

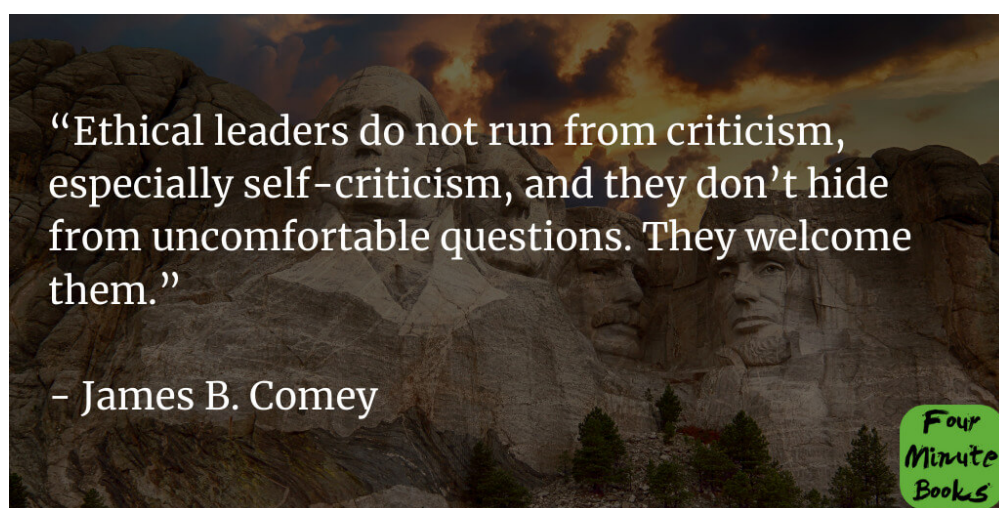
A Higher Loyalty Summary

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1-Sentence-Summary: *A Higher Loyalty* shares James Comey's experiences as the director of the FBI and outlines what he learned about leadership, ethics, and politics throughout his life, career, and experiences with President Trump who was the reason he lost his job in May of 2017.

Read in: 4 minutes

Favorite quote from the author:



Even if you don't care much for politics, you've probably at least heard the name James Comey. He's been in the news a lot in the last few years. He served as director of the FBI from 2013 until his controversial dismissal by Donald Trump in May 2017.

As a lawyer, he did many other things such as prosecuting the insider trading case against Martha Stewart and helping Rudy Giuliani in his crusade against the New York Mafia in the 1980s. Let's just say he's a man who isn't short on interesting life stories.

In his book, *A Higher Loyalty: Truth, Lies, and Leadership*, James Comey gives us a never-before-seen look into his life. We follow Comey from his upbringing as a bullied kid in New York through his long, high-profile career in government.

From working to change the Bush administration's surveillance and torture policies to overseeing Hillary Clinton's email investigation and investigating the Trump campaign's ties to Russia, he has been involved in some of the biggest cases of our recent history. He gives these stories and more, and shares what he has seen makes a truly effective leader through his vast experience.

Let's see how much we can discover in just 3 lessons:

1. Comey's early life included bullies, work experience, and even getting robbed.
2. Working closely with the Obama administration, Comey discovered six traits of great leaders, among many other life lessons.
3. James Comey's inside view of Trump's presidency reveals a lot about what actually happened in its early days.

Get ready to learn, because you're about to discover some interesting new lessons! Let's go!

Lesson 1: James Comey's early life included jobs, bullies, and even a robbery.

We know he went on to have a long, successful career, but what about his early years? Comey's life began in New York but he moved to New Jersey as a child. His mom gave him haircuts and patched up his old clothes to save money, making him a target for bullies. It didn't help that he was also scrawny and had a habit of talking too much.

But the bullying taught him some important life lessons. He says one of these was learning to read people. If you've ever had to deal with a bully, you know the signs of aggression they give off. **But what's more, he says this bullying gave him his deep desire to help the defenseless.**

Another formative experience from his youth was working for a man named Harry Howell at a grocery store. Howell taught him how to be a good leader by showing him that you can be powerful and still be understanding and have compassion at the same time. Howell worked hard and had high standards, but he knew when it was necessary to show mercy when people made mistakes.

Another major shaping moment for Comey was when he was robbed in his own home at just sixteen. The man held him and his brother at gunpoint and demanded money. The event was terrifying, but they both survived without harm.

Naturally, it had a deep effect on him personally. For the first time, he reflected on what was important in life and decided he would choose a career that would help people directly.

Lesson 2: President Obama taught Comey a lot about many things, including leadership.

Comey began working as the FBI director in 2014, under President Obama. **In his time working with Obama, he was deeply impressed with how effective and intelligent Obama was as a leader.**

Comey lists six traits that make a great leader, they are:

- A strong sense of decency and integrity
- Possessing the confidence to be humble

- A fair balance of toughness and kindness
- Transparency in their motivations
- An awareness that everyone wants their work to be meaningful
- The understanding that words are important, but actions are even more important.

Comey says Obama had many of these qualities, and also a great sense of humor. Even though it isn't one of his six traits, Comey says the ability to laugh is a sign a leader is comfortable with who they are.

After a string of police incidents in 2015 that brought extreme racial tension to the country, Comey tried to give a unifying speech at a press conference. As FBI director, he couldn't pick sides with either Black Lives Matter or Police Lives Matter, so he just made everyone angry.

When Comey talked to Obama afterward, the president listened intently to what he had to say, taking time to see all viewpoints. Afterward, Obama respectfully took him into the perspective of what it was like to be a person in a black neighborhood. Comey learned a lot from him and appreciated the leadership Obama possessed.

Lesson 3: We can get an inside look at the early days of Trump's presidency through Comey's experiences.

Comey's experience with the Trump administration was rocky from the beginning. When he gave Trump his first briefing on threat levels, he informed Trump and his team that Russians had been attempting to influence the election's outcome. Immediately Trump and his team discussed ways they could use this information to their political advantage.

This was just their first meeting, but only one of many occasions he was reminded of the actions of the Mafia bosses he used to work to lock up. Soon, more evidence of Russian connections arose. For the next months, Trump would call Comey to his office and tell him he shouldn't believe the information. Repeatedly he asked for his loyalty.

As you'd probably expect, Comey didn't pledge his loyalty to Trump. After all, he hated bullies and it was a huge ethical concern. But he did start making memos to record all the times Trump asked they speak privately. **All modern presidents consider talks like these between the president and FBI director to be inappropriate.**

Nevertheless, Comey did his best to remain free of bias and expected to serve out the next 10 years as FBI director. During Trump's last call to Comey in April of 2017. Trump expressed his disappointment that Comey wasn't making more of an effort to "lift the cloud" of the Russia investigation. In May, Comey heard the news of his firing along with everyone else while he was in California on the job.

Comey feels he lost his job for his refusal to influence the FBI investigations on the behalf of the president. He leaked his memos to the press, hoping it will lead to an investigation, though he knows there likely isn't enough evidence right now. But he ends by saying sooner or later, justice will prevail.

A Higher Loyalty Review

I don't love politics or history, but *A Higher Loyalty* was still pretty interesting. It's great to get this fascinating first-hand account of some of the details on major recent political events. I think there's a lot to learn from this book no matter what side you're on politically!

Who would I recommend the A Higher Loyalty summary to?

The 52-year-old that loves to read the news and wants more details behind the headlines, the 35-year-old with an interest in politics, and anybody that's curious about what really happens in Washington DC.