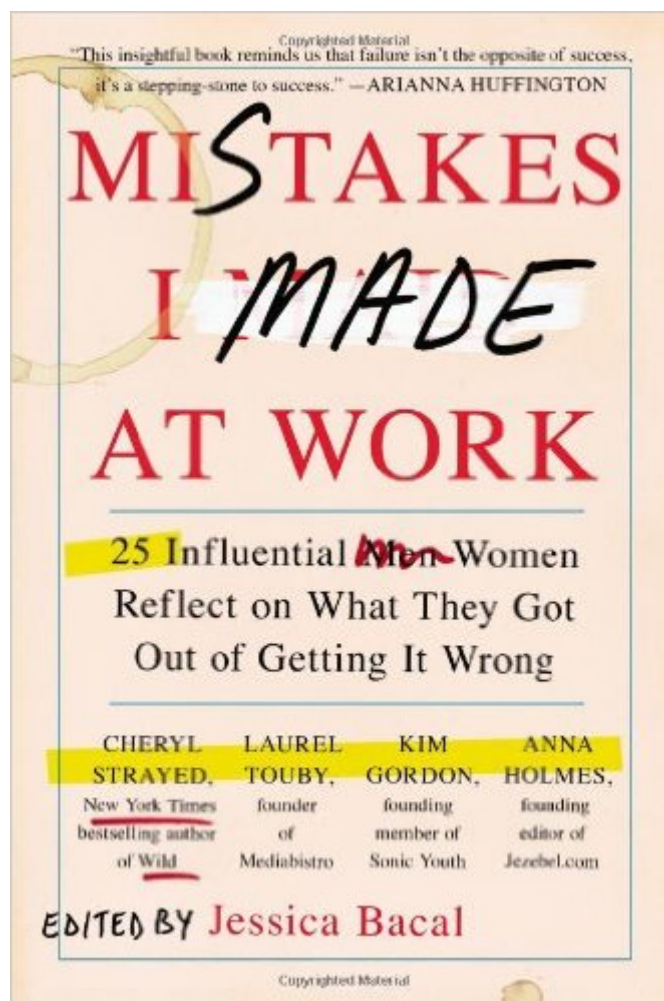


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# Mistakes I Made At Work: 25 Influential Women Reflect On What They Got Out Of Getting It Wrong



## Synopsis

High-achieving women share their worst mistakes at work and how learning from them paved the way to success. Named by Fast Company as a "Top 10 Book You Need to Read This Year" In Mistakes I Made at Work, a Publishers Weekly Top 10 Business Book for Spring 2014, Jessica Bacal interviews twenty-five successful women about their toughest on-the-job moments. These innovators across a variety of fields – from the arts to finance to tech – reveal that they're more thoughtful, purposeful and assertive as leaders because they learned from their mistakes, not because they never made any. Interviewees include: Cheryl Strayed, bestselling author of Wild; Anna Holmes, founding editor of Jezebel.com; Kim Gordon, founding member of the band Sonic Youth; Joanna Barsch, Director Emeritus of McKinsey & Company; Carol Dweck, Stanford psychology professor; Ruth Ozeki, New York Times bestselling author of Tale for the Time Being. And many more. For readers of Lean In and #Girlboss, Mistakes I Made for Work is ideal for millennials just starting their careers, for women seeking to advance at work, or for anyone grappling with issues of perfectionism, and features fascinating and surprising anecdotes, as well as tips for readers.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Mistakes I made at Work is a must-read. Not only is the author's voice (in the preview sections of each of the four parts) really accessible and down-to-earth, the essays themselves are priceless. They are easy to digest and end with "tips" which are great take-away messages. I book-marked and highlighted at least a third of the book for future reference, for myself and for the students that I mentor at my work. The book itself is a collection of essays by 25 really successful women. Part 1 is

about telling your own story, Part 2 is about asking, Part 3 is about saying no, and Part 4 is about resilience. I loved part 3 and 4 the best. Part 1 was less relevant to me, but I see its value for those who are beginning their careers. Even so, every section of the book had some real gems by luminously amazing women like Cheryl Strayed, Danielle Ofri, Luma Mufleh, and my three personal absolute favorites (people I want to meet and have a long drink with and pick their brains forever): Carla Harris, Rinku Sen, and Shirley Malcom. If you've ever stepped on someone's toes, brokered a terrible deal, beleaguereedly said yes when you really meant no, doubted yourself or career/educational choices, or did something that makes you want to hide under a rock for the rest of your career- then this is a book for you.

I couldn't finish this book since, like Sheryl Sandberg's "Lean In," the women profiled were from an echelon of society to which I can't really relate. Their careers are in a stratosphere that I have no hope of achieving and it was frustrating to hear about "mistakes" that ended up being fortuitous in the long run. I would have preferred more coping skills or learning strategies that helped them resurrect their careers after the so-called mistake, not banal or cliched advice about being a leader or listening to your gut or tapping into your network for your second wind. What about those of us who don't have money to take those risks that may or may not end your career? Sometimes I have had to take jobs that were not aligned with my career goals because my line of work did not exist where I lived. No, I couldn't just re-locate to pursue my dreams. I felt my blood boiling sometimes at the resources available to these women that people like me just don't have. Again, I couldn't relate and eventually felt my time better spent reading books about multi-potentiality to help me learn from my "mistakes I made at work."

This book is great! Very short essays on making mistakes at work by 25 impressive women. Regardless of what your career is or what you want it to be..making mistakes is inevitable. Anyone can relate to this book. I used to be a paralegal for a decade until one day I realized I hated it and I stopped. Thankfully, I had a lot of support from my guy and that made things easier. Now I am a writer and a visual artist. I am a lot happier doing something I love and not having to be fake all the time. In my previous career I had to be someone else and had to be overly careful about what I said. For some of us hiding who we are is a form of emotional torture. I'm just glad I got out when I could.

This book is very well-written and easy to read. Bacal introduces themes and lets these successful individuals explain what they learned from their mistakes - and the vignettes are in many different

career areas from business to music to writing to changing the world. It's not just an enjoyable (and easy) read, but you'll leave with some pearls: I will no longer refer to the "work-life balance" that we all struggle with, I will call it "managed disequilibrium," which frankly makes me feel like I'm doing a much better job than "work-life balance" ever did! While some of their issues are unique to women, everyone would benefit from reading this, and it would be great to see a Volume II that included men - we all have to learn from our mistakes, men and women alike!

Books on women in the workplace are hot right now, and some people take the position that women need to change their approach, while others insist that the system is the bigger problem. In *Mistakes I Made at Work*, Bacal shows us how it's not one or the other; it's both. And she doesn't do it by listing statistics. She does it through women's stories, compelling stories you'll want to retell to a friend. This book does a fantastic job unpacking why it's so easy to say, "we all learn from our mistakes," but it's so hard to do. There are gems throughout this book, but the chapters that spoke most to me were by Cheryl Strayed (if you're a writer, you need to read Strayed's thoughts on how writing involves "failing every day"), Danielle Ofri (who shows how stultifying it can be when you're new in your role and all eyes are on you) and Alina Tugend (if you've ever been underpaid for a job, her experience will ring true).

We've all made mistakes, some of which are hugely embarrassing. So I give kudos to these women who generously confessed professional mistakes they made--and some of them are real whoppers. The point of this book by Jessica Bacal is to find out what these women learned from those mistakes and how it changed them. In a society that values perfection and ridicules to the point of shaming those who err publicly, this book elevates mistakes--even lauds them--because of the good that can come out of them. I highly recommend this for every woman, young and old. It's also an ideal gift for your favorite new graduate, be it high school or college.

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