

Article

Power through Connection – How Business Aikido Offers a Way Out in a Divided World



(Demonstration 'Responding under pressure versus choosing your own action')

1. The Urgency of Connection

We live in a time of polarization and hardening, with a growing us-versus-them mentality. Instead of bridging differences, they are magnified, not least by our political leaders, who try to increase their influence and power. This dynamic is often palpable within organizations too, resulting in teams becoming divided, collaboration grinding to a halt, and trust being put under pressure. Leaders must provide direction and bring peace, space and connection to a rapidly changing and constantly pressurised world.

It is precisely in this context that the need for new forms of leadership and collaboration is growing – not harder, faster or more dominant, but more conscious, resilient and connecting-focused. Business Aikido, Peter Hoogeveen's book, offers precisely that: a powerful embodied response to the questions of our time. It is therefore high time to bring these timeless, culture-neutral and powerful principles to the attention once again.

2. The Book '*Business Aikido*'

Business Aikido is not your standard leadership book. It offers an alternative approach to how we look, feel and act. In short, accessible chapters, Peter Hoogeveen combines insights from the Japanese martial art of aikido with modern organizational practice. The style is clear

and practical, offering recognisable examples, special exercises and tools, rather than theoretical arguments.

Peter Hoogeveen is an expert in HR, organizational development, leadership, interaction and aikido. His years of experience in the business world and on the aikido mat enable him to build bridges between the head and the heart, strategy and presence, and leading with humanity while achieving concrete results. All this comes together in his writing debut, for which he received an honorable shortlist nomination for Management Book of the Year 2019.

Peter about his own development path: 'In my younger years, I did everything based on ratio and strength and had become quite good at it. It worked, until I found myself in situations that were completely new to me. I had gone too far beyond myself and ended up in a burn-out. Ouch! Over the past 20 years, I have taken the special path from 'head' to 'head + heart + body united', from putting strength to being strong and from pushing through to creating flow and working together in that. A completely different dynamic that is much more pleasant for me and my environment and also sustainable. What is special about this? At its core, it is about surprisingly small choices in attitude and behavior, choices that everyone can make and that make a huge difference. That is why I wrote Business aikido.'

3. Why Aikido? The Metaphorical and Practical Power

Aikido is a martial art that revolves around harmony. Rather than blocking an attack or responding with counterforce, it teaches you to redirect the other person's power and use it constructively without losing yourself. There is no fighting, only connection. No confrontation, but transformation. No wasting energy, time or money, but growing together for the better. This begins with a different mindset: rather than focusing on eliminating opponents, you engage allies. That provides a fundamentally different starting point for collaboration, leadership and interaction.

Business aikido is therefore an applied form of aikido. This approach is a particularly powerful metaphor and practical method for leadership, communication and collaboration. Rather than resisting resistance, you learn to recognise, anticipate and use it. Rather than using power or manipulation, you develop influence through presence by centred yourself and by staying attuned to your environment. These principles transcend culture and sector – they are applicable in boardrooms, classrooms and kitchens. This makes Business aikido relevant, valuable and fun for everyone to discover.

Some transformative thoughts:

- > *On agility:* When you can relax in tense situations, you are free to move. When you are relaxed, you are faster, more agile and less vulnerable, and you experience criticism less personally and more constructively.
- > *On influencing:* If you are not centered as a person, you are like a plaything for your environment. When you are centered, your environment will involuntarily focus on you.

- > *On leadership*: When you give your undivided attention to someone, you can sense exactly what they need. This enables you to lead effectively without exerting force.
- > *On working together*: We talk about ‘connecting’, but we are already connected. However, we often allow our interests, egos, opinions to come between us. When you can put these aside, the connection is sincere again.
- > *About perfection*: Perfection does not exist. Yet we are often hard on ourselves. Embrace your mistakes in lightness (everyone makes them) and be gentle with yourself. Then you will be open to your surroundings again and you will grow stronger from within.

