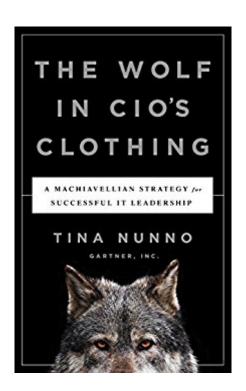# The Wolf In CIO's Clothing: A Machiavellian Strategy For Successful IT Leadership

Synopsis

Machiavellians are few in number in IT. The massive pressure on CIOs continues to increase as the opportunities to use technology in business become more prevalent and more competitive. As CIOs often find themselves at the center of business conflict, they must not only familiarize themselves with Machiavellian tactics as a defensive weapon, but also learn to use them as an offensive weapon in extreme situations so that they can increase ITâ ™s contribution to their enterprises.As Italian political philosopher Niccolo Machiavelli implied, you're either predator or prey, and the animal you most resemble determines your position on the food chain. In The Wolf in CIO's Clothing Gartner analyst and author Tina Nunno expands on Machiavelli's metaphor, examining seven animal types and the leadership attributes of each. Nunno posits the wolf â " a social animal with strong predatory instinctsâ "as the ideal example of how a leader can adapt and thrive.Technology may be black and white, but successful leadership demands an ability to exist in the grey. Drawing on her experience with hundreds of CIOs, Nunno charts a viable way to master the Machiavellian principles of power, manipulation, love, and war. Through compelling case studies, her approach demonstrates how CIOs and IT leaders can adjust their leadership styles in extreme situations for their own success and that of their teams.

Book Information

File Size: 1865 KB

Print Length: 233 pages

Publisher: Bibliomotion, Inc. (February 13, 2015)

Publication Date: February 13, 2015

Sold by:Â Digital Services LLC

Language: English

ASIN: B00TA6CI8M

Text-to-Speech: Enabled

X-Ray: Not Enabled

Word Wise: Enabled

Lending: Not Enabled

Enhanced Typesetting: Enabled

Best Sellers Rank: #178,253 Paid in Kindle Store (See Top 100 Paid in Kindle Store)   #66 inÂ Books > Business & Money > Human Resources > Conflict Resolution & Mediation   #77 inÂ Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > Business & Money > Industries > Information Management

Customer Reviews

The Wolf in CIO Clothing provides a distinctly different view of the CIO,one that will shed new light on the challenges facing the CIO. Tina Nunno's book delivers a realpolitik view of the CIO their personalities and practices. It is well worth the read and recommended for CIOs or any executive who needs to regroup themselves and reassess the portfolio of behaviors required for sustained success.Nunno organizes the book around two competing concepts the observations of Niccolo Machiavelli in his three books on Power Manipulation and Warfare. These provide the basis for the book. Nunno then organizes these ideas into an actionable framework based on a zodiac of behaviors and traits that structure the book's three sections and 19 chapters. Nunno assigns each an animal according to Machiavelli's three major themes:Part 1 - Power exemplified by the Lion and the LambPart 2 - Manipulation described using the Snake and the DovePart 3 - Warfare illustrated by the Shark and the DolphinIt is a clever idea and one that will make it easy for CIOs to recognize and apply. According to Nunno, the effective CIO is the one that strikes the right blend of all six behaviors in the right situation, which personifies the Grey Wolf and therefore the title of the book.Nunno uses this construct to great effect in demonstrating how the different behaviors apply in various CIO situations. Each of the crisply written chapters features short anonymous examples of CIOs and their practice of there's behaviors. The chapter ends with a summary set of actions and reminders - a 'wolf pack'.Nunno's unconventional view of the CIO as political animal provides clear compelling and engaging analysis and advice that you will not find anywhere else.

CIOs have traditionally tended to be rational technocrats--to believe in the ultimate power of logic and of logically constructed arguments, and to see others in the same terms, as rational creatures behaving ethically. Such CIOs will find plenty in Tina Nunno's "The Wolf in CIO's Clothing" to enhance their personal and professional lives. I certainly did. (Full disclosure: I am a colleague of Ms. Nunno's at Gartner, Incorporated, and have worked with her on a number of research projects. That said, the opinions in this piece are my own.)Following the path of Machiavelli, Nunno notes that CIOs must master the disciplines of power, manipulation, and warfare in order to succeed in the complex environment of a modern enterprise. If this seems a bit over-the-top in the context of a business, the examples Nunno cites make it clear that it is anything but. CIOs make big decisions with big consequences for their enterprises and their IT teams; those decisions are often controversial; and it takes more than logic to make them stick. Nunno explores both "light-side" and

"dark-side" approaches to a wide range of conflict situations, always from the perspective of what works to achieve the desired outcome, and why. She uses animal symbols (the dolphin, lamb, and dove on the "light" side, the lion, shark, and snake on the "dark") effectively to make the extremes of behaviors associated with power, manipulation, and warfare more vivid and compelling. Over and over again, she makes the point that half-hearted measures--attempts to strike a middle ground between the light and the dark--are ineffective and even dangerous. CIOs must master both the light and dark sides to succeed, and must employ them deliberately and without artificial restraint when needed.

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