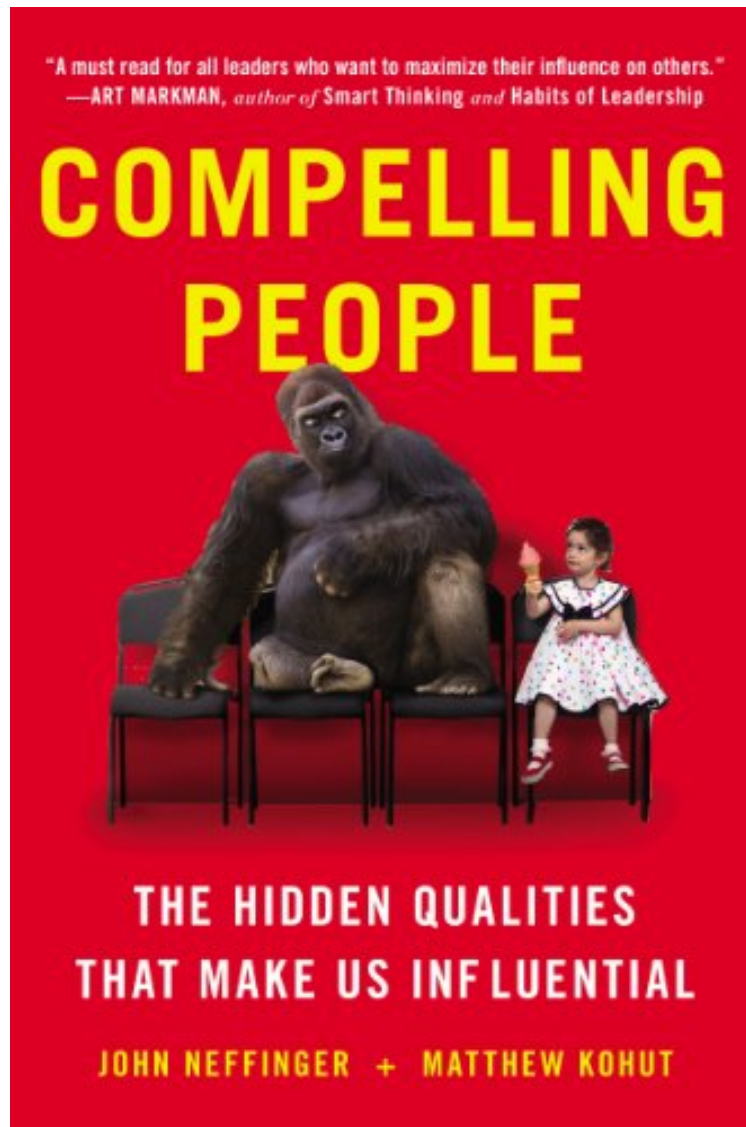


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Compelling People: The Hidden Qualities That Make Us Influential

John Neffinger, Matthew Kohut

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John Neffinger, Matthew Kohut : Compelling People: The Hidden Qualities That Make Us Influential before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised *Compelling People: The Hidden Qualities That Make Us Influential*:

101 of 107 people found the following review helpful. A compelling read and first-rate training manual for increasing your personal power. By Dr Ali Binazir. Every once in a while, a book comes along that has the power to really change the way I see the world and move in it. In 2012, it was *The Power of Habit: Why We Do What We Do in Life and Business* by Charles Duhigg. The year before, it was *Thinking, Fast and Slow* by Daniel Kahneman. *Compelling People: The Hidden Qualities That Make Us Influential* is that kind of book. The central premise of the book is that in

any encounter, people base how they feel about you on how you project strength and warmth. Once you become aware of what your unconscious strength and warmth signals are, you can learn to modulate them to connect better with people, influence them, and just be a more effective all-around human being. From the worlds of psychology, neuroscience, acting, political science, they've compiled some of the best practices for presenting your best self to the world. Some things I like about this book: 1) Neffinger and Kohut are seasoned professionals who have coached dozens of world-renowned politicians, businessmen, military leaders and speakers. When they dispense a tip -- like "hold the imaginary ball when you're speaking" -- it's a proven tip that insiders at the top of their game use. I felt like I was getting their probably very expensive one-on-one coaching at a huge discount. 2) The authors draw upon the scientific literature to back up their points - no speculation here. Anecdotes are nice, but when someone cites the hard science of how and why something works, it becomes even more convincing for me. For example, I really appreciated their explanation that strength feeds off the hormone testosterone while warmth is mediated by oxytocin, and that these two hormone systems inhibit one another. So if you sometimes feel as if there's a physical conflict between displaying strength vs. warmth, it's because there is. 3) They've organized the book such that it's easy to follow and implement their tips. They start by explaining what they mean by strength and warmth, and how you're broadcasting them via your gender, age and appearance ("the hand you were dealt"). Then they teach you how to convey strength and warmth more effectively depending on the context and what you'd like to accomplish ("how to play your hand"). 4) They illustrate their points with real-world stories - Gandhi, Martin Luther King, Hillary Clinton in the 2008 elections, US Presidents -- that bring the teachings to life, making for gripping reading and ease of implementation. Some of my favorite bits from the book: -- For a shot of strength before going into a big meeting, stand "big" for a couple of minutes, taking up a lot of space. This reduces cortisol and increases testosterone. -- Gender matters. There is a subtle art to women projecting strength and men projecting warmth without alienating their audiences. -- The five gestures that researchers have found to reduce warmth: leaning away; crossing arms; touching, rubbing or grasping hands together; and touching the face, stomach, or other parts of the body. Stop doing them! -- The flinty-eyed smile (think Clint Eastwood), or "strong smile", is a great way to project both strength and warmth. -- When giving a talk, replace fillers like "um" and "uh" with silence. So much more powerful. -- First connect, THEN lead. Once you "step inside their circle", you have much more persuasive power. In short, these are essential life skills that no one had bothered to teach us up to now. I hear the book is already mandatory reading at Harvard Business School; it *should* be required reading for all high schoolers. If you're a person at all interested in being more effective in your interactions with other humans in the realm of work, politics, romance, family life and more, then you should be reading this, too.

