A REVOLUTIONARY APPROACH TO SUCCESS

GIVE and TAKE

ADAM GRANT

PRAISE FOR ADAM GRANT'S

Give and Take

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"One of the great secrets of life is that those who win most are often those who give most. In this elegant and lucid book, filled with compelling evidence and evocative examples, Adam Grant shows us why and how this is so. Highly recommended!"

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"Good guys finish first—and Adam Grant knows why. *Give and Take* is the smart surprise you can't afford to miss."

—**Daniel Gilbert**, author of *Stumbling on Happiness*

"*Give and Take* is an enlightening read for leaders who aspire to create meaningful and sustainable changes to their environments. Grant demonstrates how a generous orientation toward others can serve as a formula for producing successful leaders and organizational performance. His writing is as engaging and enjoyable as his style in the classroom."

—**Kenneth Frazier**, chairman, president, and CEO, Merck & Co., Inc.

"In this riveting and sparkling book, Adam Grant turns the conventional wisdom upside down about what it takes to win and get ahead. With page-turning stories and compelling studies, *Give and Take* reveals the surprising forces behind success and the steps we can take to enhance our own."

—**Laszlo Bock**, senior vice president of people operations, Google

"*Give and Take* dispels commonly held beliefs that equate givers with weakness and takers with strength. Grant shows us the importance of nurturing and encouraging prosocial behaviors."

—**Dan Ariely**, author of *Predictably Irrational*

"*Give and Take* defines a road to success marked by new ways of relating to colleagues and customers as well as new ways of growing a business."

—**Tony Hsieh**, CEO, Zappos.com and author of *Delivering Happiness*

"*Give and Take* will fundamentally change the way you think about success. Unfortunately in America, we have too often succumbed to the worldview that if everyone behaved in their own narrow self-interest, all would be fine. Adam Grant shows us with compelling research and fascinating stories there is a better way."

—**Lenny Mendonca**, director, McKinsey & Co.

"Adam Grant, a rising star of positive psychology, seamlessly weaves together science and stories of business success and failure, convincing us that giving is, in the long run, the recipe for success in the corporate world. En route you will find yourself reexamining your own life. Read it yourself, then give copies to the people you care most about in this world."

—**Martin Seligman**, author of *Learned Optimism* and *Flourish*

“*Give and Take* presents a groundbreaking new perspective on success. Adam Grant offers a captivating window into innovative principles that drive effectiveness at every level of an organization and can immediately be put into action. Along with being a fascinating read, this book holds the key to a more satisfied and productive workplace, better customer relationships, and higher profits.”

—**Chip Conley**, founder, Joie de Vivre Hotels and author of *Peak* and *Emotional Equations*

“Give and Take is a game changer. Reading Adam Grant’s compelling book will change the way doctors doctor, managers manage, teachers teach, and bosses boss. It will create a society in which people do better by being better. Read the book and change the way you live and work.”

—**Barry Schwartz**, author of *The Paradox of Choice* and *Practical Wisdom*

“*Give and Take* is a new behavioral benchmark for doing business for better, providing an inspiring new perspective on how to succeed to the benefit of all. Adam Grant provides great support for the new paradigm of creating a win win for people, planet, and profit with many fabulous insights and wonderful stories to get you fully hooked and infected with wanting to give more and take less.”

—**Jochen Zeitz**, former CEO and chairman, PUMA

“*Give and Take* is a real gift. Adam Grant delivers a triple treat: stories as good as a well-written novel, surprising insights drawn from rigorous science, and advice on using those insights to catapult ourselves and our organizations to success. I can’t think of another book with more powerful implications for both business *and* life.”

—**Teresa Amabile**, author of *The Progress Principle*

“Adam Grant has written a landmark book that examines what makes some extraordinarily successful people so great. By introducing us to highly impressive individuals, he proves that, contrary to popular belief, the best way to climb to the top of the ladder is to take others up there with you. *Give and Take* presents the road to success for the twenty-first century.”

—**Maria Eitel**, founding CEO and president, the Nike Foundation

“In an era of business literature that drones on with the same-old, over-used platitudes, Adam Grant forges into brilliant new territory. *Give and Take* helps readers understand how to maximize their effectiveness ***and*** help others simultaneously. It will serve as a new framework for both insight and achievement. A must read!”

