fight global warming.Who is going to lead all these tribes? The Web can do amazing things, but it canâ ™t provide leadership. That still has to come from individualsâ ”people just like you who have passion about something. Anyone who wants to make a difference now has the tools at their fingertips.If you think leadership is for other people, think againâ ”leaders come in surprising packages. Ignore an opportunity to lead and you risk turning into a â œsheepwalkerâ •â ”someone who fights to protect the status quo at all costs, never asking if obedience is doing you (or your organization) any good. Sheepwalkers donâ ™t do very well these days.Tribes will make you think (really think) about the opportunities for leading your fellow employees, customers, investors, believers, hobbyists, readers. . . . Itâ€™s not easy, but itâ€™s easier than you probably imagine. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

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Customer Reviews

When I was about 50 pages into reading Tribes, I was finding it quite repetitive and, frankly, was wondering what all the hype was about. It seemed like Seth Godin was simply saying the same thing over and over using different words each time. About halfway through the book, I changed my

perception about it and began to take a different view.My initial perception was that Tribes was a book about leadership. If you're looking for a book that teaches you how to lead, you would likely be disappointed in Tribes. My new view is that Tribes is meant to inspire people to lead, rather than teach them to lead. There's a big difference.Did you have a class in school where the teacher simply presented the material in the textbook, you read it, took a quiz and that was it. If you were good at rote memorization, you probably got a good grade in that class. But were you inspired to learn more about that subject? I'll confess, my only motivation in a class like that was to get a good grade and move on to something more interesting. But then there were the teachers who led the class into interesting discussions and motivated you to want to learn more. That's leadership; that's connecting with your tribe.Most of us can learn anything if we work hard enough at it. The big question is: are we motivated to learn it? We can do almost anything; the real question is are we passionate enough- do we care enough about it- to do something about it,to be a leader for that cause?I see Tribes as an inspirational book, not as a "how-to-lead" book. Tribes is a "pep talk" to help us find that leader within each of us. You don't have to be the president or the CEO to lead. And perhaps your area of leadership doesn't even involve your work.

I've almost never been so painfully aware of a book's shortcomings while reading it. Not long into the book, you pick up on a pattern: Godin blithely throws out broad statements about how anyone can become a leader and how we should all strive to be leaders. He then gives the thinnest of examples of how his version of leadership can look. One example is of a guy who gets sick of waiting in line for one party, then goes to an empty bar, texts his friends and starts his own party. Viola! Instant leadership. But even Godin points out, that guy didn't get that party going in four minutes, he got it going using relationships he'd built over four years (or more) so people would respond to his text.That's where you begin to see the problem. Godin doesn't explain how to go about doing the actual hard groundwork of leadership. He makes it sound like anyone with an idea and a cell phone can rally thousands of people to their cause in minutes if they just realize that it's not hard. Really? How does that work? First off, we can't all be leaders. The math just doesn't work. If every one of us is to be a leader to one thousand, it means that we must also take time to be a follower for 1,000 other leaders who also need their "tribe". Pretty basic arithmetic, and I don't think we've all got that kind of time.Godin just skips from one shallow and unsupported, but grandiose statement about leadership to another. The one concrete example he gives in the book about how you might actually go about doing the work of leading comes when he describes his early work experience in a software company. He explains how he got the most out of shallow programming

resources by starting a newsletter that created a sense of excitement around his project and attracted programmers to it.

This book's theme is unconventional leadership, taking a cause or idea and gathering support without a firm institutional foundation by finding like-minded individuals and connecting them. If that's a new idea to you, you will find the book to be flattering in its encouragement and motivational in its tone. If you are an unconventional leader already or know a lot about how to do this, you will search in vain for anything new in Tribes.The book's substance is rather thin beyond the few examples and rants.Here it is:People are turned into a tribe by "a shared interest" and "a way to communicate" ("leader to tribe, tribe to leader, tribe member to tribe member, and tribe member to outsider"). A leader increases effectiveness for the people by""transforming the shared interest into a passionate goal and desire for change;"providing tools to allow members to tighten their communications; and"leveraging the tribe to allow it to grow and gain new members."As you can see, he's describing the way causes, nonprofits, political pressure groups, and save the world organizations operate.Some will be offended by the rants. For example, he takes off rather hard on all religions while being all in favor of faith that you can accomplish whatever you want. There's no real basis for his position other than generalities about how no religions ever favor any changes. Well, if that were the case, there would still be rampant slavery in many nations. It was religious organizations that led the antislavery movement from the beginning.Mr. Godin is very well informed about things that happened recently on the Internet (or in his own life), but he doesn't seem to have a broader understanding of leadership or change leadership.

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