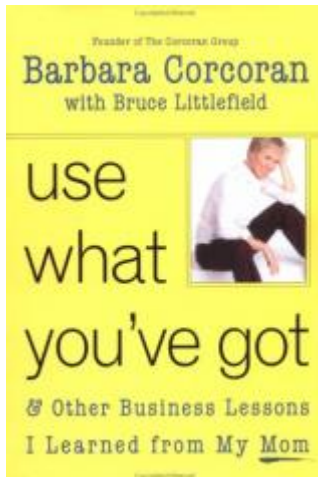


Use What You've Got, and Other Business Lessons I Learned From My Mom

by Barbara Corcoran



About the Book

In this memoir Barbara Corcoran, founder of The Corcoran Group, New York's premier real estate company, blends humor and sage advice to bring readers a story of how her mother's unconventional life lessons influenced her life and career. The story starts in a crowded ground-floor apartment in a three-family house in New Jersey that is shared by Barbara, her nine brothers and sisters and her parents. It ends with a sale of her real estate company for \$70 million --- which she credits to hard work, fierce determination and her mom's offbeat, kitchen-table advice.

With chapters titled "When the clubhouse is quiet, they're probably not making spaghetti," "If you want to be a cheerleader, you better know the cheers," and "When there are ten buyers and three puppies, every dog is the pick of the litter," readers will find themselves laughing with Barbara, and then pondering and discussing the influences of those in their own lives who nurtured them and gave them a strong sense of self. Her story is empowering as it takes readers from Barbara's days as a waitress trying to make an impression on her customers (mom's advice: If you don't have big breasts, tie ribbons on your pigtails), to her first real estate company where her partner was a cheating boyfriend to her meteoric success in the male-dominated real estate market.

Discussion Guide

1. Which of the "lessons" in the book was your favorite? Which could you most relate to? Relate one of her mom's stories to something you know from business, or life.
2. Do you have a favorite "lesson" that your mom (or dad) shared with you when you were growing up? Share it with the group. Have you thought more about this topic after reading this book?
3. Who are leaders in business and industry that you think have done a good job of nurturing their businesses and their employees?
4. Do you think it is possible to parent a winner, or do you think that a person's success must come from within?
5. Who have been some of the people who influenced your life? What did they do to motivate you?

6. Barbara's stories are so humorous. What role do you think wit and humor can play in motivating people? Share some stories of how you saw this work in your own lives.
7. Talk about some incident in your life that looked bleak at the time, but ended up being something that sent you in a new direction for success.
8. Do you think that coming from humble roots makes Barbara's success even sweeter? What is the appeal in the age-old rags to riches story? Do you think that people who start with measurable wealth enjoy success the same way?
9. Do you think that a man could have written a book like this and still expect to be taken as seriously as Barbara is?
10. If you met Barbara Corcoran, what would you want to ask her about this book?

If you liked this book, you may like:

Tuesdays with Morrie by Mitch Albom

Who Moved My Cheese by Spencer Johnson, MD and Kenneth H. Blanchard

Ice Bound by Dr. Jerry Nielsen

The Hungry Ocean by Linda Greenlaw

The Lobster Chronicles by Linda Greenlaw

Author Bio

Barbara Corcoran is a self-made business baroness. Founder of the Corcoran Group, New York's premier real estate company, Corcoran is one of the most powerful brokers in the nation.

Critical Praise

"The business she's in is almost beside the point: Corcoran could almost be selling plumbing supplies, and the story would still fly."

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Publication Date: February 10, 2003
Genres: Business, Memoir, Nonfiction
Hardcover: 261 pages
Publisher: Portfolio Hardcover
ISBN-10: 1591840023
ISBN-13: 9781591840022