As a service to our readers, Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery® reviews books, DVDs, practice management software, and electronic media items of educational interest to reconstructive and aesthetic surgeons. All items are copyrighted and available commercially. The Journal actively solicits information in digital format for review.

Reviewers are selected on the basis of relevant interest. Reviews are solely the opinion of the reviewer; they are usually published as submitted, with only copy editing. Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery® does not endorse or recommend any review so published. For instructions on where to send books, DVDs, and any other material for consideration, contact the Editorial Office at PRS@plasticsurgery.org or visit PRSJournals.com and click on “Journal Info” and then “Contact Info” for our mailing address.

Arun K. Gosain, M.D.
Review Editor

The Business of Plastic Surgery: Navigating a Successful Career, 2nd Edition


Don’t just be the best in the world at what you do; be the only one in the world who does what you do.

—Jerry Garcia, guitarist and singer/songwriter for the Grateful Dead

With their second edition of The Business of Plastic Surgery: Navigating a Successful Career, editors Joshua Korman and Heather Furnas have managed to accomplish both of Jerry Garcia’s principles: they have produced the best book on the business of plastic surgery, and no one else has come close to matching such an accomplishment.

I purchased the first edition, in 2010, and found that book to be very helpful and insightful. However, the new 2020 edition exceeds all expectations. What the editors have created is a granular, deep dive into the business elements of plastic surgery. Drs. Korman and Furnas, who are both on the clinical faculty at Stanford, have decades of experience with creating, growing, and managing their private practices, but their lessons learned apply to all plastic surgeons, regardless of practice type, environment, or stage of career.

The book’s greatest strength is assembling a diverse group of authors who have shared the most intimate details of their practices and their careers. A total of 45 authors, including 28 surgeons, three lawyers, and six M.B.A.s, have contributed 25 chapters that cover the complete arc of a surgeon’s career, from deciding to become a plastic surgeon to ultimate retirement. The book is quite engaging, because the contributors have provided very personal insights regarding the challenges, opportunities, and rewards of their practices. I found myself soaking up pearls of information, not only from the body of the chapters, but also their appendices, which include actual business plans, financial forecasts, and contracts.

The structure of the book, which clocks in at 490 pages, is divided into five sections: “Career Direction,” “Marketing and Monitoring,” “Internet University,” “Enhancing Both Practice and Career,” and “Watching Your Back.” Chapters that I particularly found informative and effective include “Digital Marketing and Advertising,” “Building and Managing Your Own Surgical Suite,” “A Successful Medspa,” “Medical Inventions: From Idea to Funding,” “The Wheel of Misfortune: Managing Medical Liability in Plastic Surgery,” and “Building and Protecting Your Wealth: In Three Acts.” The final two chapters are particularly noteworthy and need to be highlighted. “Taking Control of Your Life” explores not just work-life balance but offers insights into organizational behavior, that include preventing and recognizing burnout, promoting resilience and wellness, and improving leadership and management skills. The final chapter, “The Changing Face of Plastic Surgery,” addresses the urgent need for increasing diversity, inclusion, and equity in our workforce. (Disclosure: I contributed a sidebar to this chapter.)

Copyright © 2020 by the American Society of Plastic Surgeons

Disclosure: The author has no financial interest to declare in relation to the content of this review.
The book really does not contain any weaknesses, but for those readers expecting a theoretical, analytic review of accounting, finance, marketing, economics, operations, and strategy—the traditional courses in a first-year M.B.A. curriculum—you will not find these topics discretely presented. Instead, these domains are incorporated into the actual stories of the experts. Such an approach makes this book far more readable than expected, and relevant. The editors have succeeded in creating an invaluable resource for plastic surgeons who may want to “launch or renew a rewarding career, navigate the rapids, and reach destinations … always dreamed of.” Jerry Garcia would agree.

DOI: 10.1097/PRS.0000000000007514

C. Scott Hultman, M.D., M.B.A.