—**Josh Linkner**, founder, ePrize, CEO, Detroit Venture Partners, and author of *Disciplined Dreaming*

“What *The No *sshole Rule* did for corporate culture, *Give and Take* does for each of us as individuals. Grant presents an evidence-based case for the counterintuitive link between generosity and finishing first.”

—**Douglas Stone and Sheila Heen**, coauthors of *Difficult Conversations*

“Adam Grant is a wunderkind. He has won every distinguished research award and teaching award in his field, and his work has changed the way that people see the world. If you want to be surprised—very pleasantly surprised—by what really drives success, then *Give and Take* is for you. If you want to make the world a better place, read this book. If you want to make your life better, read this book.”

—**Tal Ben-Shahar**, author of *Happier*

"In one of the most engaging and insightful books I've read in years, Adam Grant makes a persuasive argument for a counterintuitive approach to success. *Give and Take* is an instant classic that should be read by anyone who wants to be more productive—and happier—in the office or at home."

—**Noah Goldstein**, author of *Yes!*

"*Give and Take* is sensational, with fascinating insights on page after page. I learned much that I intend to incorporate into my life immediately. The lessons will not only make you a better person, they will make you more capable of doing good for many people, including yourself."

—**Rabbi Joseph Telushkin**, author of *Jewish Literacy* and *A Code of Jewish Ethics*

"Adam Grant is the first to define what has changed about relationships in a digital age—and he backs it up with empirical evidence. In *Give and Take*, he brilliantly demonstrates that in our deeply interconnected world, the roots of sustainable success lie in creating success for those around you. It's one of those rare books that is both enlightening immensely practical. You'll want to read and revisit it every year."

—**Paul Saffo**, managing director, Foresight and member, World Economic Forum Council on Strategic Foresight

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A Revolutionary Approach to Success

Adam Grant

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ALWAYS LEARNING PEARSON

In memory of my friend

JEFF ZASLOW

who lived his life as a role model for the principles in this book.

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Good Returns

The Dangers and Rewards of Giving More Than You Get

The principle of give and take; that is diplomacy—give one and take ten.
—Mark Twain, author and humorist

On a sunny Saturday afternoon in Silicon Valley, two proud fathers stood on the sidelines of a soccer field. They were watching their young daughters play together, and it was only a matter of time before they struck up a conversation about work. The taller of the two men was Danny Shader, a serial entrepreneur who had spent time at Netscape, Motorola, and Amazon. Intense, dark-haired, and capable of talking about business forever, Shader was in his late thirties by the time he launched his first company, and he liked to call himself the "old man of the Internet." He loved building companies, and he was just getting his fourth start-up off the ground.

Shader had instantly taken a liking to the other father, a man named David Hornik who invests in companies for a living. At 5'4", with dark hair, glasses, and a goatee, Hornik is a man of eclectic interests: he collects *Alice in Wonderland* books, and in college he created his own major in computer music. He went on to earn a master's in criminology and a law degree, and after burning the midnight oil at a law firm, he accepted a job offer to join a venture capital firm, where he spent the next decade listening to pitches from entrepreneurs and deciding whether or not to fund them.

During a break between soccer games, Shader turned to Hornik and said, "I'm working on something—do you want to see a pitch?" Hornik specialized in Internet companies, so he seemed like an ideal investor to Shader. The interest was mutual. Most people who pitch ideas are first-time entrepreneurs, with no track record of success. In contrast, Shader was a blue-chip entrepreneur who had hit the jackpot not once, but twice. In 1999, his first start-up, Accept.com, was acquired by Amazon for $175 million. In 2007, his next company, Good Technology, was acquired by Motorola for $500 million. Given Shader's history, Hornik was eager to hear what he was up to next.

A few days after the soccer game, Shader drove to Hornik's office and pitched his newest idea. Nearly a quarter of Americans have trouble making online purchases because they don't have a bank account or credit card, and Shader was proposing an innovative solution to this problem. Hornik was one of the first venture capitalists to hear the pitch, and right off the bat, he loved it. Within a week, he put Shader in front of his partners and offered him a term sheet: he wanted to fund Shader's company.

Although Hornik had moved fast, Shader was in a strong position. Given Shader's reputation, and the quality of his idea, Hornik knew plenty of investors would be clamoring to work with Shader. "You're rarely the only investor giving an entrepreneur a term sheet," Hornik explains. "You're competing with the best venture capital firms in the country, and trying to convince the entrepreneur to take your money instead of theirs."

