FOREWORD REVIEWS THE INDIE WE LOVE.

Business & Economics

I Moved Your Cheese: For Those Who Refuse to Live as Mice in Someone Else's Maze
Deepak Malhotra
Berrett-Koehler
978-1-60994-065-2
(August 31, 2011)

As Spencer Johnson's iconic *Who Moved My Cheese?* clarified for many readers nearly fifteen years ago, change is inevitable. We must either adapt or be left behind. Enter Deepak Malhotra, a professor at the Harvard Business School, who argues that such thinking is "not simply incomplete, but dangerous." Telling others to "accept their limitations" and survive as best they can within the maze of life's implicit expectations fails to address how the maze itself might be an obstacle. A mouse in a maze—say, an out-of-work professional—can remain trapped by refusing to repackage his or her carefully planned career as a diverse skill set transferable to other mazes and new opportunities. Since professional workers change "careers" an average of eleven times during their working lives, clearly, the ability to adjust (to getting downsized, etc.) requires a level of creativity for which many are unprepared.

As is typical with business books that seek to inspire, *I Moved Your Cheese* focuses on more than people's working lives. By mimicking the fable format of his book's predecessor-*cum*-antagonist, Malhotra renders his work accessible to readers confronting a variety of challenges. The "maze" can be any of the myriad complex problems people face. By interrogating the claim that "the mouse must take the maze as given," Malhotra's mice, Max, Big, and Zed, escape its seemingly "insurmountable" walls to invent entirely new ways of being.

When readers substitute words such as "happiness" and "fulfillment" for "employment," Malhotra's insights are equally compelling. A thirty-something single person tired of dreary first-dates with duds, for example, can move beyond mandatory coupling to instead realizing the security provided by platonic friendships. Even parenting is possible without a partner. In an uncertain world, leaving internalized patterns and expectations behind permits one, as any Trekkie knows, "to boldly go where no one has gone before."

At first glance, the book's large font and easy readability may discourage serious consideration. However, browsing through the discussion guides at the back will soon show that

that this book’s message is both profound and durable. Malhotra has left the maze, and so can we.

Elizabeth Breau