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Book Synopsis

Book Title: Power Moves

Book Subtitle: The Life and Legacy of a Black Chamber Executive

About this Book:

New Jersey native John E. Harmon Sr. has never been a stranger to hard work. At just 11 years old, he got his first job selling produce out of the back of his family's truck. While most kids would probably recoil at the thought of work, a young John was excited by it. He got a thrill out of discovering new ways to use the money he earned from one job to leverage it into his next opportunity. Entrepreneurship was in his bones. But like most entrepreneurs, his journey towards success was rocky, though it would deem itself worthy, in the end.

After becoming the first person in his family to graduate from college, John set his sights on a safe career in the world of banking. However, after a short few years, his plan was knocked off course when the bank he worked for was sold. Though he didn't immediately recognize it, the disturbance was a blessing in disguise. He found himself gravitating back toward a career that allowed him to be the captain of his own destiny. Now back within the world of entrepreneurship, his first endeavor would be a trucking company he founded with his older brother. While he displayed a natural propensity for the work he did, he quickly realized that being a Black business owner was no easy feat. He recognized the limited systems of support that existed for those that looked like him, which often left no one to turn to when the roads got rough. Instead of accepting this reality as his fate, he set out to level the playing field by building an ecosystem for Black businesses to thrive.

In *Power Moves*, John recounts his journey of ascension, from humble beginnings as the fifth of seven children in a working class family in Trenton, New Jersey, to becoming one of the state's most influential businessmen. With unflinching honesty, he tells the tale of the man behind the prestigious titles, awards, and revered accolades. Offering up lessons and experiences that define his inspirational journey, he recounts life-altering moments from his chaotic childhood, the challenges and joys of fatherhood, and, of course, the moment he accidentally stumbled upon his purpose. His candid account of navigating corporate America as a Black man, details the many difficulties he encountered while building several Black Chambers of Commerce within his home state, and those nearby.

As a devout husband, father, brother, CEO, founder, and chairman, *Power Moves* is the dynamic story of a man who conquered copious roles in stride. Through examples pulled straight from his awe-inspiring story, he shows us how to succeed in one aspect of life while simultaneously failing in another. His rousing story is one about learning to see a door slammed as an opportunity to find an open window nearby, to be resilient in the face of adversity, and to be strategic when confronted with unexpected obstacles. John's story forces readers to reimagine their definition of success, and to consider a life lived more purposefully.

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Why is this book relevant:

According to the U.S. Census Bureau's 2021 Annual Business Survey, there are approximately 3.12 million Black-owned businesses across the country. However, data shows that despite an uptick in the number of Black folks entering the realm of entrepreneurship, they're still facing significantly more challenges than their non-Black counterparts. An Intuit QuickBooks survey found that 57% of Black business owners were denied bank loans when starting their

companies, versus a mere 37% of non-Black business owners. Additionally, Bank of America's 2022 Women and Minority Business Owner Spotlight found that 46% of respondents had trouble accessing capital.

These are struggles that John knows all too well. As seen through his own lived experiences, John understands the challenges and rewards that come with running your own business, and from trying to build something from nothing.

His story explores a wide range of themes that even non-entrepreneurs will relate to. As he navigates childhood trauma, love and parenthood, economics, racial inequities, and the challenges of entrepreneurship and leadership, readers are encouraged to see themselves in him. His journey of founding several Black Chambers of Commerce in his hometown of Trenton, to later across the states of New Jersey and New York, makes him privy to an intimate, firsthand portrayal of the struggles Black entrepreneurs face when trying to chart the murky waters of corporate America, and the joys and pitfalls of organizational development.

By providing an in-depth narration of his most personal moments, he takes readers on an entertaining, shocking, and inspirational expedition of his life—the ups, the downs, the good, and the bad.