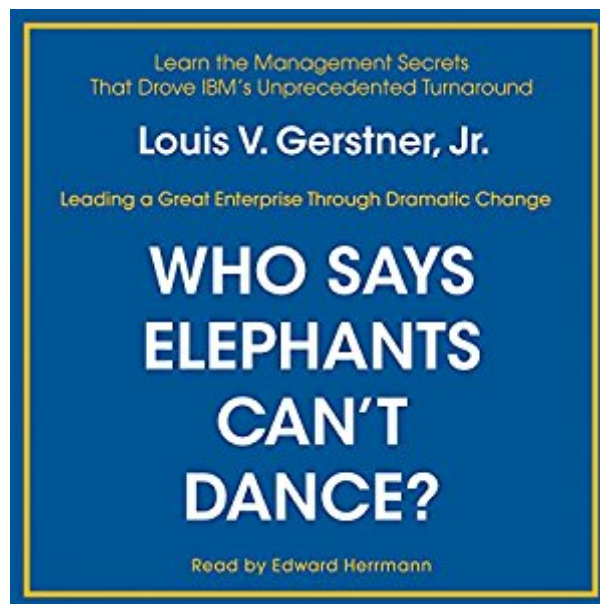




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# Who Says Elephants Can't Dance?: Inside IBM's Historic Turnaround



## Synopsis

In 1990, IBM had its most profitable year ever. By 1993, the company was on a watch list for extinction -- victimized by its own lumbering size, an insular corporate culture, and the PC era IBM had itself helped invent. Enter Lou Gerstner. The presumption was that Gerstner had joined IBM to preside over its continued dissolution into a confederation of autonomous business units -- effectively eliminating the corporation that had invented many of the industry's most important technologies. Instead, Gerstner took hold of the company, making the bold decision to keep it together, defiantly announcing, "The last thing IBM needs right now is a vision." Told in Lou Gerstner's own words, this is a story of an extraordinary turnaround, a case study in managing a crisis, and a thoughtful reflection on the computer industry and the principles of leadership. Summing up his historic business achievement, Gerstner recounts high-level meetings, explains the no-turning-back decisions that had to be made, and offers his hard-won conclusions about the essence of what makes a great company run. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This book illustrates in a direct and clear style, from inside, how the top global executives perform in the real life. It illustrates how to play the real game in global business, changing the game rules, and leading a reengineering process, which before this was an unclear concept. It shows how all the academic and theoretical tools learned in the top business schools are still valid and useful. I guess, this is one of the "must read" books for junior level executives who aspire to become global leaders,

not only in technology but also in services.

great product, great service

Gerstner's book about saving one of America's most important companies (IBM) from bankruptcy is interesting and a real page turner. IBM knew what was wrong after the PC became popular and mainframe computers lost much of their appeal, and had file drawers full of strategy documents on how to fix the situation, many of which would have worked, but IBM's top executives just could not change the company. Gerstner's insight was that IBM was its own worst enemy. Discovering what the single critical factor was in changing IBM and how Gerstner fixed it is worth many times the price of this book. However, two of Gerstner's conclusions are also worth reading: (1) He succeeded because of education, hard work, and self-help; and IBM succeeded not because of veniality, but because it found out what its customers and potential customers wanted and needed and supplied those needs and wants at a price the customers could afford. Life is fair and the world makes sense after all.

Great history of the turn around of IBM and the transformation of its business model. Really interesting to look at the strategy that was applied in not breaking the company up but leveraging off its strengths and re-aligning the organization. The EBO was an excellent strategy of innovation to focus on the products and services (like IBM Global Services) that moved the company to a technology, software and services company and turned around the revenue and profit streams to move the company from the brink of bankruptcy to again a formidable giant of the tech industry.

This is one of the best business books I have read, and there have been many. The story telling style of Lou Gerstner is very easy to follow, makes an interesting read, and really gives a good insight to what was happening at IBM and the way he turned the company around. I highly recommend this book to anyone interested in business transformation in general, and particularly if you have interest in the technology industry.

The book starts with IBM in state in 1993 and how it IBM emerged like a phoenix. The book is candid on the facts. It provides principles how one can improve work life, with practical examples. . My favorite quote in this book "there is an opportunity to learn in everything we do". Whatever mentioned is true, I see this now in lot of IT companies. Many of them perish after couple of years. This book

provides, with example how to over come.If we read the book, we can same thing HP is trying to do, but too late in the game.I am waiting for the continuation of the book from Sam Palmisano.

I read this a year or so after joining IBM and this was an interesting account of (relatively) recent history of transformation inside IBM.

You know what's cool? Since 1993 I had the profile BusinessWeek did on Mr. Gerstner, when I bought the book I re-read it and was spooked by how things turned out...Link here:<http://www.bloomberg.com/bw/stories/1993-10-03/rethinking-ibm>Now both are side by side In my shelf. A great book.

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