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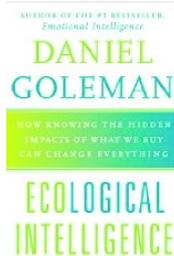
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Ecological Intelligence: How Knowing the Hidden Impacts of What We Buy Can Change Everything

Author: Daniel Goleman
Publisher: The Crown Publishing Group
Year: 2009
Pages: 288

Daniel Goleman's *Ecological Intelligence* attempts to breathe new life into the old saying that knowledge is power. Goleman argues that the products we buy today come with a "hidden price tag." These products have myriad impacts on the environment, on working conditions, on our own health and well-being, yet knowledge of these "hidden" impacts has long been difficult (if not impossible) for the average consumer to obtain. All that is beginning to change, says Goleman. The emerging field of industrial ecology has been developing sophisticated methods to quantify these impacts through a process called Life Cycle Assessment (LCA). This new assessment tool deconstructs familiar everyday products into vast webs of processes, running from raw material extraction, to manufacturing and transport, to use and disposal. Each stage in the life cycle brings with it a new set of impacts, which LCA analysts document with extreme precision. While efforts to make LCA-based information widely available to the public are still in a nascent stage, Goleman argues that this kind of "radical transparency" can boost



our ecological intelligence and lead to more ethical consumption and production.

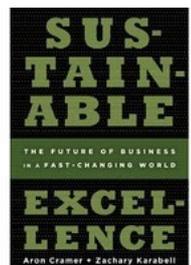
Goleman, who is a former science reporter for the *The New York Times*, as well as the author of *Emotional Intelligence* (1996) and *Social Intelligence* (2006), presents us with a very optimistic view of the future. By increasing marketplace transparency, Goleman argues, we give consumers more information, which in turn gives them the "intelligence" to make smarter choices. This new intelligence becomes a powerful mechanism for change when companies respond to changes in consumer demand with more sustainable products. This is not an entirely new idea, of course. Louis Brandeis remarked nearly a century ago that "sunlight is the best disinfectant," a statement that has been underscored by generations of economists claiming that information asymmetries (i.e. situations in which one party to a transaction has more information than the other) lead to inefficient market outcomes. *Ecological Intelligence* is nevertheless a very helpful book, if only because it reminds us how little we know about the products we buy.

Still, it remains to be seen whether access to new information will translate into meaningful changes in consumer behavior. Goleman finds hope in new initiatives such as GoodGuide, a smartphone application that provides users with social and environmental ratings on thousands of products and companies. The question, though, is whether enough consumers value this kind of information, and whether (and how quickly) the preferences of these consumers will *trickle up* through the supply chain.

Reviewed by: Matthew Maguire, CSR International

Sustainable Excellence: The Future of Business in a Fast- Changing World

Author(s): Aron Cramer and Zachary Karabell
Publisher: Rodale Books
Publication Date: 2010
Pages: 288



Today's business landscape is changing in fundamental ways. Natural resources are growing



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ever more scarce and expensive. Technology and changing consumer expectations are making transparency a fact of life. The rise of emerging economies creates vast market opportunities for companies - and better living standards for hundreds of millions. In *Sustainable Excellence*, Aron Cramer and Zachary Karabell tell the stories of companies that are transforming by responding to these paradigm shifts and reshaping the future of business.

Aron Cramer and Zachary Karabell saved the best for the last. The penultimate chapter of this book is called "Ten companies that will shape the world in 2020." The list is not what most of us might expect. Of the 10 companies mentioned, only five are US-headquartered global businesses, the other five are from China, India, Brazil, Spain and Israel. This is a list I am sure you could not have guessed, and may not even be able to completely comprehend without reading the other chapters of *Sustainable Excellence*.

The book's 14 chapters follow a logical path, starting with a definition of "sustainable excellence" and moving through a broad scope of related subsets, including a potted history of the sustainability movement, the relevance of sustainability to strategy, the role of leadership, a selection of emerging companies that are leading the way in sustainable practices, the importance and complexity of value chains, aspects of product stewardship, role of financial markets and socially responsible investing, positioning of commodities and influence of energy markets, the age of Green IT, smart-grids and sustainable urbanization, a view on authenticity, integrity and the greenwash factor in corporate practices, communications, cross-sector partnerships and the influence of NGOs. *Sustainable Excellence* is also a 'who's who' of every business that has made headway in sustainability practices over the past few decades, including Shell, Marks and Spencer, Pepsico, Walmart, SC Johnson, General Electric, Nike, Vale, Procter and Gamble, Unilever, TNT, Siemens, Du Pont, Samsung, Ikea, Levi Strauss, Unilever, Duke Energy, UPS, Novo Nordisk, Ford Motors, Ben and Jerry's, China Mobile, Clorox and many more. All have interesting stories woven into the book by Cramer and Karabell.

