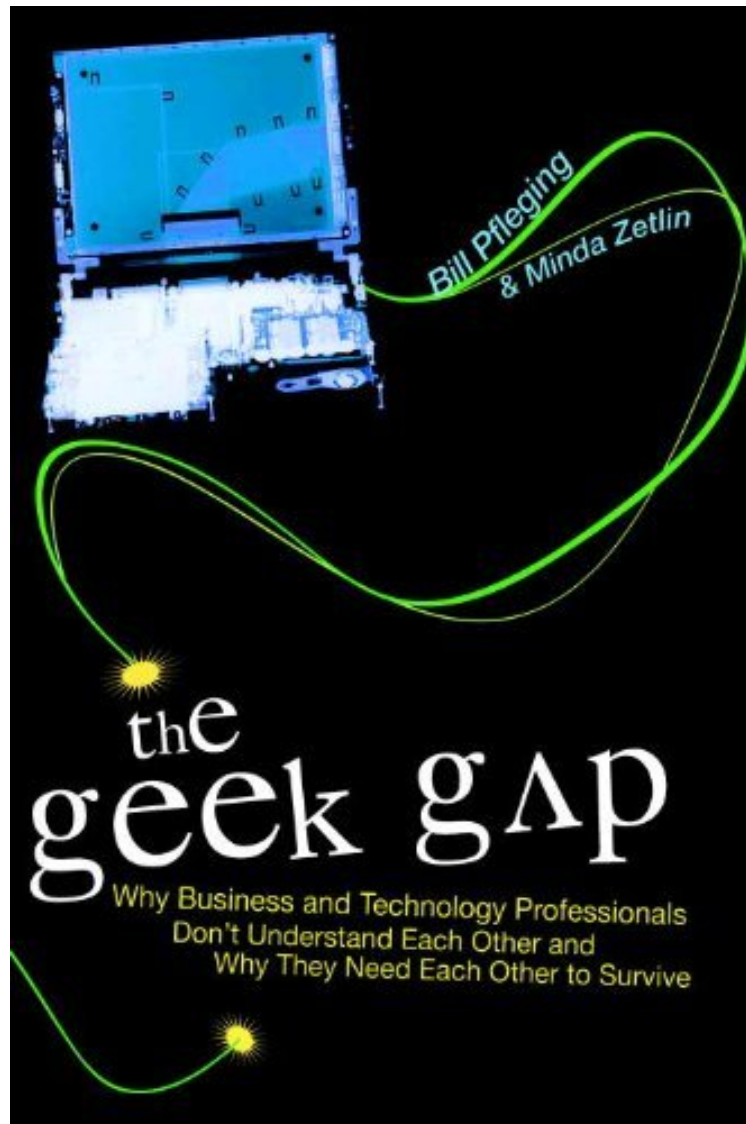


(Free pdf) The Geek Gap: Why Business And Technology Professionals Don't Understand Each Other And Why They Need Each Other to Survive

The Geek Gap: Why Business And Technology Professionals Don't Understand Each Other And Why They Need Each Other to Survive

Bill Pfliging

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Business managers (suits) and technology professionals (geeks) have become warring camps in too many companies. While both groups have no trouble following the lingo of their own specialties, when they have to communicate with each other, neither side fully understands mdash; or wants to understand mdash; the other. And that's a big problem in an increasingly technology-dependent business environment where success depends on the smooth integration of both business savvy and technological expertise.Bill Pflieger mdash; a respected computer and Web consultant mdash; and Minda Zetlin mdash; a veteran business writer mdash; explore, in this insightful, witty, and very instructive book, the culture clash that pervades nearly every business-technology interaction. The Geek Gap provides members of both camps a practical guide to working together effectively. Using many real-world examples, the authors vividly illustrate the consequences in time, money, careers, and even lives when these separate cultures fail to communicate. The authors provide practical solutions for building trust between business and computer professionals. The book is filled with tips aimed at geeks and suits to help each group understand the other, communicate in what amounts to a foreign language, and get what they need to do their jobs effectively. The authors profile companies and individual executives who have successfully bridged the gap by conducting events that bring the two groups together, switching jobs from one area to the other, creating whole new careers as "go-betweens," and much, much more.This is the first book to directly address issues of communication and understanding between business and technology people. The Geek Gap mdash; in identifying this problem and providing numerous practical and workable solutions mdash; is an indispensable guide for all.

From Publishers WeeklyLack of respect and trust, poor communication and a culture clash make for an often-disastrous divide between "geeks" and "suits," according to Pflieger, a computer consultant and "dyed-in-the-wool geek," and Zetlin, a business writer (Telecommuting for Dummies) representing the suits. Though the husband-and-wife authors offer tips for both techies and management on how to bridge the gap and thus avoid business failures, they spend most of this thoughtful if not wholly practical book affectionately parsing geek culture. A geek's primary strength, the authors explain, is problem solvingmdash;or creating and maintaining technologymdash;while a suit's talent is influencing people. Technology for suits is a "means to an end"mdash;namely, profitabilitymdash;while for geeks (who see themselves as outsiders and artists) it's a "living, breathing thing." These differences have exacerbated the geek gap the authors see behind debacles and trends from the Y2K "fizzle" to the dot-com boom and bust and now today's offshore outsourcing of IT work. Pflieger and Zetlin provide sensible advice (e.g., techies should expand their skills to avoid obsolescence in the face of "offshoring"), but the book's real virtue is its anthropological insight into the people writing code. (June) Copyright copy; Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. "The Geek Gap is thoroughly original, virtually unique, of paramount importance and, on top of ALL that, a 'great read.' Bill Pflieger and Minda Zetlin deserve a giant 'Hats off' for this wonderful piece of work."TOM PETERS"Though the husband-and-wife authors offer tips for both techies and management on how to bridge the gap and thus avoid business failures, they spend most of this thoughtful if not wholly practical book affectionately parsing geek culture....Pflieger and Zetlin provide sensible advice...but the book's real virtue is its anthropological insight into the people writing code."PUBLISHERS WEEKLY"The Geek Gap isn't just for those who have to manage technology and technologists in their offices. It's should be mandatory reading for everyone in corporate America. There's practical, useful material here that will help you bridge the gap, raise morale, and improve your bottom line."SREE SREENIVASAN, WABC-TV's Tech Guruand Columbia University New Media ProfessorAbout the AuthorBill Pflieger (Woodstock, NY) is a computer and Web consultant who writes a regular technology column for the Woodstock Times. With computer experience going back to the early 1970s at IBM, he has also worked for Tripod.com and Lycos Network.Minda Zetlin (Woodstock, NY) is a longtime business writer whose work has appeared in Crain's New York Business, Success!, Management , and other publications. She is also the author of Telecommuting for Dummies and co-author of The ASJA Guide to Freelance Writing.