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Boarding the bus bound to Cooperation

Book Review: Don't waste your energy on negatives

December 20, 2013 | By [Debra Lins](#) | Comments: [0 Comments](#)



So much of our personal energy can be wasted in negative or pointless activity. Jon Gordon's *The Energy Bus* can help you avoid some of this waste, and produce more positive outcomes, in the course of 34 quick-reading, entertaining chapters.

For you readers who are supervisors, bosses, or CEOs, I believe you'll find some inspiration for dealing with that person or persons who just do not want to get on "your bus"—or who are even headed in the opposite direction.

This book details ten rules for your life, work, and bank team that can infuse strong positive energy throughout all levels of your company. I strongly recommend buying a copy for all your managers and setting up a key performance indicator around getting everyone on your team on your bank's bus.

Parable of the bus commuter

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The Energy Bus is written as a parable about “George.” He dreaded Mondays, and this particular Monday was a disaster.

George’s car had a flat tire. He now has to use public transportation to commute to work, because his wife needed the second car for taking the kids to school and family errands. As unhappy George steps onto the bus, unbeknown to him, his attitude about life is going to change.

So the story begins of George’s transformation. His mentor and teacher is Bus #11’s driver, named Joy. Who would not want Joy in their life?

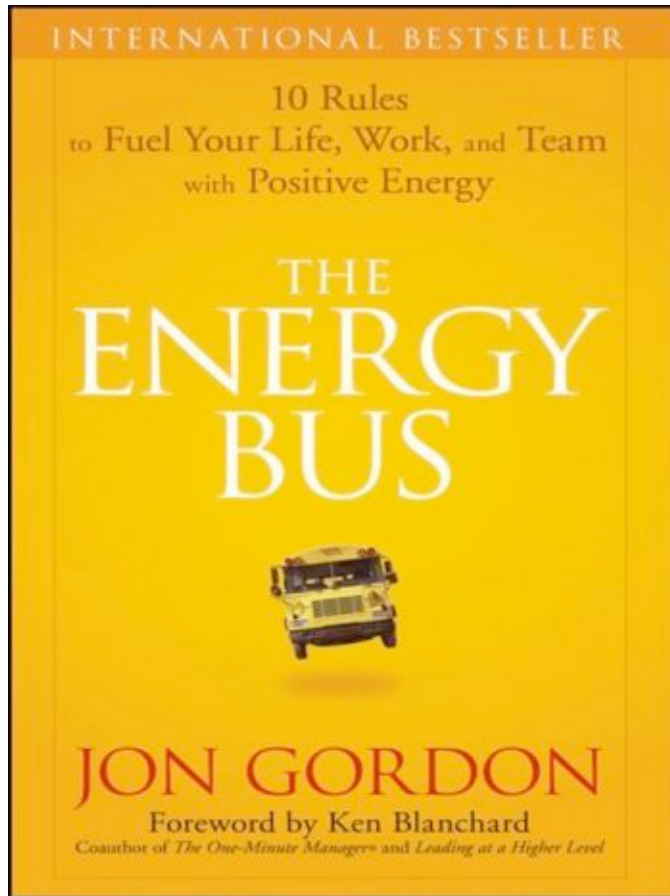
George’s conversion takes place over a two-week period of riding the same Bus #11, with Joy and her usual passengers, as his car remains in the shop, obviously more wrong than just a flat tire.

George knows he is in the dumps. He knows this is affecting his performance at work, as well as his family life. He is leading a very important project at work, and the team is in disarray, with his job on the line if he and his staff are not successful with the product launch. (Who in banking hasn’t been part of an experience like that?)

But George learns how to handle such challenges.

Looking at Gordon’s rules

Although we all live by many rules—our own rules, our family rules, our workplace rules, the regulators’ rules, sports rules, etc., you will enjoy incorporating Gordon’s ten rules into your daily life, and work environment. As George rides Joy’s Bus #11 he is introduced to each.



The Energy Bus: 10 Rules To Fuel Your Life, Work, And Team With Positive Energy. By Jon Gordon. Wiley. 192 pp.

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Warning, just because I am going to list the rules, does not mean you can skip reading this book! You will want to know how George (and you) learns to implement these rules and how his team project turns out.

