

The Enemies of Excellence 7 Reasons Why We Sabotage Success By Greg Saliccioli

All too often we see famous individuals who seem to have it all that do incredibly stupid things and throw it all away. Why is that?

Greg Saliccioli takes on EXACTLY this issue in *The Enemies of Excellence*. He highlights seven specific “enemies” that are encountered again and again by individuals. As Saliccioli puts it:

- These Enemies of Excellence can affect anyone – from the corner office to the conference room, and from the classroom to the living room

At just under 100 pages, his book is clear, concise and easy to read. I cannot recommend this book strongly enough. Even if things seem to be going “perfectly” in your life, it’s always possible that you’re on the way to a fall. Taking a couple of hours to read about how many have fallen in the past may just save you from experiencing a similar fate.

The seven enemies he highlights – in increasing order of risk/severity -- are as follows:

- **Enemy One: Egotism – “I know best”**. The first enemy is closely associated with pride. Leaders that fall victim to egotism generally believe that they have all of the answers. Saliccioli includes a simple list of questions that the reader can review to determine if he is prone to egotism. The results will likely surprise many!
- **Enemy Two: Life Mismanagement – “I’ll get to it later”**. The second enemy deals with the issue of lack of balance. The author suggests that an effective leader balances the spiritual, emotional, relational and physical dimensions of their life. Unfortunately too many leaders allow these dimensions to get out of alignment
- **Enemy Three: Bad Habits – “What harm could it do”**. You ingrain the second enemy (life mismanagement) when you adopt bad habits. This enemy is probably the easiest for most to deal with. However, it is critical to realize that our bad habits need to be looked at in the broader context / recognize that they often have a significant impact on the aforementioned spiritual, emotional, relational and physical dimensions of their life.
- **Enemy Four: Indulgence – “I deserve it”**. The fourth habit addresses the issue of entitlement. Often leaders work “so hard” that they find it easy to rationalize why they “deserve” certain things. Most of the time when we believe we “deserve” something we are wrong. Further, in the case of indulgences, many times the thing that is “deserved” is often NOT something that we should be partaking in. The common indulgences that Saliccioli highlights include food, alcohol, recreation, sex and spending.

- **Enemy Five: Broken Relationships – “Why don’t they just understand me?”** The fifth enemy takes hold when we lose sight of what is most important in life – friends and family. Too often the leader becomes totally focused on the job at hand and does not pay attention to how it is affecting his/her relationships. The result of this misguided focus is all too often damaged or broken relationships.
- **Enemy Six: Isolation – “I can do it on my own”.** Back in the first enemy we faced the “I’m always right” challenge. The sixth enemy arises when leaders start to REALLY believe this; and, accordingly, start to draw away from the input of all others. Leaders need peers, coaches, and confidants that will tell them when they are screwing up! If they don’t have these people in their life, they are likely to make huge mistakes.
- **Enemy Seven: Self-sabotage – “It’s not my fault”.** The final enemy enters the picture when the leader falls victim to self-deception. In spite of KNOWING what they are doing is wrong, they continue on. Eventually the private mis-behaving becomes public knowledge and the leader falls from their lofty perch. This is when we see the headlines and/or see the ugly situations arise in the workplace.

Salciccioli walks the reader through the above enemies vis-à-vis the story of a failed leader; and, in so doing leverages the technique of storytelling to bring the enemies to life/make them real. Hopefully the readers of the book will recognize that the story he is telling is one that they should avoid by addressing the seven enemies prior to emergence.