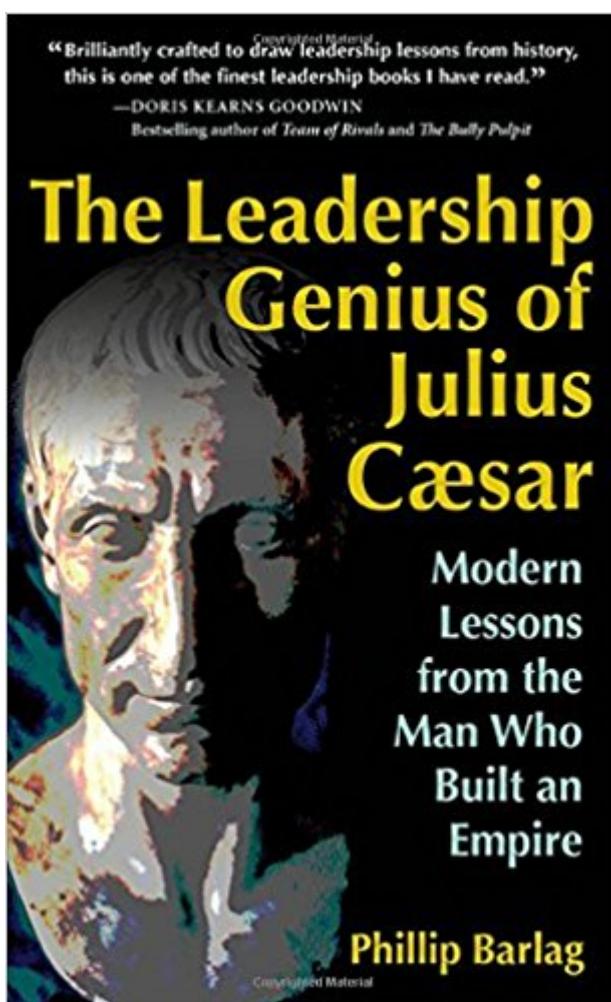


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# The Leadership Genius Of Julius Caesar: Modern Lessons From The Man Who Built An Empire



## Synopsis

The Leadership Genius of Julius Caesar Modern Lessons from the Man Who Built an Empire

“Brilliantly crafted to draw leadership lessons from history, this is one of the finest leadership books I have read.” •Doris Kearns Goodwin, bestselling author of *A Team of Rivals* and *The Bully Pulpit*

Leaders are always trying to get better, which is why there is an enormous and growing collection of literature offering the latest leadership paradigm or process. But sometimes the best way to move forward is to look back. Philip Barlag shows us that Julius Caesar is one of the most compelling leaders of the past to study •a man whose approach was surprisingly modern and extraordinarily effective. History is littered with leaders hopelessly out of touch with their people and ruthlessly pursuing their own ambitions or hedonistic whims. But Caesar, who rose from impoverished beginnings, proved by his words and deeds that he never saw himself as being above the average Roman citizen. And he had an amazing ability to generate loyalty, to turn enemies into allies and allies into devoted followers. Barlag uses dramatic and colorful incidents from Caesar’s career •being held hostage by pirates, charging headlong alone into enemy lines, pardoning people he knew wanted him dead •to illustrate what Caesar can teach leaders today. Central to Barlag’s argument is the distinction between force and power. Caesar avoided using brute force on his followers, understanding that fear never generates genuine loyalty. He exercised a power deeply rooted in his demonstrated personal integrity and his intuitive understanding of people’s deepest needs and motivations. His supporters followed him because they wanted to, not because they were compelled to. Over 2,000 years after Caesar’s death, this is still the kind of loyalty every leader wants to inspire. Barlag shows how anyone can learn to lead like Caesar.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

“When we look to great leaders as role models, we often don’t look far enough back in the past. Julius Caesar was one of the most influential leaders in history, and Barlag shares timeless lessons that today’s leaders can use to build trust and drive change.”

• Adam Grant, Professor of Management, The Wharton School, and New York Times bestselling author of *Originals* and *Give and Take*“Phillip Barlag captures in a creative way key leadership skills that transcend the passage of time. Caesar’s success was not accidental—it was grounded in some firm principles.”

• Paul Polman, CEO, Unilever“*The Leadership Genius of Julius Caesar* is an innovative and engaging read for all leaders. While drawing on events and people from the ancient world, the lessons and storytelling are relevant and timely now. Whether political, military, or business, any leader responsible for moving an organization forward—in times of prosperity or crisis—can benefit from its insight.”

• Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, 11th Secretary General, NATO“Even as times change and technology progresses, the continual quest for enhancing our abilities remains the same. In *The Leadership Genius of Julius Caesar*, Phillip Barlag highlights the lessons and insights from Caesar’s life and career to illuminate the qualities needed to guide any team toward greater loyalty, camaraderie, and success.”

• Keith Ferrazzi, author of the #1 New York Times bestsellers *Who’s Got Your Back* and *Never Eat Alone*  
Biz Books  
12/04/16 BY Jim Pawlak“*The Leadership Genius of Julius Caesar* œ Modern Lessons from the Man Who Built an Empire” by Phillip Barlag (Berret-Koehler Publishers, \$24.95). Most books written about Caesar were written by historians and focused on his accomplishments. Barlag delves into the œhow of the accomplishments by identifying his leadership skills œ many of which are topics of today’s business books. The major leadership lesson: Caesar used power, not force, to lead. He understood that power comes from the ability to motivate others by focusing on a common goal. In wartime, he lived that goal by marching beside his troops, eating in their mess hall and listening to their feedback, and talk of what they planned to do when the campaign ended. He called his troops œcomrades to remind them that he was one of them. They chose to follow him because they respected him and trusted him to keep his word. At the Battle of Munda, his army was

tired and wanted to rest before engaging the enemy again. Caesar drew his sword and raced up the hill alone — but not for long. His troops saw he was leading from the front, and raced after him. Putting his life on the line showed his commitment to victory. Leading from the front becomes critically important when tough decisions have to be made. In times of peace, Caesar worked across the aisle and reminded political opponents that they were citizens of Rome and owed a responsibility to all Romans. He spoke of mutual benefit. This increased their interest in working with him. We all know how it ended. His opponents became jealous as Caesar's popularity and power grew. They feared that, as emperor, he would resort to force to rule. They clearly didn't understand the man's motivation.