The best way for Hornik to land the investment was to set a deadline for Shader to make his decision. If Hornik made a compelling offer with a short fuse, Shader might sign it before he had the chance to pitch to other investors. This is what many venture capitalists do to stack the odds in their favor.

But Hornik didn't give Shader a deadline. In fact, he practically invited Shader to shop his offer around to other investors. Hornik believed that entrepreneurs need time to evaluate their options, so as a matter of principle, he refused to present exploding offers. "Take as much time as you need to make the right decision," he said. Although Hornik hoped Shader would conclude that the right decision was to sign with him, he put Shader's best interests ahead of his own, giving Shader space to explore other options.

Shader did just that: he spent the next few weeks pitching his idea to other investors. In the meantime, Hornik wanted to make sure he was still a strong contender, so he sent Shader his most valuable resource: a list of forty references who could attest to Hornik's caliber as an investor. Hornik knew that entrepreneurs look for the same attributes in investors that we all seek in financial advisers: competence and trustworthiness. When entrepreneurs sign with an investor, the investor joins their board of directors and provides expert advice. Hornik's list of references reflected the blood, sweat, and tears that he had devoted to entrepreneurs over the course of more than a decade in the venture business. He knew they would vouch for his skill and his character.

A few weeks later, Hornik's phone rang. It was Shader, ready to announce his decision.

"I'm sorry," Shader said, "but I'm signing with another investor."

The financial terms of the offer from Hornik and the other investor were virtually identical, so Hornik's list of forty references should have given him an advantage. And after speaking with the references, it was clear to Shader that Hornik was a great guy.

But it was this very same spirit of generosity that doomed Hornik's case. Shader worried that Hornik would spend more time encouraging him than challenging him. Hornik might not be tough enough to help Shader start a successful business, and the other investor had a reputation for being a brilliant adviser who questioned and pushed entrepreneurs. Shader walked away thinking, "I should probably add somebody to the board who will challenge me more. Hornik is so affable that I don't know what he'll be like in the boardroom." When he called Hornik, he explained, "My heart said to go with you, but my head said to go with them. I decided to go with my head instead of my heart."

Hornik was devastated, and he began to second-guess himself. "Am I a dope? If I had applied pressure to take the term sheet, maybe he would have taken it. But I've spent a decade building my reputation so this wouldn't happen. How did this happen?"

David Hornik learned his lesson the hard way: good guys finish last.

Or do they?

***

According to conventional wisdom, highly successful people have three things in common: motivation, ability, and opportunity. If we want to succeed, we need a combination of hard work, talent, and luck. The story of Danny Shader and David Hornik highlights a fourth ingredient, one that's critical but often neglected: success depends heavily on how we approach our interactions with other people. Every time we interact with another person at work, we have a choice to make: do we try to claim as much value as we can, or contribute value without worrying about what we receive in return?

As an organizational psychologist and Wharton professor, I've dedicated more than ten years of my professional life to studying these choices at organizations ranging from Google to the U.S. Air Force, and it turns out that they have staggering consequences for success. Over the past three decades, in a series of groundbreaking studies, social scientists have discovered that people differ dramatically in their preferences for reciprocity—their desired mix of taking and giving. To shed some light on these preferences, let me introduce you to two kinds of people who fall at opposite ends of the reciprocity spectrum at work. I call them takers and givers.

Takers have a distinctive signature: they like to get more than they give. They tilt reciprocity in their own favor, putting their own interests ahead of others' needs. Takers believe that the world is a competitive, dog-eat-dog place. They feel that to succeed, they need to be better than others. To prove their competence, they self-promote and make sure they get plenty of credit for their efforts. Garden-variety takers aren't cruel or cutthroat; they're just cautious and self-protective. "If I don't look out for myself first," takers think, "no one will." Had David Hornik been more of a taker, he would have given Danny Shader a deadline, putting his goal of landing the investment ahead of Shader's desire for a flexible timeline.

But Hornik is the opposite of a taker; he's a *giver*. In the workplace, givers are a relatively rare breed. They tilt reciprocity in the other direction, preferring to give more than they get. Whereas takers tend to be self-focused, evaluating what other people can offer them, givers are other-focused, paying more attention to what other people need from them. These preferences aren't about money: givers and takers aren't distinguished by how much they donate to charity or the compensation that they command from their employers. Rather, givers and takers differ in their attitudes and actions toward other people. If you're a taker, you help others strategically, when the benefits to *you* outweigh the personal costs. If you're a giver, you might use a different cost-benefit analysis: you help whenever the benefits to *others* exceed the personal costs. Alternatively, you might not think about the personal costs at all, helping others without expecting anything in return. If you're a giver at work, you simply strive to be generous in sharing your time, energy, knowledge, skills, ideas, and connections with other people who can benefit from them.