Rule #1: *You're the driver of the bus.*

Always remember you are the driver of your bank bus. Gordon considers #1 the most important rule. As the driver you must take responsibility and control of setting the direction you are going to head in, or you will never get where you want to go. Of course you do need to seek the support of others.

Rule #2: *Desire, vision, and focus move your bus in the right direction.*

This rule is all about focus. The author uses the “Law of Attraction” for explaining this concept to George. The bus driver, Joy, shares this thought: “The more we think about something, the more it shows up in our lives.”

Rule #3: *Fuel your ride with positive energy.*

Rule #2 gets you going in the right direction, yet Rule #3 gets you where you want to go.

There are several great examples of how to view a negative as a positive; for example, a restaurant really messes up your meal, and instead of being upset you think about how thankful you are to have food, with so many starving people in the world.

Rule #4: *Invite people on your bus—and share your vision for the road ahead.*

This serves as a great reminder that we have the right to determine who is on our team's bus, according to Gordon. Sometimes, when you ask someone to get on your bus, they may say no, and that is okay. It is also okay to ask a party to get off your bus when they do not share your same goals and sense of direction. The more people you pick up along the way the more positive energy your bus will have.

Rule #5: *Don't waste your energy on those who don't get on your bus.*

This rule is simpler than I made it out to be . . . truly some people will get on your bus and some will not. Do not take it personally, as everyone has to make up their own mind, and wasting energy on others' decisions is just not productive.

Rule #6: *Post a sign on your bus that says: “No Energy Vampires Allowed.”*

I love this rule, and wish I had had a large sign for my desk at my bank. You know the type, and we have all employed at least one “energy vampire.”

It is that person that draws all the energy from you or the group; nothing ever goes right; and they know that it will never work, etc., etc., etc. Yes, give them a chance to change. But if they do not, you need to be strong and boot them off your bus.

Rule #7: *Enthusiasm attracts more passengers and energizes them during the ride.*

Have you ever had that really special group of employees where every person on the team supports each other, and you can just feel the positive energy all around?

That is what this rule is all about, and how this enthusiasm attracts great people to your organization. Your bank bus is energized and others see it, feel it, and want to be a part of it!

Rule #8: *Love your passengers.*

Directly from the book: “Enthusiasm is important. But love is the answer.”

The author talks about how the leader (driver of the bus) really needs to tap into their heart. Lead with your heart’s positive and contagious energy, and experience the difference. Chapter 27 shares five ways to love your passengers (employees): Make time for them; listen to them; recognize them; serve them; and bring out the best in them.

Rule #9: *Drive with purpose.*

When you drive with purpose your team does not grow fatigued, jaded, or burned out. They stay on the bus, and are committed on every level because all passengers know they are making a difference.

Why? Because you have communicated how important they are and that what they do is more than just a job.

Rule #10: *Have fun and enjoy the ride.*

In life, they say, we only get one ride, so we should have fun along the way and insure we enjoy the ride. I really appreciated the perspective shared, as in life we should have no regrets.

Gordon sums it up by saying, “Live and work like you have nothing to lose and everything to gain.” He also says, “Act like a kid on Christmas morning . . . optimistic and excited about the gifts you are receiving.”

What a great thought at this time of year.

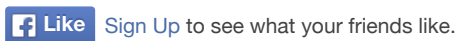
What route from here?

This book concludes by walking the reader through an 11-step process to assist with your very own “Energy Bus Action Plan.” It is truly all about creating positive change and reaping the rewards that follow!

All leaders acknowledge that their success in life is not achieved alone. Having a clear message and purpose is so important to success, and this book can assist you, as the leader of your bank, to insure all of your team members are on “your bus” and headed toward the same goals.

The outcome of this positive energy will take you and your team to the top.

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Debra Lins

Debra Lins, a frequent book reviewer for ababj.com, is CEO and president, Lins Business Consulting. Lins is a veteran community banker and a former member of the ABA's Community Bankers Council. She has also written for ABABJ.com's Boardroom and UNconventional Wisdom guest blogs. Lins is a Governor's appointee to the Wisconsin Department of Financial Institutions Banking Review Board.

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