

Book Review:

The Healthy CEO

Reviewed by: Emerald Chien, Vistage Communications Intern

Dr. Larry Ohlhauser's occasion for writing *The Healthy CEO* is to show people how to slow down and recognize the importance of physical, relational, and financial wellness in their lives. Together with a team of experts, he has compiled a highly organized, easy-to-read book of valuable advice for maintaining a healthy and successful lifestyle.

Ohlhauser, a TEC Canada member and winner of TEC Canada's 2007 Speaker of the Year award, was recently named one of the "Top 100 Physicians of the Century" by the College of Physicians and Surgeons, and the Alberta Medical Association. His book began as an effort to reach out to executives and infuse their lives with energy, purpose, and passion.

The Healthy CEO differs from other nutrition/lifestyle books in that it touches on three areas of health that are pertinent to business owners.

1. Physical Wellness: How to take charge of your health, and quality of life
2. Relational Wellness: How to get along better with others and prevent stress, which has a highly negative effect on your job satisfaction and your home life
3. Financial Wellness: How to manage your income and avoid poor financial decisions

Physical Wellness

The chapter dedicated to physical health is filled with practical advice that many of us have learned along the way. But here are some interesting facts:

- You should eat up to 35 grams of whole grain foods daily because they can contain fiber that allows digested food to pass through the colon more easily. Fiber also helps to normalize metabolism and digestion while steadying your blood sugar levels.
- When you exercise your heart rate increases and endorphins are released that stimulate your brain, making you more creative, boosting your energy level, and even helping you to focus more when you're back on the job.
- Sleep is absolutely essential to your health. Your body utilizes the time you are asleep to restore certain processes such as protein synthesis. Also while you're sleeping you release vital hormones that let your brain, organs, heart and blood pressure rest.

Relationships

The chapter dedicated to improving your relationships, offers this advice:

- Be more self-aware. Being able to objectively identify your strengths, weaknesses, and worth helps you to control emotional reactions.
- Voice your expectations to your partner. It may prevent many assumptions that contribute to conflict.

Financial Health

The health of your personal finances can affect your physical well-being. Dr. Ohlhauser offers these valuable types:

- Measure your current financial status based on your net worth, not your stock portfolio or savings. Your net worth is the sum of your bank and retirement accounts, real estate, and the net worth of your business minus your debts.
- Keep track of what you purchase to see how you are spending your money. This will discourage you from buying things you don't need.
- Use the "70-30" savings rule. Try to live off 70% of your after-tax income and leave the other 30% percent to saving investing.

The advice that Dr. Ohlhauser offers can be applied to anyone's life. His bottom line is familiar to Vistage members-be accountable for how you treat yourself, others and your finances. The book is rewarding for those who want it all, and want to live a long healthy life to enjoy what they have worked so hard to gain.

The book also employs use of fictional characters, Frank and Katie Johnson. Frank is a CEO who's trying to make life, love, and living, all work together simultaneously. When he has a sudden heart attack, Frank takes time to reevaluate his lifestyle choices. Using this dramatic event as a wake up call, Dr. Ohlhauser outlines the steps that we should take to reevaluate our lives and choices.

The book also includes a CD-ROM self-assessment tool-The Physical Wellness Workbook. This tool let's you answer simple questions about your exercise routine, eating, and other habits. Your answers to these questions score you for different aspects of your health, which can be revisited to measure your improvement.