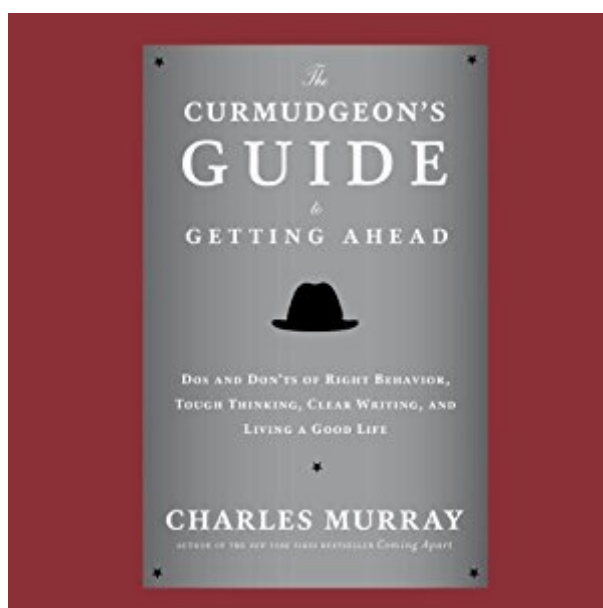


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# The Curmudgeon's Guide To Getting Ahead: Dos And Don'ts Of Right Behavior, Tough Thinking, Clear Writing, And Living A Good Life



## Synopsis

In the best-selling tradition of *Eats, Shoots & Leaves*, a gently curmudgeonly but invaluable guide to the dos and don'ts of the workplace Best-selling social historian Charles Murray has written a delightfully fussy - and entertaining - book on the hidden rules of the road in the workplace - and in life - from the standpoint of an admonishing, but encouraging, workplace grouch and taskmaster. Why the curmudgeon? The fact is that most older, more senior people in the workplace are closet curmudgeons. In today's politically correct world, they may hide their displeasure over your misuse of grammar or your overly familiar use of their first name without an express invitation. But don't be fooled by their pleasant demeanor. Underneath, they are judging and evaluating your every move and utterance. And in most cases, if you want to advance in your career, it is their approval you need to win. In the course of this pithy and powerful book, Murray tells us the proper etiquette for email, how to stop using such overused and fuzzy phrases as "reaching out" and "sharing", his thoughts on piercings and tattoos and proper dress, the importance of rigor in language and good writing, why being judgmental is good, and other curmudgeonly pieces of wisdom and advice. He suggests how to stand out at work (work long hours when you are young and unencumbered by family and other obligations), when to use strong language and when to avoid it, and offers a bare-bones usage primer on how to avoid confusing words like "advice" and "advise", which look or sound similar but have distinct meanings. Written with both verve and reserve and drawing on the core values that have historically made good manners the best lubricant to social and professional advancement, *The Curmudgeon's Guide to Getting Ahead* is an invaluable resource for anyone hoping to land the job of their dreams - or get ahead in their career of choice.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Murray's efforts to share business and life insights with his intended audience of young men and women seem sincere. The book is going to be most useful for teens and twenty-somethings, but even older readers will find some wisdom in Murray's suggestions, if only to reinforce that which they already know. I read the book in two or three sittings, overall less than 24 hours. I wish Murray would have fleshed out his section, "On Thinking and Writing Well." I'm always interested in reinforcing good practice for my grammar and usage. Some of the explanations, or clues for usage, didn't seem to really provide sufficient substance for someone who might be questioning his or her choice of usage. Murray does however give suggestions for supplemental reference sources one should have available when one writes.

This guide is what is sorely missing in adults and teens today. General respect and attention to the experience of those who worked their way up the ladder. Yet, he admits his limitations and his behavior theories lack critical analysis.

Although I am now retired, and therefore not having to be concerned with such things, I think that Charles Murray gives excellent advice. Like it or not, people do judge you in myriad ways. Is that fair? Probably not, but it is a fact, and as John Adams famously said, "Facts are stubborn things." In our current times, boorish speech and behavior in our alleged "leaders" has become the norm, and somehow, we accept, and even encourage such things. I am especially appreciative of his advice on writing and English usage. I worked for 35 years in a government agency, and have witnessed first hand how coarse every day speech has become, and how even official business communications now look like they are written by fifth graders. All this has somehow, regrettably, become acceptable.

I bought this book expecting to find exactly what it gave me during --and after-- reading it. And it gave me a lot of wisdom in a funny way and, as a bonus, in a nutshell. I'm in my fifties and I have read hundreds --in fact, many more than thousand-- books of whatever you want, so it is difficult for me to feel or experience surprise when it comes to literature. Charles Murray did a really good job in giving advice to the young people by thinking in adult ones too. Wisdom is ageless, and this is

perhaps the Murray's better achievement. He has read the same books I have read (or almost) but he is capable to offer a new perspective, a fresh new reading to people like me or whoever that is tired of stereotypes and clichés. In doing so he embraces from grammar to ethics, and from leaving home to get a good wife. All oriented to teach you --tip after tip-- how and why to live a good life. Mr. Murray jump over the risk of writing a recipe, giving us instead a bunch of good and relevant advices. I don't share his religious perspective at all but --and this is not easy to say-- the book is good anyway. Highly recommended.

Being a curmudgeon myself, having been raised a certain way, and thrown to live in a very different culture from a young age, I began being disappointed with myself when noticing I've lost much of my good manners and values over the years. This book has helped me stop being a pleb and pursue the virtues and values I've lost. Great and short read, gets right to the point, just as any written work should.

Thoughtful compilation of insights into generational and cultural differences between the older generation (typically the bosses) and those starting out in their careers. I really like reading books like this where judgments are clearly expressed. Don't know the author but got the book primarily due to the title. It is well written, which makes it all the more enjoyable. The primary audience seems to be 20 somethings starting a career who come from an upper middle class and have pursued higher education. I think that is a fair assessment. The most enjoyable thought process for me was the suggestion to wrestle with the question "What does it mean to live a good life?" I also like the discussion about "resilience." Favorite quotes: "The ability to make judgments carries with it the responsibility to do so."

Just in time to squelch the burgeoning onslaught of young people who insist on using senseless expressions like "like" every third word that pops out of their mouths! Murray has concisely captured valuable life lessons for not only recent college grads, but for anyone who is changing careers, having difficulties achieving promotions, or just wondering how to easily assimilate into the business world. I bought four copies, and sent them to my three sons and a recent Univ of Penn. grad. It would be a welcome change to have "like" banished from everyday conversation, and while this is just a snippet of the wisdom imparted, acceptance of the cautionary advice would make the world a much easier place to listen to people!

...but, I thought it was a good read, especially for those that are just starting out in their professional careers. It's sad to see the new generation of "professionals" struggle with the simplest of business norms. I would recommend this book to the youngsters to help them get started on the right foot.

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