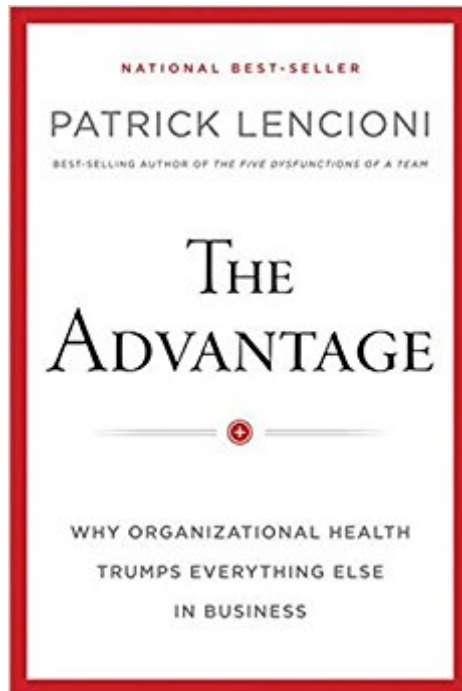


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# The Advantage: Why Organizational Health Trumps Everything Else In Business



## Synopsis

There is a competitive advantage out there, arguably more powerful than any other. Is it superior strategy? Faster innovation? Smarter employees? No, New York Times best-selling author, Patrick Lencioni, argues that the seminal difference between successful companies and mediocre ones has little to do with what they know and how smart they are and more to do with how healthy they are. In this book, Lencioni brings together his vast experience and many of the themes cultivated in his other best-selling books and delivers a first: a cohesive and comprehensive exploration of the unique advantage organizational health provides. Simply put, an organization is healthy when it is whole, consistent and complete, when its management, operations and culture are unified. Healthy organizations outperform their counterparts, are free of politics and confusion and provide an environment where star performers never want to leave. Lencioni's first non-fiction book provides leaders with a groundbreaking, approachable model for achieving organizational health—complete with stories, tips and anecdotes from his experiences consulting to some of the nation's leading organizations. In this age of informational ubiquity and nano-second change, it is no longer enough to build a competitive advantage based on intelligence alone. The Advantage provides a foundational construct for conducting business in a new way—one that maximizes human potential and aligns the organization around a common set of principles.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

The Advantage: Why Organizational Health Trumps Everything Else in Business By Patrick

Lencioni Patrick Lencioni is a proven master of the business fable--a short story that provides a lesson that can be applied to the business world. His numerous bestsellers, "The Five Dysfunctions of a Team," "Death by Meeting," and "Silos, Politics and Turf Wars," among others, each focus on providing the reader with a lesson on a particular business topic. In his latest book, "The Advantage: Why Organizational Health Trumps Everything Else in Business," Lencioni pulls together the many separate themes of his previous works and weaves them into a comprehensive business theory. And despite his expertise as a storyteller, in this book he chooses not to use the business fable. Perhaps the fable format is not extensive enough to meet his needs. Whatever the reason, the insight and strength of this book prove that he made the right choice. The result is first-rate writing that supports discerning insights about the essential factors for business success. The opening line in the first chapter captures the premise of the book, "The single greatest advantage any company can achieve is organizational health. Yet it is ignored by most leaders even though it is simple, free, and available to everyone who wants it." Organizational health is readily accessible, the author argues, but most organizations choose to be smart rather than healthy. Smart may include a great marketing plan and cutting edge technology. It focuses on "tweaking the dials," in these and other areas, rather than on overall health of the organization.

Although I am a big reader, I am typically not a fan of "workplace parables," which explains why I haven't been particularly drawn to Patrick Lencioni's work in the past despite seeing his books on the bestseller lists. When he released a non-parable book last year, *The Advantage*, I decided to take a peek. I ended up reading (devouring) the book quickly and about wore out a highlighter in the process! In brief, *The Advantage* serves as a guide to organizational health. Right from the start, Lencioni highlights two requirements for success: an organization needs to be smart (in terms of strategy, finance, marketing, and the like) and healthy (minimal politics and confusion, high morale and productivity). Rather than providing simple "quick fixes" for organizational health that don't last, he offers a more sustainable culture shift: one underscored by strong leadership, recognized values, and defined purpose. One of the longings I hear most often from my executive clients is their desire for clarity - an issue Lencioni has obviously experienced as well, since 3 of his 4 disciplines in *The Advantage* revolve around this topic. I was reminded of Cy Wakeman's statement in *Reality Based Leadership*: "Ambiguity is the source of all conflict." When we can clearly communicate goals, expectations, procedures and values, we reduce tension and misunderstandings and increase levels of engagement. While profound statements - and more importantly, thought-provoking questions for organizational leaders to ask themselves - abound throughout the book, my favorite

appears within Discipline 2 - Create Clarity. Here, Lencioni discusses the importance of knowing your purpose and asserts that all organizations exist to make people's lives better.

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