"Compelling People" entertains and instructs in a way that can directly lead to your being a better version of yourself. -- Ali Binazir, M.D., M.Phil., author of *The Tao of Dating: The Smart Woman's Guide to Being Absolutely Irresistible*, the highest-rated dating book on for 157 weeks. 6 of 6 people found the following review helpful. Excellent book for understanding yourself and others. By Michael Compelling people: The Hidden Qualities That Make Us Influential exists in the rarefied air of self-help books that might actually help you. Most books of these type contain a thesis statement that you understand within the first 40 pages. The next X number of pages are the author(s) filling out their quota for his or her publisher. In a way, this is the case for *Compelling People*, wherein John Neffinger and Matthew Kohut articulate a simple framework for understanding people and interactions between people. The authors contend that people are governed by two qualities they term "strength" and "warmth". Strength being a person's ability to accomplish tasks and warmth being a person's ability to connect with others. Instead of padding the rest of the book out or boring this reader to tears, Neffinger Kohut manage to build and engage on this concept. *Compelling people* takes you through many common social interactions and explains what is going on beneath the surface. Whether it is interviewing for a job, pursuing a love interest, or even rearing children, *Compelling People* will give you a context for understanding these universal and daunting experiences. This is not to say that this book is some type of parlor trick that will change your life in an instant or make you insanely wealthy upon reading it. It is merely a tool for better understanding people and hopefully yourself. The lessons of the book contain many truths that you will likely see happening in your daily life. These lessons are punctuated with interesting studies, examples using public figures, and anecdotes from the author's personal coaching sessions. As someone who tries to read to learn and grow, I can often judge a book by how often I reach for the highlight features on my e-Reader. *Compelling people* is a book where I highlighted early and often, which I think is the highest compliment for a book such as this. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. VERY interesting read. Almost life-changing. By Tom S. This book is a great read. It has given me a lot of insight into human interaction and body language, allowing me to more confidently navigate everyday situations. It sometimes almost feels like I'm cheating being able to figure people out so easily. In a way, this book changed my life and I will definitely be reading it again. I can see this being an invaluable book for anyone looking to grow in a professional setting or climb the corporate ladder, but it also provides much insight into any interaction or relationship with other humans.

Required reading at Harvard Business School and Columbia Business School. Everyone wants to be more appealing and effective, but few believe we can manage the personal magnetism of a Bill Clinton or an Oprah

Winfrey. John Neffinger and Matthew Kohut trace the path to influence through a balance of strength (the root of respect) and warmth (the root of affection). Each seems simple, but only a few of us figure out the tricky task of projecting both at once. Drawing on cutting-edge social science research as well as their own work with Fortune 500 executives, members of Congress, TED speakers, and Nobel Prize winners, Neffinger and Kohut reveal how we size each other up—and how we can learn to win the admiration, respect, and affection we desire.

“A must-read”—Art Markman, PhD, author of *Smart Thinking*; “Kohut and Neffinger will help you to lead—and succeed—in everything from public speaking to love.”—Joseph S. Nye, Jr., PhD, author of *The Powers to Lead*; “This is not just another pop-psych book: it’s the first book to capture and share the insights from all the recent groundbreaking research on how we judge and persuade each other. And it translates that into simple, practical terms anyone can use to build more effective relationships at the office or home.”—Amy Cuddy, PhD, Harvard Business School
About the Author: John Neffinger and Matthew Kohut are partners in KNP Communications, a firm specializing in presentation coaching and communications strategy for corporate and political clients. They also lecture regularly at Harvard Business School, Columbia Business School, MIT, Bennington College, and the Naval War College.