It's tempting to reserve the giver label for larger-than-life heroes such as Mother Teresa or Mahatma Gandhi, but being a giver doesn't require extraordinary acts of sacrifice. It just involves a focus on acting in the interests of others, such as by giving help, providing mentoring, sharing credit, or making connections for others. Outside the workplace, this type of behavior is quite common.

According to research led by Yale psychologist Margaret Clark, most people act like givers in close relationships. In marriages and friendships, we contribute whenever we can without keeping score.

But in the workplace, give and take becomes more complicated. Professionally, few of us act purely like givers or takers, adopting a third style instead. We become *matchers*, striving to preserve an equal balance of giving and getting. Matchers operate on the principle of fairness: when they help others, they protect themselves by seeking reciprocity. If you're a matcher, you believe in tit for tat, and your relationships are governed by even exchanges of favors.

Giving, taking, and matching are three fundamental styles of social interaction, but the lines between them aren't hard and fast. You might find that you shift from one reciprocity style to another as you travel across different work roles and relationships.* It wouldn't be surprising if you act like a taker when negotiating your salary, a giver when mentoring someone with less experience than you, and a matcher when sharing expertise with a colleague. But evidence shows that at work, the vast majority of people develop a primary reciprocity style, which captures how they approach most of the people most of the time. And this primary style can play as much of a role in our success as hard work, talent, and luck.

In fact, the patterns of success based on reciprocity styles are remarkably clear. If I asked you to guess who's the most likely to end up at the bottom of the success ladder, what would you say—takers, givers, or matchers?

Professionally, all three reciprocity styles have their own benefits and drawbacks. But there's one style that proves more costly than the other two. Based on David Hornik's story, you might predict that givers achieve the worst results—and you'd be right. Research demonstrates that givers sink to the bottom of the success ladder. Across a wide range of important occupations, givers are at a disadvantage: they make others better off but sacrifice their own success in the process.

In the world of engineering, the least productive and effective engineers are givers. In one study, when more than 160 professional engineers in California rated one another on help given and received, the least successful engineers were those who gave more than they received. These givers had the worst objective scores in their firm for the number of tasks, technical reports, and drawings completed—not to mention errors made, deadlines missed, and money wasted. Going out of their way to help others prevented them from getting their own work done.

The same pattern emerges in medical school. In a study of more than six hundred medical students in Belgium, the students with the lowest grades had unusually high scores on giver statements like "I love to help others" and "I anticipate the needs of others." The givers went out of their way to help their peers study, sharing what they already knew at the expense of filling gaps in their own knowledge, and it gave their peers a leg up at test time. Salespeople are no different. In a study I led of salespeople in North Carolina, compared with takers and matchers, givers brought in two and a half times less annual sales revenue. They were so concerned about what was best for their customers that they weren't willing to sell aggressively.

Across occupations, it appears that givers are just too caring, too trusting, and too willing to sacrifice their own interests for the benefit of others. There's even evidence that compared with takers, on average, givers earn 14 percent less money, have twice the risk of becoming victims of crimes, and are judged as 22 percent less powerful and dominant.

So if givers are most likely to land at the bottom of the success ladder, who's at the top—takers or matchers?

Neither. When I took another look at the data, I discovered a surprising pattern: *It's the givers again.*

As we've seen, the engineers with the lowest productivity are mostly givers. But when we look at the engineers with the highest productivity, the evidence shows that they're givers too. The California engineers with the best objective scores for quantity and quality of results are those who consistently give more to their colleagues than they get. The worst performers and the best performers are givers; takers and matchers are more likely to land in the middle.

This pattern holds up across the board. The Belgian medical students with the lowest grades have unusually high giver scores, but so do the students with the *highest* grades. Over the course of medical school, being a giver accounts for 11 percent higher grades. Even in sales, I found that the least productive salespeople had 25 percent higher giver scores than average performers—but so did the most productive salespeople. The top performers were givers, and they averaged 50 percent more annual revenue than the takers and matchers. Givers dominate the bottom *and* the top of the success ladder. Across occupations, if you examine the link between reciprocity styles and success, the givers are more likely to become champs—not only chumps.

