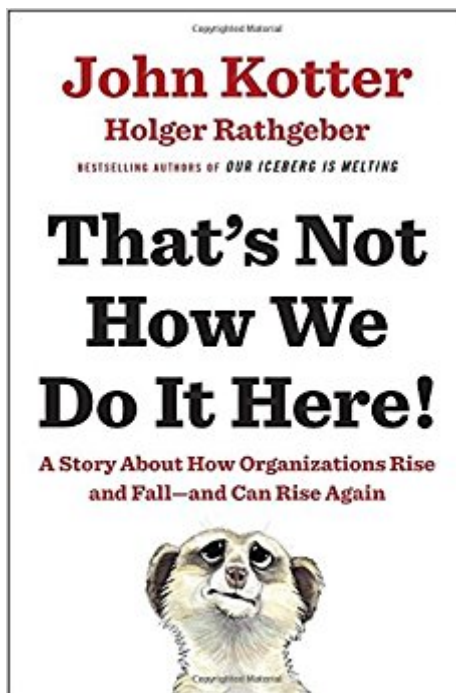




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# That's Not How We Do It Here!: A Story About How Organizations Rise And Fall--and Can Rise Again



## Synopsis

What's the worst thing you can hear when you have a good idea at work? That's not how we do it here! In their iconic bestseller *Our Iceberg Is Melting*, John Kotter and Holger Rathgeber used a simple fable about penguins to explain the process of leading people through major changes. Now, ten years later, they're back with another must-read story that will help any team or organization cope with their biggest challenges and turn them into exciting opportunities. Once upon a time a clan of meerkats lived in the Kalahari, a region in southern Africa. After years of steady growth, a drought has sharply reduced the clan's resources, and deadly vulture attacks have increased. As things keep getting worse, the harmony of the clan is shattered. The executive team quarrels about possible solutions, and suggestions from frontline workers face a soul-crushing response: "That's not how we do it here!" So Nadia, a bright and adventurous meerkat, hits the road in search of new ideas to help her troubled clan. She discovers a much smaller group that operates very differently, with much more teamwork and agility. These meerkats have developed innovative solutions to find food and evade the vultures. But not everything in this small clan is as perfect as it seems at first. Can Nadia figure out how to combine the best of both worlds—a large, disciplined, well-managed clan and a small, informal, inspiring clan—before it's too late? This book distills Kotter's decades of experience and award-winning research to reveal why organizations rise and fall, and how they can rise again in the face of adversity.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

“This unique parable shows us how we’re safer in changing times when we innovate!” Spencer Johnson, MD, author of *Who Moved My Cheese?* “This simple parable of furry mammals facing the challenge of adapting to threat offers real insights into the journey so many of us make. Brilliant!” General Stanley McChrystal (Ret.), author of *Team of Teams* and cofounder of the McChrystal Group “It works. And not just for meerkats.” Gaetan Thomas, NB Power president and CEO “John Kotter does it again. His use of metaphor helps readers distill down to the fundamental requirements for a high-performing organization: tapping the hearts and minds of team members in service to a compelling purpose. Leadership enables this, and in doing so unlocks tremendous creativity and potential.” Leigh Morgan, COO, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation “Kotter and Rathgeber’s ability to impart clear lessons via fable is as strong as ever.” TD Magazine

John Kotter, professor emeritus at Harvard Business School, is often called the world’s foremost authority on leadership and change. His many previous books, including *Leading Change* and *Our Iceberg Is Melting*, have been translated into more than two hundred foreign-language editions and have been bestsellers around the world. He is a founder of Kotter International, a consulting firm that specializes in helping leaders transform their organizations. Holger Rathgeber is the coauthor of *Our Iceberg Is Melting*, a former executive at a medical products firm, and a principal at Kotter International.

While the book is written in an interesting way and thought provoking, it provides no solutions that can be applied in the real world. As a change management professional, I was hoping to get some good insights into helping my clients improve. But while the book raises questions about the quick fall and rise of organization using the Meerkats colonies, there was little to no learnings I was able to gather. Sure, there were some insights on how an organization should have their employees work on projects they believed in, but the book fails to address the hard part, which is the HOW. I finished reading the book feeling like I just read a nice story to my niece, not a book that will help my organization face the “biggest challenges and turn them into exciting opportunities.” If you are new to Change Management, this is a good book to begin understanding the complexity of the field and help you to begin asking the right questions. But if you were already a practitioner and wanted to improve your solutions skills, you may want to look elsewhere.

Quick read with an easy to follow story line. I'd recommend to use as a "team read" for topic illustration in work with management team members. Helps to convey how all managers are not leaders and balance is key. If you've studied leadership and organizational dynamics at any depth, there's not much new to learn here. But overall, I'd recommend.

I probably should have spent more time with this book, but wanted to get the big picture first. As a fan of Kotter, I like to skim for the big picture and go back for personal reflection and application. I recommend this book for groups working within groups or organizations that once were great, but doing what we always did doesn't work any longer.

Very interesting approach to talk about innovation in organizations wherein their survival in the business world is at stake. Question is: aren't all business at stake?

If you like fables for adults, then this is a decent read. It's definitely more for people in position who can affect change or impact teams, structures, etc. in their jobs, but it does offer a good perspective on how to approach culture and work.

This book was part of the reason that I took my current job with Kotter International. This is the sixth book that I've read by Dr. John Kotter over the past five years, and one of hundreds of business books that I've read during my career. This book will change things. The last time that I was this excited about the potential impact that a book can have on the lives of millions of people was my first time reading *Crucial Conversations* (Switzler et al). That's Not How We Do It Here! is a phrase that I have heard many times in my career; understandably, each time that I heard it, my passion for the organization waned. I am certain that if armed with the concepts of this book, my previous employers would realize lower employee turnover, and higher employee innovation leading to improved bottom line results. I have shared the book with many of them. That's Not How We Do It Here! is a business fable, in the style of *Our Iceberg is Melting* (Kotter Rathgeber) and *5 Dysfunctions of a Team* (Lencioni). Destin Sandlin said once, "Knowledge does not equal understanding" and that could not be a better explanation of why so many business books have been bought and read, and yet, many business leaders and managers fail to improve. The fable, is a great format to visualize the application of the rich and often complex concepts, providing clarity, and more importantly, understanding. I have shared this book with folks that I have worked with from all over the business spectrum (c-suite to contact center), and have found that everyone finds it

both accessible and deeply engaging. One person didn't wait for me to explain what the book was about before diving in and not saying another word to me until she was 50 pages in. Her comment at that time, "Oh My God, That's US!" The story is deeply engaging and the concepts are powerful. It doesn't follow the normal story arc of business books... Start with this (bad) go to this (good). It is much more complex than that. It touches on many elements of management and leadership that individually are all familiar no-brainers, but looking at them all together, it paints a vivid picture of why so many organizations struggle to be structured AND agile. I highly recommend this book to everyone that I meet and to everyone reading this review.

Excellent read with useful information!

Perfect! Thanks!

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