



CSR International Book Review Digest

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Big Business, Big Responsibilities

Authors: Andy Wales, Matthew Gorman and Dunstan Hope
Publisher: Palgrave MacMillan
Year: 2010
Pages: 184



"In the 21st century, the companies that succeed will be those that push the boundaries of collaboration, embracing new ways of working that promote sustainability"

In their first book, Andy Wales, Matthew Gorman and Dunstan Hope, look at the future of business based on current sustainability and ethical concerns. *Big Business, Big Responsibilities* offers a new view on the role that big business can play in tackling our century's biggest ethical and environmental challenges. Contrary to what is often found in the media, *Big Business, Big Responsibilities* argues that multinationals are among the leading visionaries when it comes to protecting human rights, tackling poverty and confronting climate change, citing examples from companies such as GE, SABMiller, BP, Marks&Spencer and more.

The authors argue that companies are starting to recognise that there is strong business case for

sustainability. No longer is corporate social responsibility simply a form of 'green-washing', but issues such as climate change, water scarcity and human rights are real issues that must be addressed in order to secure future business success.

However, businesses cannot achieve this success alone. Addressing these issues requires a collaboration, and shared responsibility, between business, government and NGOs. Rather than work against businesses, NGOs should work in collaboration, as a partner in helping businesses improve their practices. And governments can play a key role by levelling the playing field, and supporting business with tough policy and legislation - such as requiring businesses to cut emissions and be more transparent.

This book challenges preconceptions of big business and provides hope for the future of our globalised world. It is a simple and straightforward read - optimistic, while still recognising the fact that business still has a long way to go in improvements.

Review by: Heather Corker, CSR International

One Report: Integrated Reporting for a Sustainable Strategy

Author: Robert G. Eccles and Michael P. Krzus
Publisher: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
Publication Date: 2010
Pages: 235



The push for more corporate transparency has long been a key component of the CSR movement. And while interest in CSR reporting has been growing rapidly over the last decade, more recently it seems that the focus is starting to shift away from standalone CSR reports and toward the idea of integrated reporting. In *One Report: Integrated Reporting for a Sustainable Strategy*, Robert Eccles and Michael Krzus argue that companies should combine their financial and non-financial disclosures



into one integrated report. Doing so not only demonstrates to stakeholders that the company is serious about sustainability, but it also acknowledges that financial and non-financial performance are actually related and thus need to be considered side-by-side.

As Eccles and Krzus say, "Since a sustainable strategy is about integrating financial and non-financial performance, the inevitable consequence of this is that a company should report on how well it is doing this in an integrated way."

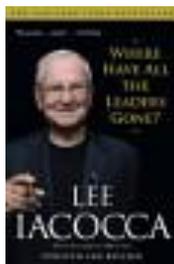
One Report also evaluates the content and format of current corporate disclosures. In terms of content, Eccles and Krzus argue that companies need to strike a balance between rules-based reporting and principles-based reporting in order to avoid excessive complexity while still providing stakeholders with actionable information. In terms of format, the authors recognize that traditional paper and PDF reports have their place, but they indicate that the future lies in web-based reporting as well as the use of electronic feeds based on Extensible Business Reporting Language (XBRL). Eccles and Krzus illustrate these points through a number of recent case studies involving Novo Nordisk (the Danish pharmaceutical company), Natura (a cosmetics company based in Brazil), and the United Technologies Corporation (based in the United States).

One Report is a short book that packs a big punch. Eccles and Krzus build a compelling argument for integrated reporting while remaining grounded in the practical realities and trends in communication technology that will shape corporate reporting in the years to come.

Review by: Matthew Maguire, CSR International

Where have all the Leaders Gone?

Author(s): Lee Iacocca and Catherine Whitney
Publisher: Simon and Schuster
Publication Date: 2007
Pages: 274



"A self-made man who many Americans once wished would run for president, Iacocca saved the Chrysler Corporation from financial ruin, masterminded the creation of the minivan, and oversaw the renovation of Ellis Island."

It has been a long known fact, that business icon Lee Iacocca is a straight talker and in his book, *Where have all the Leaders Gone*, he proves it yet again. He uses a lifetime of business experience from his days at Ford as the president and Chrysler as the CEO, making a case that America needs exceptional talent now to regain its social and economic prowess.

Iacocca expresses concerns on wide ranging subjects like the 2008 American presidential elections, the war in Iraq, energy policy in America and globalisation's challenges. This is a very interesting and thought provoking book and forces each American to ask questions like

- What is each of us giving back to our country?
- We are answerable to our Future Generation, so are we doing enough?
- Have we become too blind to the needs of the Environment?

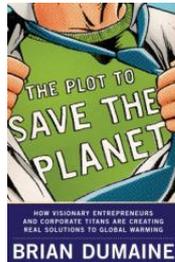
Lee chalks out his 9 C's of Leadership – Charisma, Curiosity, Creative, Character, Communicate, Courage, Conviction, Competence and Common Sense. While the book is very America-centric, many of the thoughts that the author shares would resonate with readers in any corner of the globe.

To sum up this book, Iacocca raises a challenge, a call to action and duty to the Government and the People of America. He says the nation is in desperate need of someone who can stand up and ask questions, make policies which can sustain the crisis that America is about to witness.

Review by: Vatika Grover, CSR International

The Plot to Save the Planet

Author: Briane Dumaine
Publisher: Crown Business
Publication Date: 2008
Pages: 288



Everyone loves a thriller, don't they? More so when the forces of good wage a battle against a seemingly all-powerful enemy. Brian Dumaine taps into disparate fields to uncover the counter-plot to thwart well-funded conspiracy theories that dismiss climate change as a hoax. In his book *The Plot to save the Planet*, he shares many stories of American entrepreneurs, corporate tycoons and financiers as he explores their powerful psyche to discover what motivates them and what keeps them awake at night. The book offers an intriguing look into the very near future as corporate mavericks vie to combine economic growth and environmental protection to battle global warming through new business models and cutting-edge technology.

