Failure Is Not an Option: Mission Control from Mercury to Apollo 13 and Beyond

Gene Kranz
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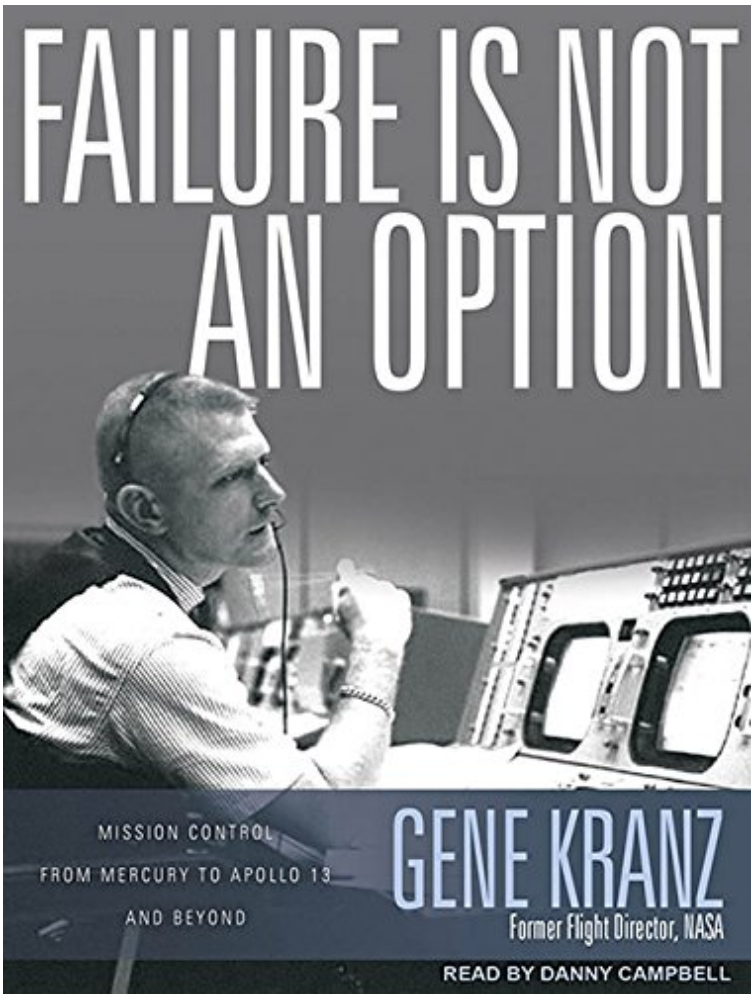

#1759291 in Books 2011-08-30Formats: Audiobook, MP3 Audio, UnabridgedOriginal language:EnglishPDF # 2 7.40 x .60 x 5.30l, .25 Running time: 18 HoursBinding: MP3 CD | File size: 46.Mb

Gene Kranz : Failure Is Not an Option: Mission Control from Mercury to Apollo 13 and Beyond before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Failure Is Not an Option: Mission Control from Mercury to Apollo 13 and Beyond:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Might be too easy to relateBy Jeri Lynn MetzgerAs I work in aerospace operations, this was right up my alley! It was a bit of affirmation that I am doing a job I love even though it requires crazy travel and hours, my experience is easy compared to Mercury through Apollo. Highly recommend for technical folks that might be looking for some problem solving motivation.0 of 0 people found the following review

helpful. Managing Man's Greatest AdventureBy Skip EvansExcellent, behind the scenes look, at the inner workings of the Apollo Moon Program. You see the tension and pressure of operating the Mercury, Gemini, and Apollo spacecraft on constantly expanding mission objectives culminating in the Lunar landing. Just when they began to have some confidence in what they were doing, the Apollo 13 mission launched and all of their engineering skills were tested on developing a lifeboat system that allowed the crew to make it back to earth.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Riveting and well-writtenBy RL337Gene Kranz's memoir is gripping, entertaining, enlightening, exciting, amusing, and depressing. I use the last adjective only because of the inevitable, unfulfilled longing Kranz expresses for Americ a's return to the enterprise of space exploration. If you are old enough to remember Apollo 11 on TV, or you have any interest in space exploration' history or future, you will not be able to put this book down.

Gene Kranz was present at the creation of America's manned space program and was a key player in it for three decades. As a flight director in NASA's Mission Control, Kranz witnessed firsthand the making of history. He participated in the space program from the early days of the Mercury program to the last Apollo mission, and beyond. He endured the disastrous first years when rockets blew up and the United States seemed to fall further behind the Soviet Union in the space race. He helped to launch Alan Shepard and John Glenn, then assumed the flight director's role in the Gemini program, which he guided to fruition. With his teammates, he accepted the challenge to carry out President John F. Kennedy's commitment to land a man on the moon before the end of the 1960s. Kranz was flight director for both Apollo 11, the mission in which Neil Armstrong fulfilled President Kennedy's pledge, and Apollo 13. He headed the Tiger Team that had to figure out how to bring the three Apollo 13 astronauts safely back to Earth. (In the film Apollo 13, Kranz was played by the actor Ed Harris, who earned an Academy Award nomination for his performance.) In Failure Is Not an Option, Gene Kranz recounts these thrilling historic events and offers new information about the famous flights. What appeared as nearly flawless missions to the moon were, in fact, a series of hair-raising near misses. When the space technology failed, as it sometimes did, the controllers' only recourse was to rely on their skills and those of their teammates. Kranz takes us inside Mission Control and introduces us to some of the whiz kids-still in their twenties, only a few years out of college-who had to figure it all out as they went along, creating a great and daring enterprise. He reveals behind-the-scenes details to demonstrate the leadership, discipline, trust, and teamwork that made the space program a success. Finally, Kranz reflects on what has happened to the space program and offers his own bold suggestions about what we ought to be doing in space now. This is a fascinating firsthand account written by a veteran mission controller of one of America's greatest achievements.