Guess which one David Hornik turns out to be?

After Danny Shader signed with the other investor, he had a gnawing feeling. "We just closed a big round. We should be celebrating. Why am I not happier? I was excited about my investor, who's exceptionally bright and talented, but I was missing the opportunity to work with Hornik." Shader wanted to find a way to engage Hornik, but there was a catch. To involve him, Shader and his lead investor would have to sell more of the company, diluting their ownership.

Shader decided it was worth the cost to him personally. Before the financing closed, he invited Hornik to invest in his company. Hornik accepted the offer and made an investment, earning some ownership of the company. He began coming to board meetings, and Shader was impressed with Hornik's ability to push him to consider new directions. "I got to see the other side of him," Shader says. "It had just been overshadowed by how affable he is." Thanks in part to Hornik's advice, Shader's start-up has taken off. It's called PayNearMe, and it enables Americans who don't have a bank account or a credit card to make online purchases with a barcode or a card, and then pay cash for them at participating establishments. Shader landed major partnerships with 7-Eleven and Greyhound to provide these services, and in the first year and a half since launching, PayNearMe has been growing at more than 30 percent per month. As an investor, Hornik has a small share in this growth.

Hornik has also added Shader to his list of references, which is probably even more valuable than the deal itself. When entrepreneurs call to ask about Hornik, Shader tells them, "You may be thinking he's just a nice guy, but he's a lot more than that. He's phenomenal: super-hardworking and very courageous. He can be both challenging and supportive at the same time. And he's incredibly responsive, which is one of the best characteristics you can have in an investor. He'll get back to you any hour—day or night—quickly, on anything that matters."

The payoff for Hornik was not limited to this single deal on PayNearMe. After seeing Hornik in action, Shader came to admire Hornik's commitment to acting in the best interests of entrepreneurs, and he began to set Hornik up with other investment opportunities. In one case, after meeting the CEO of a company called Rocket Lawyer, Shader recommended Hornik as an investor. Although the CEO already had a term sheet from another investor, Hornik ended up winning the investment.

Although he recognizes the downsides, David Hornik believes that operating like a giver has been a driving force behind his success in venture capital. Hornik estimates that when most venture capitalists offer term sheets to entrepreneurs, they have a signing rate near 50 percent: "If you get half of the deals you offer, you're doing pretty well." Yet in eleven years as a venture capitalist, Hornik has offered twenty-eight term sheets to entrepreneurs, and twenty-five have accepted. Shader is one of just three people who have ever turned down an investment from Hornik. The other 89 percent of the time entrepreneurs have taken Hornik's money. Thanks to his funding and expert advice, these entrepreneurs have gone on to build a number of successful start-ups—one was valued at more than $3 billion on its first day of trading in 2012, and others have been acquired by Google, Oracle, Ticketmaster, and Monster.

Hornik's hard work and talent, not to mention his luck at being on the right sideline at his daughter's soccer game, played a big part in lining up the deal with Danny Shader. But it was his reciprocity style that ended up winning the day for him. Even better, he wasn't the only winner. Shader won too, as did the companies to which Shader later recommended Hornik. By operating as a giver, Hornik created value for himself while maximizing opportunities for value to flow outward for the benefit of others.

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In this book, I want to persuade you that we underestimate the success of givers like David Hornik. Although we often stereotype givers as chumps and doormats, they turn out to be surprisingly successful. To figure out why givers dominate the top of the success ladder, we'll examine startling studies and stories that illuminate how giving can be more powerful—and less dangerous—than most people believe. Along the way, I'll introduce you to successful givers from many different walks of life, including consultants, lawyers, doctors, engineers, salespeople, writers, entrepreneurs, accountants, teachers, financial advisers, and sports executives. These givers reverse the popular plan of succeeding first and giving back later, raising the possibility that those who give first are often best positioned for success later.

But we can't forget about those engineers and salespeople at the bottom of the ladder. Some givers do become pushovers and doormats, and I want to explore what separates the champs from the chumps. The answer is less about raw talent or aptitude, and more about the strategies givers use and the choices they make. To explain how givers avoid the bottom of the success ladder, I'm going to debunk two common myths about givers by showing you that they're not necessarily nice, and they're not necessarily altruistic. We all have goals for our own individual achievements, and it turns out that successful givers are every bit as ambitious as takers and matchers. They simply have a different way of pursuing their goals.