Phillip Barlag is an executive director at World 50, which initiates and facilitates the most interesting and influential business conversations in the world. He has the enormous privilege of serving remarkable leaders from some of the most well-respected companies around the globe. His work explores the authentic nature of success and struggle in leadership. His writing has been published in Fast Company, MIT Sloan Management Review, and a number of influential business blogs. He lives in the Atlanta, Georgia, area with his wife and three children.

You've heard the saying, "History doesn't repeat . . . but it rhymes." In this engaging and insightful book on leadership, Phillip Barlag takes a person who, in our ancient history courses we encountered as opaque and imperial and unpacks Julius Caesar as a person who like us is deeply human, challenged at every turn and yet inspires us through his ability to succeed in the face of overwhelming odds. Again and again. Want to discover Julius Caesar the populist? Surprise, he's here. Want a Braveheart experience? It's here. Want to hear how a speech of a single word can quell an insurrection? Caesar did it. Feeling overwhelmed by inter office politics? Try taking on the Roman Senate where losing meant death. Feel like you're starting with no resources available? I never realized that's where Caesar started. And oh yes, I think being captured by pirates is a little more of a challenge to your early career than those pink slips going around. Through eight leadership lessons Phillip weaves a single common thread that leaders of all kinds throughout the ages miss at their peril - lead with power, not force. It's a subtle art that great leaders facing overwhelming odds like Churchill and Lincoln have embodied and used to achieve victory. But it is a leadership art that is also so easy to lose touch with when we begin to rise through the ranks. Thanks to Phillip for bringing that back to us through a

unexpected hero. And yes, Barlag doesn't call it out as such, but that "Twitter of his day" example (spoiler alert - the Commentaries) is worth the price of the book.

This little book approaches Caesar's life from an unusual standpoint. Rather than following Caesar's career from a historical viewpoint, it plucks Caesar out of his time and examines his life as a leader and how his exercise of leadership applies across time. I found it quite interesting and even refreshing. However, I must point out that Barlag gets some of his historical facts wrong. These inaccuracies do not detract from Barlag's analysis of Caesar and his understanding and use of power. For example: Barlag states that at the battle of Alesia, the Gallic relief army attacked Caesar's outer ring of defenses (the contravallation) and that Caesar split his army in two, one half facing the relief force, and the other half attacking Alesia and hunting down Vercingetorix. Actually, Caesar's army stayed within the two rings of defense and fought off the relief force and Vercingetorix's attack on the inner ring (the circumvallation). Both attacks failed, and Vercingetorix surrendered to Caesar when it became obvious that he could not win. As I stated above though, these historical lapses do not negate any of Barlag's conclusions. Modern leaders, or those wanting to be leaders, will find this book very informative.

I loved this book. As a CEO, social entrepreneur and as a human being, "The Leadership Genius of Julius Caesar" taught me several profound lessons that I will use for a lifetime. Having read other great books on leadership, including from Harvard Business Review, I can genuinely say this book offers unique perspectives that are applicable in all aspects of life. Phillip Barlag does a fantastic job in making stories come alive and humanizes one of history's greatest characters in a way that is relatable to us modern humans. Engaging, inspiring and thought-provoking, this book is highly recommended. Thanks Mr. Barlag for helping us become better leaders!

Outstanding book. Well written, concise and packed full of easy-to-understand, actionable leadership insights. Mr. Barlag presents a quick and easy must-read for leaders at any point in their journey.

In an increasingly complex and idea driven world, exceptional leadership is a requirement to remain competitive. Barlag's Caesar reminds the reader that leadership has always been crucial, and that

we can learn from history as well as from current schools of thought. Well worth a read to get another framework or approach to thinking about leadership.

This book is a must-read for anyone trying to be better in life - personally or professionally. Being "better" is not found in some gimmicky formula or ridiculous slogan. Instead, the mere act of reading this, cover-to-cover, will give you a baseline on how to improve in life. Mr. Barlag is correct that Julius Caesar's leadership style is extremely relevant today. In an era where leadership has become a mere slogan, and executives fail to understand and comprehend what it actually means, Mr. Barlag has revived and made relevant again an essential style that once ruled the world. Buy this book and you will be given a wonderful role model in Julius Caesar and a coach in Mr. Barlag. Both will help you unlock genius in today's world.

Barlag does a great job relating Julius Caesar's leadership tactics and strategies to today's world. The principles discussed in the book can be applied by the most senior and junior professionals in the organization. This book, along with Drucker's *Effective Executive*, will now be my go-to recommendation for friends and colleagues.

Becoming a leader professionally, and personally, is generally something that takes consistent work over years with mentors, & personal study. This fantastic read should be a part of that process. It moves you through, not only excellent narrative, but salient (poignant) summations to help bring each leadership lesson home. It's incredible the lessons history can teach us, if only we're able to find ways of distilling the noise to find the gems. Barlag has artfully accomplished this goal with this easy-to-digest, bellwether leadership publication. Pick. It. Up. Now.

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