



Risky is the New Safe

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Abstract

Written by Randy Gage, *Risky is the New Safe* is an accessible, easy-to-read book that provides out-of-the-box insights on how to approach life, become successful, and live unconventionally through risking. Randy Gage is an American author, businessman, and motivational speaker, who is known for his inspiring rags-to-riches life story. Divided into seven chapters creatively named after parts of the opera, the main argument of the book is using the old, conventional, and safe paradigms is risky. It demands for a change in thinking and encourages the readers to act by embracing risk. It is not deadening and is recommended to decision-makers and to those who are interested in undertaking the risky and unconventional pathway.

Keywords Anahtar Kelimeler: Risk-taking, contrarianism, economy, strategy, decision-making.

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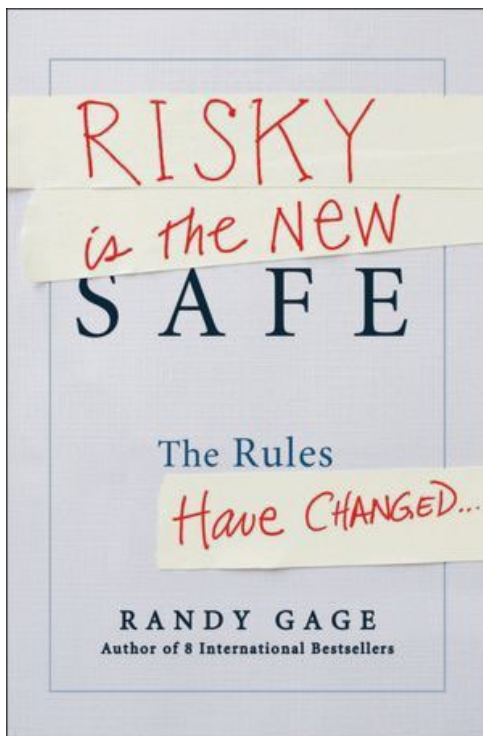
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Riskli Olan Yeni Güvenlidir

Öz

Randy Gage tarafından kaleme alınan *Risky is the New Safe*, hayata nasıl yaklaşılacağı, başarılı olunacağı ve risk alarak alışılmışın dışında nasıl yaşanacağı konusunda ezber bozan bilgiler sunan, kolay okunabilen bir kitap. Randy Gage Amerikalı bir yazar, işadamı ve motivasyon konuşmacısıdır ve ilham verici zenginliğe giden hayat hikâyesiyle tanınmaktadır. Operanın bölümlerinden yaratıcı bir şekilde isimlendirilen yedi bölüme ayrılan kitabın ana argümanı eski, geleneksel ve güvenli paradigmaları kullanmanın riskli olduğudur. Düşüncede bir değişiklik talep ediyor ve okuyucuları riski kucaklayarak harekete geçmeye teşvik ediyor. Sıkıcı olmayan bu kitap, karar vericilere ve riskli ve alışılmamış yollara girmek isteyenlere tavsiye edilir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Risk alma, aykırılık, ekonomi, strateji, karar verme.



Gage, R. (2012). *Risky is the new safe*. Wiley. 176 pages.

Why should we risk? What does it mean to be a contrarian? How can we become successful despite the hypercomplex changes in the world? These are some questions that are explored through this book, *Risky is the New Safe*. It is an accessible, easy-to-read book that provides out-of-the-box insights on how to approach life, become successful, and live unconventionally. Written by Randy Gage, this book has been bought by millions leading to becoming a bestseller both in New York Times and Wall Street Journal. With an inspiring rags-to-riches life story, Randy Gage is an American author, businessman, and motivational speaker.

The book is comprised of seven chapters creatively named after parts of the opera. The main argument of the book can be reflected from the title itself—risky is the new safe and that using the old, conventional, and safe paradigms is even riskier. It calls for a change in thinking and encourages the readers to act by embracing risk. The

book also touches on many topics such as, but not limited to, education, entrepreneurship, technology, economics, and leadership.

Overture, *Training Monkeys and Cloning Puppies*, accentuates that the world is not the same as before and hence the strategies that work before are now not effective anymore. He states that many things have already changed like how monkeys can be trainable to harvest coconuts and how animals can easily be genetically modified. This is like Dalio's claim (2020) that many things have become radically different, both in economic and political aspects. Because of the many changes, the author contends that playing it safe is very risky. He predicts that many jobs shall be replaced by technology. This is similar to Harrari's forecast (2016) of *the rise of the useless class* which refers to the phenomenon of humans getting pushed out in the job market because artificial intelligence gets smarter. Despite the horrific predictions, he believes that the current era still is the greatest to be alive in human history. In the same vein, Pinker (2012), using data, concludes that people are living longer, healthier, more independent compared to preceding generations.

Act I, *It's Not About the Tech*, states that technologies and the Internet have intimately ingrained in our personal and social lives advancing several changes, While Gage appreciates further innovation and connection they bring, he recognizes that they can make us lonelier, addicted, and superficially busier. In the same manner, Turkle (2012), using hundreds of interviews, finds out that as technology advances, our emotional lives deteriorate. Moreover, Gage foresees that the utilization of video is going to dramatically increase since inherently we are visual creatures and that networks and production directors are going to multiply, making customized shows targeting our idiosyncratic tastes. He adds that smartphones and other smart appliances shall continually change how we operate our lives. Gage advises that people should not be scared about these rapid changes because it is still about the people who use them.