.com In 1957, the Russians launched Sputnik and the ensuing space race. Three years later, Gene Kranz left his aircraft testing job to join NASA and champion the American cause. What he found was an embryonic department run by whiz kids (such as himself), sharp engineers and technicians who had to create the Mercury mission rules and procedure from the ground up. As he says, "Since there were no books written on the actual methodology of space flight, we had to write them as we went along." Kranz was part of the mission control team that, in January 1961, launched a chimpanzee into space and successfully retrieved him, and made Alan Shepard the first American in space in May 1961. Just two months later they launched Gus Grissom for a space orbit, John Glenn orbited Earth three times in February 1962, and in May of 1963 Gordon Cooper completed the final Project Mercury launch with 22 Earth orbits. And through them all, and the many Apollo missions that followed, Gene Kranz was one of the integral inside men--one of those who bore the responsibility for the Apollo 1 tragedy, and the leader of the "tiger team" that saved the Apollo 13 astronauts. Moviegoers know Gene Kranz through Ed Harris's Oscar-nominated portrayal of him in Apollo 13, but Kranz provides a more detailed insider's perspective in his book Failure Is Not an Option. You see NASA through his eyes, from its primitive days when he first joined up, through the 1993 shuttle mission to repair the Hubble Space Telescope, his last mission control project. His memoir, however, is not high literature. Kranz has many accomplishments and honors to his credit, including the Presidential Medal of Freedom, but this is his first book, and he's not a polished author. There are, perhaps, more behind-the-scenes details and more paragraphs devoted to what Cape Canaveral looked like than the general public demands. If, however, you have a long-standing fascination with aeronautics, if you watched Apollo 13 and wanted more, Failure Is Not an Option will fill the bill. --Stephanie GoldFrom Publishers WeeklyWhen the heroic American astronauts of the '60s and '70s inquired, "Houston, do you read?" it was often Krantz's team who answered from the ground. Veteran NASA flight controller Krantz (portrayed by Ed Harris in the film Apollo 13) has written a personable memoir, one that follows his and NASA's careers from the start of the space race through "the last lunar strike," Apollo 17 (1972-1973). Krantz's story opens in the world of the first U.S. space scientists, of exploding Mercury-Atlas rockets, flaming escape towers and "the first rule of flight control": "If you don't know what to do, don't do anything!" Its climax is Apollo 13, with Krantz serving as "lead flight director" and helping to save the trapped astronauts' lives. His account of that barely averted disaster evokes the adrenalized mood of the flight controllers and the technical problems ("gimbal lock," oxygen status, return trajectories) that had to be solved for the astronauts to survive. Elsewhere in these often-gripping pages we learn of the quarrels that almost derailed Gemini 9A's spacewalk; "the best leaders the program ever had," among them George Mueller,

who revived NASA after a 1966 launchpad fire; the forest of internal acronyms and argot ("Go-NoGo," "all-up," EVA, the Trench, CSM, GNC, FIDO, RETRO, GUIDO); and the combination of teamwork and expertise that made the moon landings possible. Plenty of books (and several films) have already tried to depict the space program's excitement; few of their creators had the first-person experience or the attention to detail Krantz has, whose role as flight control "White" his readers will admire or even wish to emulate. Eight bw photos. (Apr.) Copyright 2000 Reed Business Information, Inc.From BooklistThe NASA controller best known for his role in Apollo 13 entitles his autobiography with his personal motto. Kranz's NASA career, which followed a short stint as a fighter pilot, began way back in the Mercury days, with Alan Shepard's 1961 suborbital flight and the painful process of testing the Atlas booster for manned missions. Besides Apollo 13, the high points of Kranz's narrative are John Glenn's orbital flight, the moon-orbiting Apollo 8, and the first moon landing, Apollo 11--experiences as profound for the mission control professionals as they were for TV audiences. In passing, Kranz provides a wealth of fascinating data, anecdotes, and personal sketches; pays a large tribute to long-suffering wives (and a few husbands); and makes abundantly clear the amount of improvisation and the number of narrow margins involved in the early days of manned space flight. A song popular in space-advocacy circles is "Here's to the Unsung Heroes"--the people on the ground, that is, one of whom has now sung himself, effectively and movingly. Roland Green