This brings us to my third aim, which is to reveal what's unique about the success of givers. Let me be clear that givers, takers, and matchers all can—and do—achieve success. But there's something distinctive that happens when givers succeed: it spreads and cascades. When takers win, there's usually someone else who loses. Research shows that people tend to envy successful takers and look for ways to knock them down a notch. In contrast, when givers like David Hornik win, people are rooting for them and supporting them, rather than gunning for them. Givers succeed in a way that creates a ripple effect, enhancing the success of people around them. You'll see that the difference lies in how giver success creates value, instead of just claiming it. As the venture capitalist Randy Komisar remarks, "It's easier to win if everybody wants you to win. If you don't make enemies out there, it's easier to succeed."

But in some arenas, it seems that the costs of giving clearly outweigh the benefits. In politics, for example, Mark Twain's opening quote suggests that diplomacy involves taking ten times as much as giving. "Politics," writes former president Bill Clinton, "is a 'getting' business. You have to get support, contributions, and votes, over and over again." Takers should have an edge in lobbying and outmaneuvering their opponents in competitive elections, and matchers may be well suited to the constant trading of favors that politics demands. What happens to givers in the world of politics?

Consider the political struggles of a hick who went by the name Sampson. He said his goal was to be the "Clinton of Illinois," and he set his sights on winning a seat in the Senate. Sampson was an unlikely candidate for political office, having spent his early years working on a farm. But Sampson had great ambition; he made his first run for a seat in the state legislature when he was just twenty-three years old. There were thirteen candidates, and only the top four won seats. Sampson made a lackluster showing, finishing eighth.

After losing that race, Sampson turned his eye to business, taking out a loan to start a small shop with a friend. The business failed, and Sampson was unable to repay the loan, so his possessions were seized by local authorities. Shortly thereafter, his business partner died without assets, and Sampson took on the debt. Sampson jokingly called his liability "the national debt": he owed fifteen times his annual income. It would take him years, but he eventually paid back every cent.

After his business failed, Sampson made a second run for the state legislature. Although he was only twenty-five years old, he finished second, landing a seat. For his first legislative session, he had to borrow the money to buy his first suit. For the next eight years, Sampson served in the state legislature, earning a law degree along the way. Eventually, at age forty-five, he was ready to pursue influence on the national stage. He made a bid for the Senate.

Sampson knew he was fighting an uphill battle. He had two primary opponents: James Shields and Lyman Trumbull. Both had been state Supreme Court justices, coming from backgrounds far more privileged than Sampson's. Shields, the incumbent running for reelection, was the nephew of a congressman. Trumbull was the grandson of an eminent Yale-educated historian. By comparison, Sampson had little experience or political clout.

In the first poll, Sampson was a surprise front-runner, with 44 percent support. Shields was close behind at 41 percent, and Trumbull was a distant third at 5 percent. In the next poll, Sampson gained ground, climbing to 47 percent support. But the tide began to turn when a new candidate entered the race: the state's current governor, Joel Matteson. Matteson was popular, and he had the potential to draw votes from both Sampson and Trumbull. When Shields withdrew from the race, Matteson quickly took the lead. Matteson had 44 percent, Sampson was down to 38 percent, and Trumbull was at just 9 percent. But hours later, Trumbull won the election with 51 percent, narrowly edging out Matteson's 47 percent.

Why did Sampson plummet, and how did Trumbull rise so quickly? The sudden reversal of their positions was due to a choice made by Sampson, who seemed plagued by pathological giving. When

Matteson entered the race, Sampson began to doubt his own ability to garner enough support to win. He knew that Trumbull had a small but loyal following who would not give up on him. Most people in Sampson's shoes would have lobbied Trumbull's followers to jump ship. After all, with just 9 percent support, Trumbull was a long shot.

But Sampson's primary concern wasn't getting elected. It was to prevent Matteson from winning. Sampson believed that Matteson was engaging in questionable practices. Some onlookers had accused Matteson of trying to bribe influential voters. At minimum, Sampson had reliable information that some of his own key supporters had been approached by Matteson. If it appeared that Sampson would not stand a chance, Matteson argued, the voters should shift their loyalties and support him.

Sampson's concerns about Matteson's methods and motives proved prescient. A year later, when Matteson was finishing his term as governor, he redeemed old government checks that were outdated or had been previously redeemed, but were never canceled. Matteson took home several hundred thousand dollars and was indicted for fraud.

