It took me barely two hours to read this book. Although it lacks depth, it is not a book for light reading. Technically accurate but uncommon terms are used freely without any explanation or definition.

Integrated Spreadsheet Software cannot be used as a supplement to support a course in a business school curriculum. It is probably inadequate to support a training course in Lotus 1-2-3 or Context MBA. It cannot serve as a self-learning guide for any of these integrated packages. What it can do is serve the user of VisiCalc who would like to gain a quick overview of the features available in Lotus 1-2-3 and Context MBA.

Donald Chand
Department of Computer Information Systems
Bentley College
Waltham, Massachusetts

Winning the Information System Game:
A Manager’s Survival Guide


Every manager's bookshelf should sport a copy of Winning the Information Systems Game. Not only should it be on the shelf, but it should be ragged with wear because Nelson T. Dinerstein has written a very practical guide to personal advancement. Unlike the hundreds of other books on the market that provide foggy hints for getting ahead in the world of business, the author offers solid information about both management success and using microcomputers to aid in the process.

The book is far from a technical reference manual for information systems design. In fact, it provides simple and easy-to-understand descriptions of personal information systems that can be of real use to the manager who wants to do his job—and to do it well. It is designed for the lower or middle level manager who is not well-versed in the use of microcomputers and personal information systems.

However, software development professionals will also benefit from its content. This is particularly true for software professionals who are in management roles or those who are working in applications areas where direct customer/client service is required.

In the early portions of the book, Dinerstein provides very practical suggestions for any manager who wants to grow within the organization. His comments and ideas are clearly based on a wealth of experience. They are realistic, thought-provoking, and very real keys to management and leadership success.

The software professional will likely decide to skip the middle portion of Winning the Information Systems Game because it will appear too basic and lacking in technical detail. However, those sections of the book provide the kind of basic user information that most managers, unfamiliar with information systems, seek.

For the business applications software professional or for the specialist in database design, this information is very relevant. It provides a clear description of the kind of concerns that inexperienced and uninitiated management-level users face. In short, the professional will learn some important techniques for doing his job better.

The final two chapters of the book do an excellent job of describing realistic procedures for subordinate interaction with higher level managers. They summarize many of the important elements that are essential to personal and professional growth, regardless of technical specialization.

Winning the Information Systems Game is not a general text for college instruction. It is not a reference book on systems design and development. It is, however, a very practical guide for anyone who wants to grow within an organization through traditional management channels. It provides sound leadership and management advice. It provides an excellent overview of micro-based personal information systems. It will represent a wise investment for the new manager who seeks to grow.

There is one more item worthy of mention. The book is very easy to read. Perhaps of greatest importance in this regard, it is formatted so the busy professional can move through chapters rapidly by reading only the highlighted key statements. This also allows a quick and easy review of any portion of the material presented by the author.

Dennis C. Nystrom
College of Applied Science and Technology
Rochester Institute of Technology
Rochester, New York

January 1986