4. Concrete value for Leaders, teams and organizations

Readers of Business Aikido learn concrete skills such as:

- **Self-regulation under pressure**: How do you stay present and centered in difficult situations?
- **Effective interaction**: How do you establish genuine connections beyond differences in background, culture, age, gender and opinions, while avoiding unnecessary hassle?
- **Dealing with resistance**: How can you use tension as an opportunity for growth?
- **Human and effective leadership**: How can you lead without using force?

The book offers exercises that can be applied immediately, ranging from special posture experiments, breathing techniques to practical instructions for daily life, to help leaders strengthen their physical and mental presence. It also offers recognizable examples from organizational practice. The insights are simple yet profound. Above all, they work. The principles of Business aikido have been proven effective time and again in leadership training, coaching programmes and team development.



(Impression layout Dutch edition Business aikido)

5. Others on Business aikido

- > **Hans Leijtens** - *Executive Director of Frontex and former NATO Board Member*
'Business aikido offers a fresh and original perspective on collaboration and leadership. It's about creating together and staying close to each other, based on classical principles applied in everyday practice. It is an educational guide for managers and employees, providing practical examples that can be used immediately.'
- > **Annemiek Sierhuis** - *Data Analyst and Business Expert*
'Publisher Nubiz has published a gem. Aikido means 'the path of harmony' and is also described by the author, Hoogeveen, as follows: 'the goal is not to eliminate an opponent, but to involve an ally.' Thinking in this way creates new opportunities. Business aikido is incredibly well-structured, the aikido principles are interwoven the text and mentioned again in the appendices.'
- > **Nienke van de Hoef** - *co-founder Scrumcompany and Organize Agile*
Peter makes the perfect connection between practice and the lessons from Aikido. He has an eye and ear for the participants and understands the dynamics in teams and organizations flawlessly.'
- > **Daan Fousert** - *Director Servant Leadership Solutions*
'There are already many books about aikido, but Business aikido is a welcome addition as it is the first book to concisely explains how to apply aikido in daily life and work. Clear, concise and practical – a pleasure to read. It will help you (and your team) make different choices and rise above yourselves. A must-read for every professional and manager!'

6. International Potential and Relevance

The power of Business aikido transcends the Dutch market. The themes addressed in the book – inclusion, diversity, resilience and connection – are universally relevant. In a world where cultural and opinion-based differences often lead to misunderstandings, the neutral physical language of aikido offers a universal bridge.

The book's accessible, descriptive and inviting writing style makes it ideal for translation and distribution in English-speaking and other language markets. The integration of body, mind and interaction also ties in with the growing interest in 'embodied leadership' and mindfulness in professional contexts worldwide.

7. Recognition and Development Potential

Business aikido was shortlisted for Management Book of the Year in 2019, in recognition of the quality and relevance of its content. The book has enjoyed considerable success in the Netherlands, receiving enthusiastic responses from readers, leaders and trainers alike.

The Dutch version of Business aikido is in its 4th edition. Various scientific books and studies refer to Business aikido as a valuable source.

However, it's potential extends further. In the divided world in which we now live, there is a particular need for clear insights into how we can connect beyond our differences, and how we can help each other grow instead of fighting each other. As individuals, as organizations and as humanity. This is why we are aiming to reissue the book in other languages. The powerful principles elaborate in Business aikido could make a valuable contribution to innovative leadership beyond borders, possibly supported by a workbook, e-learning or training programme. The time is ripe. The need is great. The message is powerful.

8. Call to publishers and agents

In a world hungry for connection beyond differences, Business aikido offers exactly what is needed: strength without struggle, leadership without ego and connections that transcend words. That is why Business Aikido matters.

For publishers and agents seeking impactful, humane and practical books, Business aikido is a golden opportunity. It fits seamlessly with the growing demand for leadership titles that provide knowledge and enable real transformation at the individual, team, and organizational level.

For more information or collaboration

<https://www.kiworkx.nl/kiworkx-english/>