The innovations explored in the book range from solar and wind energy, clean cars and practical bio-fuels to energy-smart offices and homes. Many of the solutions may appear impractical, or too expensive or counterproductive at the moment. Dumaine correctly points out that no single program however, is likely to solve the problem but taken together these exciting emerging technologies are our best chance for a carbon-free future. Such ventures could also yield astounding financial opportunities. He presents compelling evidence of why even the savviest of investors, Warren Buffett is investing heavily in wind power and why John Doerr, a leading venture capitalist and an early backer of Sun Microsystems, Yahoo and Google goes so far as to say "Green tech is bigger than the Internet. It could be the biggest economic opportunity of the twenty-first century" or for that matter why Richard Branson, has pledged the next ten years' profits from Virgin Airlines, an estimated \$300 billion, to create the clean fuel of the future not merely for charity, but as a rewarding business proposition.

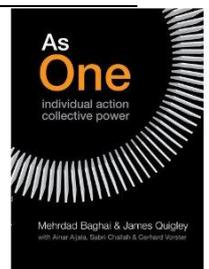
Against the backdrop of doom and gloom stories that persist in popular media, the book offers a

fresh perspective of hope and excitement that rivals that of the early Silicon Valley days. The reader is left with the clear picture of how it is a race with time after all - a race that offers much but is fraught with many risks.

Review by: Kiran Pereira, CSR International

As One: Individual Action, Collective Power

Author: Mehrdad Baghai, James Quigley et al
Publisher: Portfolio Penguin
Publication Date: 2011
Pages: 352



Leadership is one of the most important issues today, whether you're in a company board room, political rally, university lecture hall, sports team, or wherever else. The subject of countless conferences, workshops, inspirational talks, books and more, leadership can make the difference between success and failure, victory and defeat, excellence and mediocrity. *As One* is among the latest books to tackle this issue and the authors make the readers' experience a fun and educational one.

The book is very systematic and focuses throughout on the subtitle of 'Individual Action, Collective Power', examining the chemistry between a leader and the team, as well as the inner workings of the team. Many of the examples are from the corporate world, revealing in some cases how Corporate Sustainability and Responsibility thrives within the right leadership model.

The authors reveal eight archetypes – landlord and tenants, architect and builders, producer and creative team, senator and citizens, community organizer and volunteers, captain and sports team, conductor and orchestra as well as general and soldiers. For each archetype, the authors start with a story to inspire the reader and demonstrate the characteristics of this kind of leader. This is then followed by a detailed case study, a description of the archetypes six key characteristics as well as a section on how to apply the given approach effectively. Besides the quality material in the book, the aesthetic side of things is an added bonus – the glossy pages and rich photography make *As*



One a truly beautiful experience for readers.

After going through the archetypes, one is left with an unshakeable conviction that good leadership and harmonious teamwork make the difference in every situation. The corporate world has to learn that the sustainability of their business and the world in general can only be achieved in one way – by acting As One.

Review by: Nazareth Seferian, CSR International

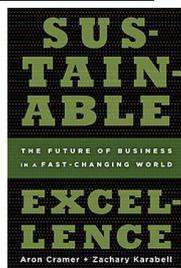
Sustainable Excellence: The Future of Business in a Fast-Changing World

Author: Aron Cramer and Zachary Karabell

Publisher: Rodale Books

Publication Date: 2010

Pages: 288



In their new book, *Sustainable Excellence*, authors Aron Cramer and Zachary Karabell use their first-hand experience to present the case that for companies to be successful in the future they will need to integrate sustainable excellence throughout their DNA.

To address the changing global economy, companies need to consider important environmental, social and governance issues and apply superior principles of sustainability to their business practices. The effects of climate change, growing populations, emerging economies, and availability and prices of natural resources are all examples of some of the issues companies are facing in the long term.

Cramer and Karabell present five core elements that companies will need to incorporate into their business practices to excel over the long run. They include:

- Think big: create business strategies that meet big global challenges
- Use sustainability to drive innovation
- Set the right incentives internally and externally
- Embrace the transparent world and collaborate
- Make consumers your partners

In order to highlight the importance of these core

elements, the authors successfully present various case studies providing numerous examples of how companies have adapted their business strategies to include sustainability. The case studies cover a wide variety of sectors and issues from technology and innovation, to products and supply chains, as well as energy and natural resources. Companies highlighted included Nike, Walmart, Ford, GE, ANZ, ICICI, Levi-Strauss, IBM, SAP and Coca-Cola. Their examples prove time and time again that companies that have incorporated some or all of the five core elements mentioned above are successfully engaging with their customers, generating profits, and positively contributing to social and environmental sustainability.

However, Cramer and Karabell are not disillusioned. Even with all of the great work that has been completed to date, they recognise that there is often a gap between what companies say they will do and what they actually do. Companies must have the willingness and leadership to make drastic shifts and redefine their business strategies. Interestingly, they draw our attention to ten companies to watch as they could shape our world over the next decade.

The authors drive home the point that sustainable excellence is no longer an option for companies but a “key ingredient for lasting success in a fast-changing world”. Ultimately, the goal is to make “sustainable excellence become simply excellence”.

Review by: Jennifer Roynon, CSR International

(Also reviewed in the November 2010 edition of the CSRI Book Review Digest)

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