Finally, a personal note: when I read CSR books, I mark in green highlighter all the interesting pieces of information I want to be sure not to forget.

Sustainable Excellence has so much green on every page, I now need to buy a new pack of highlighters. I think I will send the bill to Messrs. Cramer and Karabell!

Adapted from a review originally published on CSRwire.com on 14 November 2010

Review by Elaine Cohen, Beyond Business Ltd.

The Social and Behavioural Aspects of Climate Change. Linking Vulnerability, Adaptation and Mitigation

Editor(s): Pim Martens, Chiung Ting Chang
Publisher: Greenleaf Publishing
Publication Date: 2010
Pages: 312



Climate Change is a topic that affects everyone in some way. Those not yet convinced of this statement are well advised to read *The Social and Behavioural Aspects of Climate Change*. In 12 case studies and five essays, mostly written by Dutch academics, the book successfully presents the variety of ways in which Climate Change influences businesses, science, policies and individuals.

The Social and Behavioural Aspects of Climate Change is a product of the research programme VAM (Vulnerability, Adaptation and Mitigation) which was conducted by the NWO (Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research) since 2004. The main objective of the efforts is to underline the need for input of the social sciences in the battle against Climate Change. The programme ran until 2010 and has its key results summarised in the book.

The editors and authors of the individual chapters put great effort to taking the reader with them at every step. This is to meet the challenge that naturally comes from writing a book about a rather new topic that is being discussed from many different perspectives. The reader gains insights into complex topics without getting frustrated about lacking background knowledge in these specialised fields. As a result, every reader can benefit from the thought-provoking text, regardless of whether they are an old hand at Climate Change matters or comparatively new to the topics.



The case studies are categorised in three clusters - 'Industry', 'Local Communities' and 'Institutions'. To pick out an example, the opening case study deals with the consequences climate change has for the inland navigation between the Netherlands and Germany. As the water level rises and drops more dramatically and more unpredictably due to Climate Change, the economic impact on welfare has to be taken seriously. Unresolved questions of how to distribute the costs of infrastructural investments and other adaptation measures between the two countries stimulate further research investments. Beside the case studies the book presents a synthesis of six essays on the societal effects of abrupt and extreme Climate Change in Europe. What might sound like a script for a Hollywood movie turns out to be a serious roundup of scenarios taking historical, legal, sectoral, institutional and economical aspects into account.

After the case studies and the essays the reader is not left alone with the new input. As a wrap-up, the editors analyse the outcomes of all studies in the light of recent developments and challenges experienced by Climate Change research. By doing this, the results of the individual chapters are placed elegantly into a broader dimension than just the Dutch climate change research.

Reviewed by: Pia Niehues, CSR International

**Corporate Community
Involvement: The
Definitive Guide to
Maximising your
Business' Societal
Engagement**



Author(s): Nick Lakin and Veronica Scheubel
Publisher: Greenleaf Publishing
Publication Date: 2010
Pages: 269

Corporate Community Involvement is a step-by-step manual for those corporate practitioners who seek practical guidance in order to implement steps in societal engagement. To be more specific, Lakin and Scheubel depict Community Involvement as the ideal practice for businesses and they compare and contrast this concept to Social Responsibility and other related terminologies such as Corporate

Giving, Strategic Philanthropy, Social Sponsorship and Corporate Citizenship, at the same time suggesting that these approaches are part of the dynamic development of Community Involvement.

The book's 11 easy-to-read chapters present the readers with every feature of Community Involvement that one deals with in a company. The book covers topics such as devising a strategy, budgeting and staffing programmes, partnering across sectors, involving employees, measuring, evaluating and reporting, leveraging results in internal and external communications as well as networking and influencing.

An interview with an experienced practitioner is presented in the opening parts of most of the chapters; this presents the topic while also sharing a best-practice example of Corporate Community Involvement in action. Each chapter is then enriched with tips, tools and hands-on advice to deepen the readers understanding. Case studies and inspiring stories portrayed come from numerous and world renowned corporations such as Microsoft, TNT, Siemens, Betapharm, Ericsson, Telefonica, Coca Cola, HSBC, BMW, The Body Shop, FedEx, Intel, McDonald, Nike, Unilever, IBM and UPS, including companies where the writers have served.

The book could have been a complete reference; however, compared to the manufacturing sector examples, little is offered from the practices of the extractive sector (mining, oil and gas) which, the book admits, is "the industry which has the biggest immediate impact on the environment and local communities and typically takes place in parts of the world with the weakest societal infrastructure."

The book offers the readers support in planning and executing a comprehensive and detailed approach to Community Involvement. It is indeed a worthwhile read for corporations who need to engage with their stakeholders in society.

Reviewed by: Mardian Marsono, CSR International

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