



Hello, He Lied & Other Tales from the Hollywood Trenches

By Lynda Obst



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"Never go to a meeting without a strategy." "Ride the horse in the direction it's going." These are just two of the gems unearthed from the trenches of Hollywood by Lynda Obst, one of the most successful producers in the movie business today. In *Hello, He Lied*, Obst offers real, practical advice to would-be professionals in any field: "Thou shalt not cry at work," "thou shalt not appear tough," "thou shalt return all thy phone calls," and more. She takes us inside high-pressure meetings with David Geffen, onto the set of *Sleepless in Seattle*, and into the heated negotiations for *The Hot Zone* and reveals what she's learned in more than twenty years in the business: how to swim with the sharks--and not get eaten.

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

Hollywood producer Lynda Obst (Flashdance, Sleepless in Seattle) recounts her own battles in Hollywood's trenches--from her beginnings as a journalist to her current role as the maker and breaker of careers. Like other "classic" Hollywood books--*Hollywood Babylon* by Kenneth Anger and *You'll Never Eat Lunch in This Town Again* by Julia Phillips--*Hello, He Lied* is saturated with sleaze and proves, once again, that most of Tinseltown's stars are seriously lacking in the upstairs department.

From Publishers Weekly

In her first book, movie producer and former New York Times Magazine editor Obst creates a peculiarly Hollywood kind of hybrid, a memoir/survival guide that describes what it's really like to get a movie made while still managing to say something nice?or at least benevolently neutral?about everybody in power. Obst left a dream job at the good gray Times to become a "development girl" (scouting material and overseeing script writes) for hyper-ambitious studio head Peter Guber. From Guber she learned that success means never going to a meeting (or doing anything) without a strategy. Her strategy here is to portray herself at work, describing how she has learned to handle tough situations and tough people. Thus, supermogul David Geffen, who once mused during a meeting that she should consider collagen shots, is praised for his personal manager-like interest in his employees' lives. Obst distills her experience into a coda for survival. She knows not to buck major trends ("Ride the Horse in the Direction Its Going," reads one chapter title). She knows when to put projects on the back burner ("Putting It on the Roof"). Above all, she understands the "Tao of Power," as explained in a chapter that reads like a contemporary Hollywood version of *The Art of War*: "The secret that all powerful people know is that no one else gives you power.... With power, there is no permission to be granted. Permission must be seized." At times, the writing is awkward: "The latent energy that makes imploding friendships so dangerous is the fact they are playlets of this familial struggle." But there are gems in the gravel. Obst's rundown of the difference between an arty "fuzzy girl" as opposed to an Armani-wearing "crisp girl" is worth the price of admission. Photos not seen by PW.

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From Library Journal

The title reveals Obst's success producing Hollywood films?part adolescent aggression (Hey, you idiot!) and part practical philosophy (lies can be truths). Writing in a breezy, readable style, she frankly steps through the ups and downs of her "high-stakes career" producing *Sleepless in Seattle*, *Flashdance*, and *The Fisher King*. Many bulleted lists ("tips on moguls") punctuate chapters titled "Never Go to a Meeting Without a Strategy," "The Tao of Power," and "My New Best Friend." And she does not shrink from telling a story about herself, particularly if it flatters one of her many powerful mentors. Obviously a sharp, well-read, and industrious worker, Obst has produced a book that is unfortunately short on details about the art of producing and long on sensible advice useful no matter what career you pursue. Primarily for those into Hollywood "wisdom," this book also substitutes as a popular psychology lesson in interpersonal politics. For larger public libraries and where there is demand.?Jane E. Sloan, Rutgers Univ. Libs., New Brunswick, N.J.

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Users Review

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