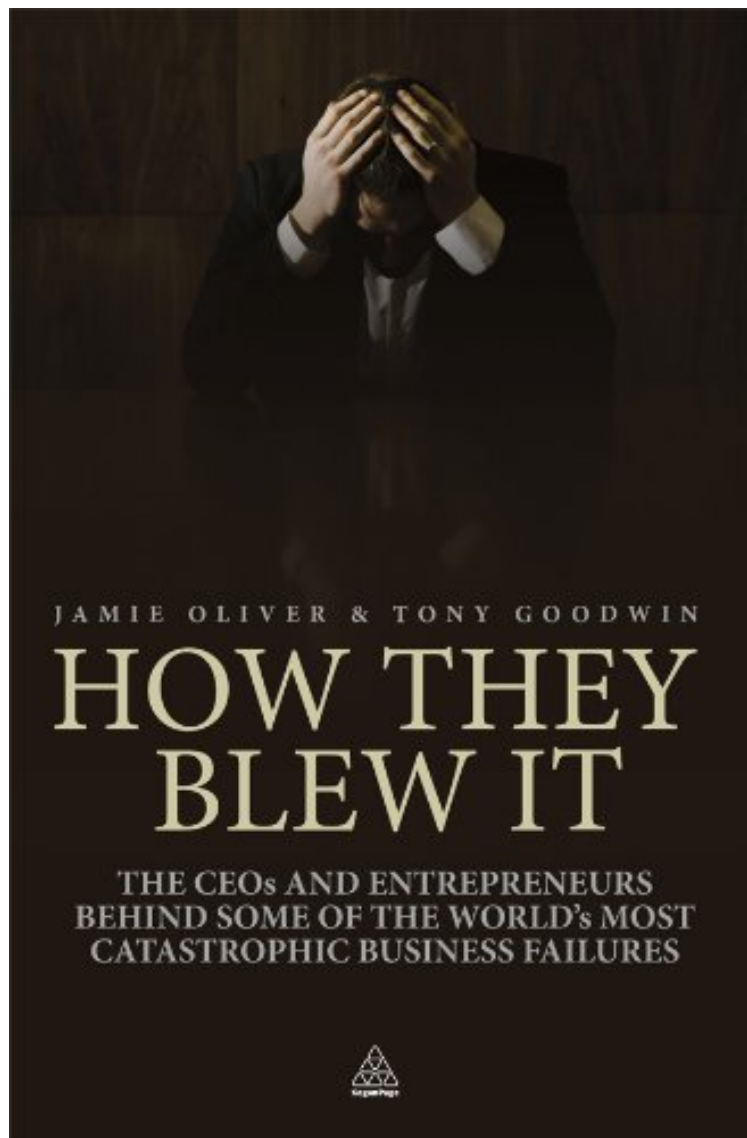


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## How They Blew It: The CEOs and Entrepreneurs Behind Some of the World's Most Catastrophic Business Failures

*Jamie Oliver, Tony Goodwin*

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**Jamie Oliver, Tony Goodwin : How They Blew It: The CEOs and Entrepreneurs Behind Some of the World's Most Catastrophic Business Failures** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised How They Blew It: The CEOs and Entrepreneurs Behind Some of the World's Most Catastrophic Business Failures:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. The lite version of some business blunder histories By Phil O.I read

this in one sitting. Of the tales I was at least passingly familiar with, I saw nothing new. But several I had not read about. There is something to be said for a skimming look at history like this. Call it business beach reading, for unscholarly people. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. It's conclusion is really worth reading. By Peter Barrett This book is good as it not only explores the mistakes entrepreneurs make but also how the environment they operated in contributed to them. I refer here for example the freeing up of lending to entrepreneurs by Iceland's banks. However after reading a few chapters you start seeing a common theme. That's where the conclusion comes in. Not only does it state the bleeding obvious but makes some great inferences about their behaviour and what traps entrepreneurs should avoid that I didn't pick up. 10 of 10 people found the following review helpful. Where's the Beef? By Adam Smyth I pre-ordered this book about a month ago, not expecting to see it until late summer, so I was surprised when it arrived this week. I was also surprised that it's a paperback, but that's certainly no big deal. This book is very easy to read, in part due to its brevity, and the authors certainly write clearly enough. All things considered, however, I was left unsatisfied with this book. Indeed, this is the 36th review I've written for , and the lowest number of stars I've awarded before this is four. (Okay, I'm an easy grader.) Here are my specific thoughts: First, let's get to the book's theme. It is a collection of brief (about 10-page) descriptions of 16 entrepreneurs or corporate leaders who achieved great success--and then suffered great failure. Of the 16 subjects, some are well-known and some are not. (That's not a criticism.) The better known subjects include Bernie Ebbers, of WorldCom fame; Mikhail Khodorkovsky, the former head of Russian oil giant Yukos; Dick Fuld, of Lehman Brothers; Ken Lay, former CEO of Enron; and James Cayne, of Bear Stearns. Fraudsters like Bernie Madoff were not included, because the authors' focus is on people who more legitimately climbed great heights. The idea of studying other people's failures in order not to repeat them ourselves makes perfect sense, but (given my three stars, you knew they'd be a "but") the short chapters on each individual are simply too short. These chapters are more a just-the-facts-ma'am recital of the events surrounding the rise and fall of these entrepreneurs, not so much deeper what-drove-them-to-do-it analyses. After each chapter the authors list their sources, and many of these are newspaper articles. And to me, at least, that what this book's chapters read like--newspaper summaries of how the mighty have fallen. That is, they are heavier on "who, what, where" and lighter on discussions of what might be the more interesting details and motivations surrounding these complex individuals. The book is not empty of insights. For example, it's interesting how these entrepreneurs change from projecting a cool shrewdness on their way up the ladder of success, to more emotional and illogical behavior on the way down. Also, there is an understandable tendency for these people to believe so deeply in their own success that they sometimes bet the farm on their ability to achieve still more success. That's what Bernie Ebbers did--literally. These are important insights, but my guess is that readers of this book will yearn for considerably more. In short, this isn't a bad book. If it were, I would have given it one or two stars. But it's not a great book, either, because it's just too superficial. That's my story, anyway, and I'm sticking to it. Your mileage may vary. Best wishes.

How They Blew It is a series of eye-popping tales of entrepreneurs and business leaders who went from corporate gurus to financial disaster zones in rapid and humiliating fashion. Full of surprising details and mind-blowing sums of money, it looks at the characteristics of these leaders and the fine line between hero and zero. How They Blew It is about the people at the heart of these business catastrophes. It is about what drives them to succeed and then to fail. It is a compelling examination of the rights and wrongs of each case and it seeks to get into the minds of the people behind the business disasters and ask "Why the hell did they do that?" By examining how business ventures can go so badly wrong, you can learn to avoid those mistakes in the first place.

"[A] fresh take on self-help." - Management Today