In addition to harboring suspicions about Matteson, Sampson believed in Trumbull, as they had something in common when it came to the issues. For several years, Sampson had campaigned passionately for a major shift in social and economic policy. He believed it was vital to the future of his state, and in this he and Trumbull were united. So instead of trying to convert Trumbull's loyal followers, Sampson decided to fall on his own sword. He told his floor manager, Stephen Logan, that he would withdraw from the race and ask his supporters to vote for Trumbull. Logan was incredulous: why should the man with a larger following hand over the election to an adversary with a smaller following? Logan broke down into tears, but Sampson would not yield. He withdrew and asked his supporters to vote for Trumbull. It was enough to propel Trumbull to victory, at Sampson's expense.

That was not the first time Sampson put the interests of others ahead of his own. Before he helped Trumbull win the Senate race, despite earning acclaim for his work as a lawyer, Sampson's success was stifled by a crushing liability. He could not bring himself to defend clients if he felt they were guilty. According to a colleague, Sampson's clients knew "they would win their case—if it was fair; if not, that it was a waste of time to take it to him." In one case, a client was accused of theft, and Sampson approached the judge. "If you can say anything for the man, do it—I can't. If I attempt it, the jury will see I think he is guilty, and convict him." In another case, during a criminal trial, Sampson leaned over and said to an associate, "This man is guilty; you defend him, I can't." Sampson handed the case over to the associate, walking away from a sizable fee. These decisions earned him respect, but they raised questions about whether he was tenacious enough to make tough political decisions.

Sampson "comes very near being a perfect man," said one of his political rivals. "He lacks but one thing." The rival explained that Sampson was unfit to be trusted with power, because his judgment was too easily clouded by concern for others. In politics, operating like a giver put Sampson at a disadvantage. His reluctance to put himself first cost him the Senate election, and left onlookers wondering whether he was strong enough for the unforgiving world of politics. Trumbull was a fierce debater; Sampson was a pushover. "I regret my defeat," Sampson admitted, but he maintained that Trumbull's election would help to advance the causes they shared. After the election, a local reporter wrote that in comparison with Sampson, Trumbull was "a man of more real talent and power."

But Sampson wasn't ready to step aside forever. Four years after helping Lyman Trumbull win the seat, Sampson ran for the Senate again. He lost again. But in the weeks leading up to the vote, one of the most outspoken supporters of Sampson's was none other than Lyman Trumbull. Sampson's sacrifice had earned goodwill, and Trumbull was not the only adversary who became an advocate in response to Sampson's giving. In the first Senate race, when Sampson had 47 percent of the vote and seemed to be on the brink of victory, a Chicago lawyer and politician named Norman Judd led a strong 5 percent who would not waver in their loyalty to Trumbull. During Sampson's second Senate bid, Judd became a strong supporter.

Two years later, after two failed Senate races, Sampson finally won his first election at the national level. According to one commentator, Judd never forgot Sampson's "generous behavior" and did "more than anyone else" to secure Sampson's nomination.

In 1999, C-SPAN, the cable TV network that covers politics, polled more than a thousand knowledgeable viewers. They rated the effectiveness of Sampson and three dozen other politicians who vied for similar offices. Sampson came out at the very top of the poll, receiving the highest evaluations. Despite his losses, he was more popular than any other politician on the list. You see, Sampson's Ghost was a pen name that the hick used in letters.

His real name was Abraham Lincoln.

In the 1830s, Lincoln was striving to be the DeWitt Clinton of Illinois, referencing a U.S. senator and New York governor who spearheaded the construction of the Erie Canal. When Lincoln withdrew from his first Senate race to help Lyman Trumbull win the seat, they shared a commitment to abolishing slavery. From emancipating slaves, to sacrificing his own political opportunities for the cause, to refusing to defend clients who appeared to be guilty, Lincoln consistently acted for the greater good. When experts in history, political science, and psychology rated the presidents, they identified Lincoln as a clear giver. "Even if it was inconvenient, Lincoln went out of his way to help others," wrote two experts, demonstrating "obvious concern for the well-being of individual citizens." It is noteworthy that Lincoln is seen as one of the least self-centered, egotistical, boastful presidents ever. In independent ratings of presidential biographies, Lincoln scored in the top three—along with Washington and Fillmore—in giving credit to others and acting in the best interests of others. In the words of a military general who worked with Lincoln, "he seemed to possess more of the elements of greatness, combined with goodness, than any other."

