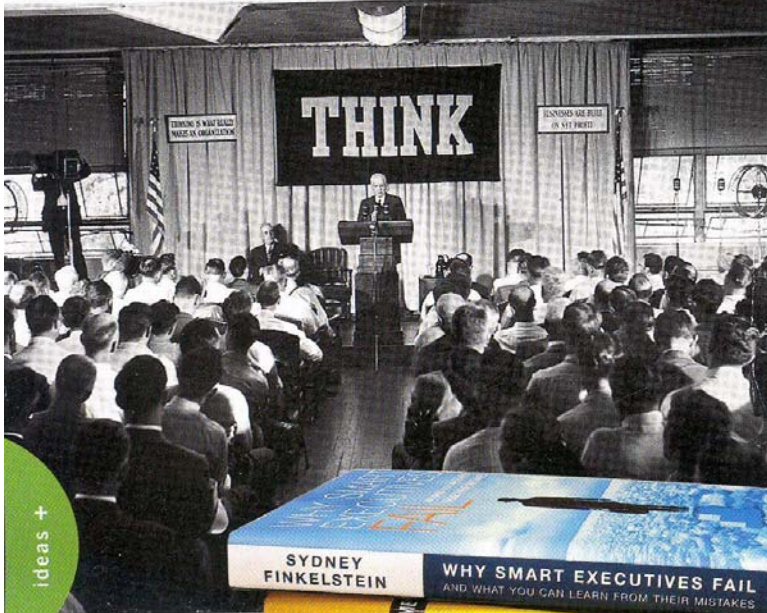


Feed Your Head

The summer's best business books tell of slip-ups, Segways, and the original celeb CEO.



USA: LANSER—GRAPHIC HOUSE/ARCHIVE PHOTOS; BOOKS: JOHN MUGGERIDGE

Bombs away

Why Smart Executives Fail
by Sydney Finkelstein
(Portfolio)

How do leaders who have been successful for years suddenly start getting everything wrong? Finkelstein, a professor at Dartmouth's Tuck School of Business, undertook a six-year study to find the causes of spectacular business failures. With richly detailed storytelling and careful analysis, he takes us deep inside gargantuan mistakes wrought by leaders of such companies as Wang Labs, Motorola, Mattel, Quaker, Enron, and WorldCom. For instance, Iridium—Motorola's multibillion-dollar venture to build earth-orbiting satellites—flopped because “techtosterone”-driven execs failed to see how fast terrestrial cellular service was spreading. From such fiascos

Finkelstein draws valuable lessons on how to avoid boneheaded corporate thinking—and how shareholders can spot disasters in the making.

—Ellen Florian

ideas +

