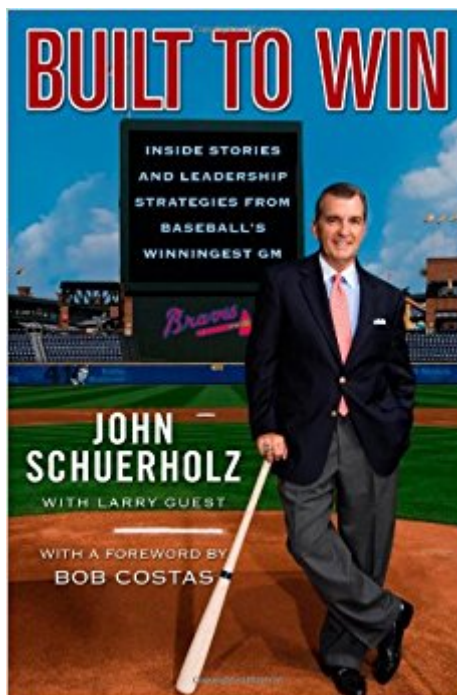




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# Built To Win: Inside Stories And Leadership Strategies From Baseball's Winningest GM



## Synopsis

In 2004, the Atlanta Braves won their 13th straight National League East division title, an unprecedented level of consistency in the current days of free agency. Behind this success has been the architectural genius of John Schuerholz, who not only built one of the strongest teams in baseball history in the early nineties, but kept them among the elite teams in baseball for over a decade. Now Schuerholz pulls back the front office's curtain in the most candid baseball book since Michael Lewis's *Moneyball*, discussing everything from how the Braves actually traded for Barry Bonds in the early 90's, to dealing with John Rocker's hateful comments in 1999, to the loss of franchise leaders Greg Maddux and Tom Glavine to free agency, to the recent acquisition of Tim Hudson, all the while keeping the Braves at the top of the baseball mountain. John Schuerholz's book will make baseball fans worldwide look at the game in a different way.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

For For The Restless Sea 'Evokes the spirit of Cornwall in the early nineteenth century' OXFORD TIMES 'Arguably one of the best of its kind in the last quarter of a century' CORNISH WEEKLY

John Schuerholz has been the general manager of the Atlanta Braves since 1990, and before that was the G.M. of the Kansas City Royals. He is the only General Manager in baseball to win a World Series championship in both leagues. Larry Guest is the author of *Arnie: Inside the Legend*, *The Payne Stewart Story* and many others.

First of all, I've been a Braves fan for 30 years, so I appreciate the success of the Schuerholz era. Having said that, this book is really terrible. Schuerholz comes across as a pompous blowhard who wants us to know that he IS the best dressed man in baseball ("dapper" & "stylish apparel" are used in the book), and that he and Tom Glavine know more about wine than idiots like Stan Kasten. In fact, we get three pages on a Chateau La Fleur Petrus Pomerol, vintage 1961 - oh yeah, that's great reading!! Add some incessant name dropping and a pile of Management 101 anecdotes and you get this opus of self-love. I really thought I'd enjoy this book. It's too bad the big guy didn't stick to baseball and leave the management cliches for someone as impressed with the author's insights as the author himself. It's almost as if Schuerholz is desperately seeking his share of the credit for the success of the team; so much so that he tries to convince the reader that his management expertise is more responsible for the team's success than the organization Bobby Cox had in place when the author arrived in Atlanta. I'm not buying it, John - even though I was dumb enough to buy this book.

John Schuerholz' book reads as if it was directly dictated to his writer. There are bland recollections of several decades in baseball, but the general themes seems to be pointing out obvious concepts (work together, listen to your staff) to make this a business/management book. Meanwhile, Schuerholz levels repeated jabs at players for being greedy and directly states that agents are destroying the game. These statements are routinely paired with an attempt to bill the Atlanta Braves as a medium-market team without the resources of largest teams. However, Schuerholz argues revenues for the team are modest, without acknowledging that Time Warner, the owner of his team, has cleared hundreds of millions of dollars in advertising by broadcasting Braves games. Sadly, this is a book devoid of self-reflection or insider details.

I got this book ahead of meeting John Schuerholz. He tells his amazing story with such heart. And it turns out he is as charming and kind a gentleman as you could ever hope to meet.

This book is not for everybody. However, it is very good to help you think through things that come up in a business. It is not for just baseball. One might think so, however, because of the cover. It is worth the price.

Great to learn the ins and outs of the best franchise run in baseball history! John is a legend and has a lot of wisdom for the taking. As an aspiring GM, this book has wonderful principles and practices for both baseball business and regular business.

Wow! What a fantastic book if you want to learn about how Schuerholz runs the Braves. He does discuss the tough choice of leaving Kansas City to join the Braves when they weren't popular choice amongst baseball, but he couldn't have made a better choice. Some interesting views on steroids, certain ball players and the daily responsibilities of running the powerhouse Braves. So much better than Moneyball- a great read!

I think it's safe to say I was very disappointed in this book. I was looking for the real good inside stories and what the majority of this book is is basically Schuerholz patting himself on the back, taking all the credit for everything while sounding very elitist and egotistical. He will give backhanded credit to others and then in the next paragraph talk like it was all him. And this book is so utterly repetitive with "leadership" anecdotes that I had a hard time finishing it. The leadership stories and tips are just common sense stuff that everyone knows. Work as a team, be positive, etc. And he just repeats himself over and over. I also enjoyed how he talked like Atlanta didn't operate with a lot of money yet the owner, through the TV deal, made boatloads for the Braves to spend. The book is filled with quotes from people who just talk about how oh so great and smart John is. It very much comes across like he is trying to validate his work but he just sounds so pompous and full of himself. He also totally puts down the new era of statistics and acts like he and his teams have been doing it for ages. He doesn't seem to understand this new era is about different kinds of statistics, not just basic ones. Of course teams have used basic stats for decades, that's not the point John. He should have just stuck with the good inside stories of these organizations. From contracts, to trades, etc. This book is basically "Hey everyone look at me and how smart I am".

You can take most of the reviews and average them out. This is not a great book. But John Schuerholz is a baseball executive not a writer -- No matter how much he tries to bore us with his poetry. Honestly, if you are a Braves fan and you can get the book for cheap there will be a few chapters that you will enjoy. Some of the names pop up and it was a fun stroll down memory lane. My main problems with the book, John seems to have some vendetta against Moneyball, his poetry and he seems to be trying to convince us that winning 14 division titles is worth more than having won more than one World Series. The streak was amazing. And unlike some comments have been made, it doesn't happen without John Schuerholz's help. Just like it doesn't happen without Bobby Cox and the players. It took everyone, and from the General Manager's standpoint there were some interesting topics discussed in the book. But I wouldn't spend more than \$5.00 on the

book. And feel free to skip ahead if it gets a little boring.

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