



# If We Can Put a Man on the Moon: Getting Big Things Done in Government

*William D. Eggers, John O'Leary*

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The American people are frustrated with their government-dismayed by a series of high-profile failures (Iraq, Katrina, the financial meltdown) that seems to just keep getting longer. Yet our nation has a proud history of great achievements: victory in World War II, our national highway system, welfare reform, the moon landing.

We need more successes like these to reclaim government's legacy of competence. In *If We Can Put a Man on the Moon*, William Eggers and John O'Leary explain how to do it. The key? Understand-and avoid-the common pitfalls that trip up public-sector leaders during the journey from idea to results.

The authors identify pitfalls including:

- The Partial Map Trap: Fumbling handoffs throughout project execution
- The Tolstoy Syndrome: Seeing only the possibilities you want to see
- Design-Free Design: Designing policies for passage through the legislature, not for implementation
- The Overconfidence Trap: Creating unrealistic budgets and timelines
- The Complacency Trap: Failing to recognize that a program needs change

At a time of unprecedented challenges, this book, with its abundant examples and hands-on advice, is the essential guide to making our government work better. A must-read for every public official, this book will be of interest to anyone who cares about the future of democracy.

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