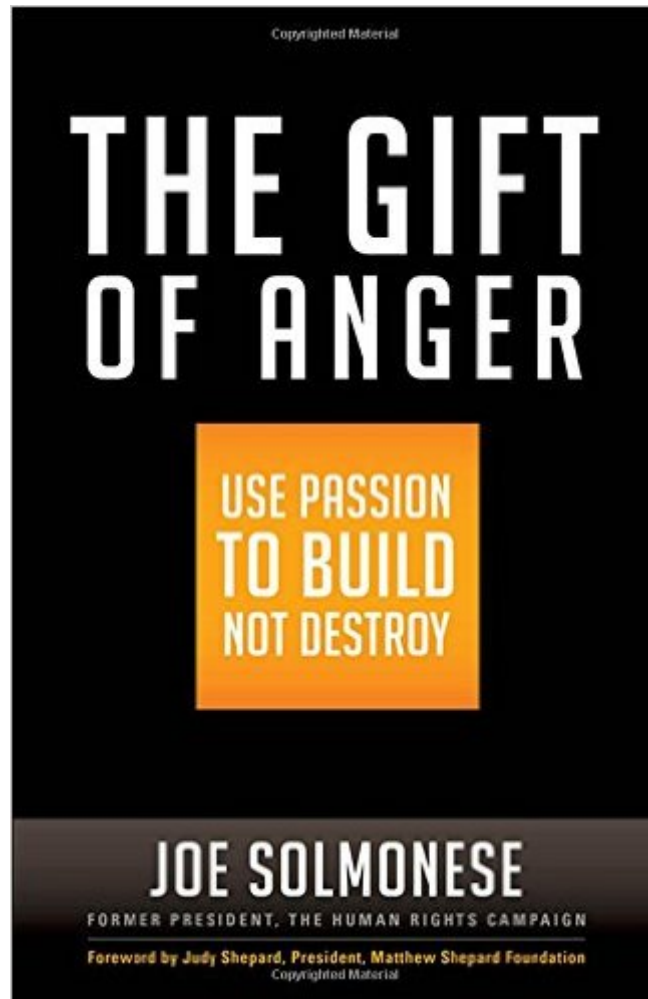


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# The Gift Of Anger: Use Passion To Build Not Destroy



## Synopsis

Under Joe Solmonese's leadership, the Human Rights Campaign became the model other organizations look toward to create effective social and political change. Against daunting odds, HRC was instrumental in passing landmark national legislation such as the Matthew Shepard and James Byrd, Jr., Hate Crimes Prevention Act; repealing "Don't Ask, Don't Tell"; and passing marriage equality acts in eight states. How did Solmonese and HRC do it? What Solmonese reveals in this book is that for him, the key to success was learning to harness his anger. Essentially it's just a form of energy. Channeled, it can keep you moving forward on a long journey. But uncontrolled, it can blow everything up. With this as his guiding principle, Solmonese uses stories from his work with HRC and his previous position as CEO of the powerful women's organization EMILY's List to share a series of often-surprising lessons. For example, empathize with your enemies instead of shaming them, find allies wherever you can, and ask for the doable, not the impossible (even when the impossible is your ultimate goal). Most striking in this book are the stories of Solmonese's ability to draw some kind of win "however small" from seeming adversaries. But at every step of the way he emphasizes the importance of managing the yin-yang tension of anger. Particularly when one is dealing with irrational and offensive attitudes, the temptation is ever present to give in to righteous indignation. While it's fine to feel it, Solmonese's advice is to always be strategic with your outrage.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

A friend recommended this book, and I highly recommend it to anyone interested in improving their

ability to advocate for any issue -- whether it's as big as a global movement or as small as asking your boss for a raise. In the book, Joe Solmonese shares his lessons learned from 20+ years as a leader in the political and business worlds. Unlike other business books which I often find to be heavy on theory and frameworks, I particularly enjoyed the practical nature of the advice as well as the specific examples of Joe actually getting stuff done in Washington, which we all know is easier said than done. As just one example, Joe describes the strategies and tactics that were critical in the successful effort to end "Don't Ask Don't Tell." His ability to find common ground and channel anger to overcome differences are great lessons that I will be looking to apply right away to my business career and my everyday life.

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