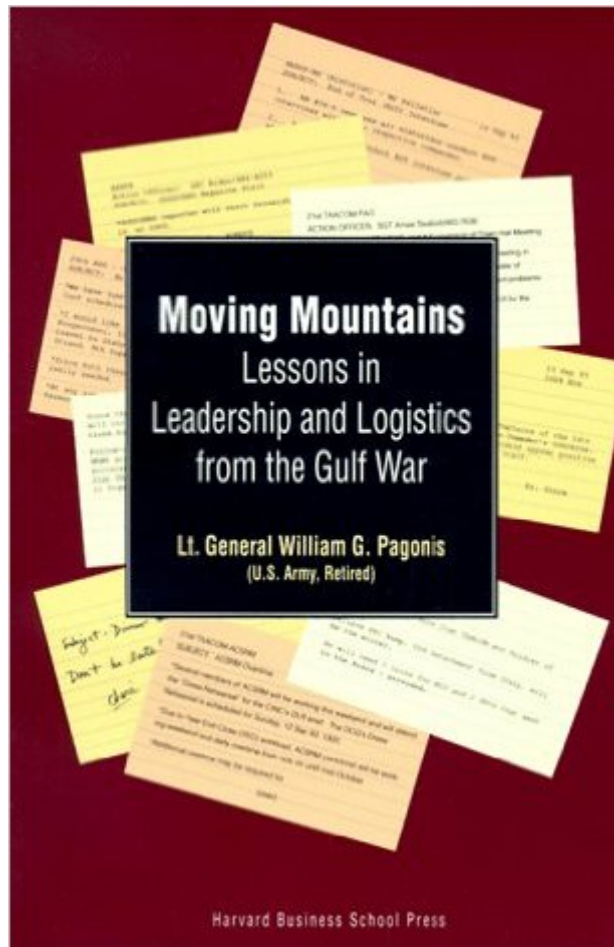


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# Moving Mountains: Lessons In Leadership And Logistics From The Gulf War



## Synopsis

"Business Week" described the Gulf War as "the largest military logistics operation in history", entailing an unprecedented deployment of troops and supplies halfway around the world. Here is a firsthand account of the supply effort that led to the dramatic Allied victory in the Gulf, written by the general who spearheaded the remarkable undertaking. General Pagonis recounts the Gulf War from the first fateful telephone call, to the mobilization of 550,000 troops and the shipment of 7,000,000 tons of supplies, to the enormously complex challenge of bringing home a half million soldiers and their equipment. Numerous leadership and logistics lessons can be gleaned from his experience. Pagonis describes his battlefield innovations as well as his inspirational leadership style. Using historical examples and current business practice, he makes a strong case for better leadership and better logistics, both in the military and in the private sector. In the Gulf War, leadership and logistics came together, and extraordinary goals were achieved. Pagonis demonstrated what senior managers of world-class companies now recognize: good logistics is an important source of competitive advantage. "Moving Mountains" offers lessons for all organizations facing major operational challenges.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

As a logistician, I bought this book in the expectation that it would enhance my professional knowledge. It didn't, and it didn't stay on my bookshelf, either. Written for the general reader in the profession of management, this book will enlighten no one in the profession of arms. The treatment of military logistics is all too shallow (and the treatment of the author all too deep). Gus Pagonis did a

magnificent job in the Gulf under incredibly difficult conditions. I had hoped that this work would tell us in some detail how he did it. But no. I suspect his editors at the Harvard University Press had a lot to do with that. It's too bad the publisher wasn't Presidio Press or some other house that understands military affairs.

From a military history point of view, logisticians get far too little credit for allowing the front line to even exist. Lt. Gen. Pagonis' book does attempt to offer some insight into the challenges of supplying the Army's needs as it built up during Operation Desert Storm in 1990-91, and then through Desert Storm. Very little is said about the withdrawal process of Desert Farewell. The problems with this book are that it is too much centered around a business school philosophy book- not to take too much away from the success that Pagonis had, but it seems less about the challenges of supply in a hostile environment than a depiction of how to solve problems. I greatly respect the efforts and solutions that Pagonis encountered and defeated, but wish this was more a military-oriented book and less of a business school effort. Regardless of these issues, *Moving Mountains* will give a reader some appreciation for all of the tasks and unsung duties by the rear echelon forces in combat, and how the Army has developed its ability to deal with any potential environments it may find itself in the future.

This is one of the best books on management out there. Like many officers, Pagonis thinks a little too highly of himself (in my opinion) but it is not overwhelming. I wish he explained in greater detail how his 6" x 9" card system worked because I didn't fully understand it (could have just been me though). This is probably the best treatise on the subject of military logistics out there. As a vet suffering from PTSD, I have met many young vets who have returned from the Mid East who are angry at the waiting they had to do before going into battle. I have shared this book with them and they have come back telling me "I didn't know it was that complicated". This book is a testament to all the behind the scenes work that is necessary to field an army.

I actually own an autographed copy of this book. I had the honor of serving with General Pagonis when he was a LTC and when he found out I was retiring he sent me a copy of his book with an autograph. One of the better books out there on leadership and problem solving. I bought this copy for my niece, she is graduating from college this year and I thought this would be a good book to read. Flexibility, problem solving and leadership will always be in short supply where ever she goes. These traits must be nourished and developed. This book will help her with those traits. This is not a

book for those looking for trite buzzwords. He gives real world examples of his problems, and by looking at those problems will give you insight to yours. I highly recommend adding this book to your reading list

While the victory in the gulf war of 1991 was obviously an accomplishment, it was perhaps most of all an achievement of logistics. Moving Mountains tells the story of that achievement and of the General who lead it. The book included a number of biographical references about General Pagonis. Fortunately these are kept brief. Pagonis's life, outside of the military seems to be largely unremarkable. In the military Pagonis reached a high rank. The text provides no clues as to what made him a success as an officer. Once the text turns to the gulf war it becomes much more absorbing. The descriptions of the early stages of the build up are interesting. So are some of the descriptions of the interactions with a few of his subordinates. The last chapter is a summary, or list of prescriptions of how to manage. These range from being specific to the military to being so general as to be trite and meaningless. There is nothing in between. In the end this book was fairly boring. It might be of interest to students of the gulf war, or to those in the military who might face similar situations.

The best book to date on military logistics. Explains in detail how the U.S. Army was able to accomplish it's mission in supplying over half a million troops when and where it was needed. Gen. Pagonis has written an excellent guide for officers and NCO's involved in logistics.

Anyone interested in buying this book must understand two things up front: 1. This book is written by a professional soldier and not a business school professor. 2. This book is one man's account of his duties and opinions on the subject of logistics and is not intended to be a textbook on the subject of logistics or a war novel. If you understand these two things before you buy the book then you will find this book to be very interesting as it is one of the few books written on military logistics. Moreover, you will gain insight into as to how General Pagonis used his personal leadership style to manage the logistical challenges of the first Gulf War. For someone wanting to learn about the nuts and bolts of logistics this book isn't for you. However, for those of you who want to gain an understanding of how logistics can impact the success or failure of a war while picking up a few words of wisdom in leadership from one of the best in the business will enjoy this book. I have read this book twice and I enjoyed it each time. Although I couldn't use much of the material from the book in my MBA classes, I was able to apply some of the information from this book while I was earning a graduate certificate

in Logistics and Supply Chain Management from Penn State.

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