Act II, *The Only Free Cheese Is in the Mousetrap*, states that it is inevitable that economies are going to fall, and hence people are going to be hurt. But, many will utilize it as an opportunity to become wealthy and these are the ones who take risks and embrace change. Meanwhile, old tactics like utilizing

savings accounts and depending on government retirement programs are the new risky. Gage also castigates the soak-the-rich philosophy because a majority of the rich people are producers and give jobs to the masses and proposing burdensome taxes on them can do a disservice ironically to the poor and will make them flee to other countries. Just like Kiyosaki (2017) and Ramsey (2013), Gage suggests that we should not rely on government-sponsored retirement programs; diversify our portfolio; and invest wisely in real estate and precious metals (i.e., borderless currencies). Lastly, he cautions us on financial planners, stockbrokers, and wealth managers who are broke themselves. Indeed, their credibility can be manifested by their financial lives.

Act III, *Move Fast and Break Things*, centers on the willingness to take risks, though we may fail. Brown (2015) has a similar contention—we must dare greatly despite our vulnerabilities. They both say this can help us see our potential. Gage argues playing safe in this hyper-changing world leads us to total failure. For example, social media has changed how businesses work and if we do not harness it properly, we will become outdated or out of operation; customers now can share experiences, impacting businesses in a matter of moments. When used well, this bolsters customer retention and allows the emotional connection. While it has put businesses in a vulnerable state, it can motivate them to develop high-quality products and services and promptly handle concerns. Articulating that physical retail is becoming less relevant, he sees network marketing and online retailing dominate the market scene.

Act IV, *Harnessing Ego for Success*, indicates that ego is not bad and should be used well to attain success. This is in contrast with the argument of Holiday (2016) which is ego is the enemy. Gage says to become successful, we must cultivate a powerful and healthy ego, a part of our mind that controls consciousness. To develop it, we must: (1) direct ego toward a higher purpose; (2) achieve purpose with passion; (3) think critically and consciously rather than reacting; (4) take continuous action, no matter how small; (5) guide ego through self-discipline; and (6) form an honest support group. He adds that being mindful of our programming—which we commonly get from socializing with others, watching, and reading—is crucial since it becomes our foundational beliefs. We must become contrarians as well that we do not believe easily in things being said to us, even by people who have titles or are in authority.

Soprano Aria, *Selfishness is the New Altruism*, suggests that we must be selfish in the sense that we should be concerned with our self-interest. Gage shares he sponsors several causes but does all of them for selfish reasons, primarily to be happy. Emulating Rand (1964), he utilizes the term *selfish* to describe virtuous attributes of character. This should not be confused with hedonism in which seeking pleasure is given the sole importance, regardless of consequences. He also does not like the prevalent idea of sacrificing oneself for the welfare of a collective. Satisfying own needs first can make one truly help others. Peterson (2018) has a comparable assertion—everyone is morally obliged to take care of oneself first before taking care of others. Selfishness should be aligned with a purpose to reach our true potential, which is a desirable manner to serve God and others. Gage further adds that financial and tangible resources permit self-expression which can provide happiness; this can drive to true prosperity—significance.

The After Party, *Sameness Creates Comfort; Difference Creates Opportunity*, pronounces we live in a better world, compared to preceding generations and hence we should maximize this opportunity to create success. Thinking in alignment with the general public will not give us an advantage, so we must go beyond the norm and become iconoclastic as we traverse in life. The author states that working hard at the traditional job can likely make us broke than wealthy. This echoes Kiyosaki (2017) who believes that the issue with having a job is that depending on others for a living is the riskiest of all. Gage suggests that to progress, we search for problems to solve, become unconventional critical thinkers, and create leverage. Further, he advocates prosperity consciousness—a mindset in which the focus is on abundance than inadequacy. The mindset of successful individuals when faced with a challenge view

challenge as an opportunity to grow, whereas the depressed ones see it as an insurmountable problem, he adds.

The author has put forward radical, bold, and no-holds-barred insights. On the one hand, this leads to commenting on a very personal and overly subjective manner. There are times in which he just simply gives opinions without basing it in a scientific data or evidence. He also gives statements about the future, though he is not considered a futurist, which he honestly admits. On the other hand, this approach is humanistic; plainly conversing with the readers is refreshing since talking about these matters is commonly done through cold, technical statistics. Additionally, just like how organic conversations flow, it has covered many topics. Though this book is vulnerable to criticism, this one is qualitatively vivid which can be of great addition to the arena of risk-taking.

Moreover, he incorporates concepts from philosophers and entrepreneurs. By standing on the shoulder of the giants, he has reinforced the credibility of his arguments. Given the fact that he is not an academic, he has not mentioned statistical analyses, complicated theories, or scientific frameworks. On the one hand, including those can be helpful to fortify the trustworthiness of his assertion. On the other hand, this can pave a way for lay readers to understand more of the topics mentioned, without the burden of technicality. Indeed, the author's strength lies in sharing practical insights based on his personal experiences, narratives, and reflections. The book is not dampening, which is recommended to decision-makers and to those who are interested in undertaking the risky and unconventional pathway.

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