In the Oval Office, Lincoln was determined to put the good of the nation above his own ego. When he won the presidency in 1860, he invited the three candidates whom he defeated for the Republican nomination to become his secretary of state, secretary of the treasury, and attorney general. In *Team of Rivals,* the historian Doris Kearns Goodwin documents how unusual Lincoln's cabinet was. "Every member of the administration was better known, better educated, and more experienced in public life than Lincoln. Their presence in the cabinet might have threatened to eclipse the obscure prairie lawyer."

In Lincoln's position, a taker might have preferred to protect his ego and power by inviting "yes men" to join him. A matcher might have offered appointments to allies who had supported him. Yet Lincoln invited his bitter competitors instead. "We needed the strongest men of the party in the Cabinet," Lincoln told an incredulous reporter. "I had no right to deprive the country of their services." Some of these rivals despised Lincoln, and others viewed him as incompetent, but he managed to win them all over. According to Kearns Goodwin, Lincoln's "success in dealing with the strong egos of the men in his cabinet suggests that in the hands of a truly great politician the qualities we generally associate with decency and morality—kindness, sensitivity, compassion, honesty, and empathy—can also be impressive political resources."

If politics can be fertile ground for givers, it's possible that givers can succeed in any job. Whether giving is effective, though, depends on the particular kind of exchange in which it's employed. This is one important feature of giving to keep in mind as we move through the ideas in this book: on any particular morning, giving may well be incompatible with success. In purely zero-sum situations and win-lose interactions, giving rarely pays off. This is a lesson that Abraham Lincoln learned each time he chose to give to others at his own expense. "If I have one vice," Lincoln said, "and I can call it nothing else—it is not to be able to say no!"

But most of life isn't zero-sum, and on balance, people who choose giving as their primary reciprocity style end up reaping rewards. For Lincoln, like David Hornik, seemingly self-sacrificing decisions ultimately worked to his advantage. When we initially concluded that Lincoln and Hornik lost, we hadn't stretched the time horizons out far enough. It takes time for givers to build goodwill and trust, but eventually, they establish reputations and relationships that enhance their success. In fact, you'll see that in sales and medical school, the giver advantage grows over time. In the long run, giving can be every bit as powerful as it is dangerous. As Chip Conley, the renowned entrepreneur who founded Joie de Vivre Hotels, explains, "Being a giver is not good for a 100-yard dash, but it's valuable in a marathon."

In Lincoln's era, the marathon took a long time to run. Without telephones, the Internet, and high-speed transportation, building relationships and reputations was a slow process. "In the old world, you could send a letter, and no one knew," Conley says. Conley believes that in today's connected world, where relationships and reputations are more visible, givers can accelerate their pace. "You no longer have to choose," says Bobbi Silten, the former president of Dockers, who now runs global social and environmental responsibility for Gap Inc. "You can be a giver *and* be successful."

The fact that the long run is getting shorter isn't the only force that makes giving more professionally productive today. We live in an era when massive changes in the structure of work—and the technology that shapes it—have further amplified the advantages of being a giver. Today, more than half of American and European companies regularly use teams to get work done. We rely on teams to build cars and houses, perform surgeries, fly planes, fight wars, play symphonies, produce news reports, audit companies, and provide consulting services. Teams depend on givers to share information, volunteer for unpopular tasks, and provide help.

When Lincoln invited his rivals to join his cabinet, they had the chance to see firsthand how much he was willing to contribute for the sake of other people and his country. Several years before Lincoln became president, one of his rivals, Edwin Stanton, had rejected him as a cocounsel in a trial, calling him a "gawky, long-armed ape." Yet after working with Lincoln, Stanton described him as "the most perfect ruler of men the world has ever seen." As we organize more people into teams, givers have more opportunities to demonstrate their value, as Lincoln did.

Even if you don't work in a team, odds are that you hold a service job. Most of our grandparents worked in independent jobs producing goods. They didn't always need to collaborate with other people, so it was fairly inefficient to be a giver. But now, a high percentage of people work in interconnected jobs providing services to others. In the 1980s, the service sector made up about half of the world's gross domestic product (GDP). By 1995, the service sector was responsible for nearly two thirds of world GDP. Today, more than 80 percent of Americans work in service jobs.