Clarion Review

Self-Help

Making Purpose Work: The Challenge of Growing Ourselves and Our Companies
Franchee Harmon
HPH Publishing
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Four Stars (out of Five)

Companies with *it* have bright futures companies without *it* will eventually face extinction. Franchee Harmon says the crucial construct is Purpose. Innovators who engage the component strategies of Purpose also tend to encourage more creative thinking. The best insights come from examining seemingly unrelated ideas in tandem in search of an original connection. Corporations which seek to copy industry leaders and aim simply to keep up are more rigid unpleasant and stifling of individual outside-the-box thinking. "…businesses must achieve greater flexibility in roles processes strategies and responsibilities."

Bucking a trend in business book content the author spends remarkably little time detailing a central theoretical model or indicating how to practically apply it to the current corporate realities. Instead the majority of the page-count draws deeply from classical philosophy neurological anatomy and cognitive / behavioral psychology finding sound precedents for valuing purpose emotion and belief. The author subtly appeals to the up and coming wave of business leaders. Managers under age thirty-five are more likely to be open to a new work-culture paradigm which isn't driven by pure rationalism. "Despite near neglect and subordination to reason emotion has managed to find supporters."

The line of argument includes references to creative risk-takers such as Steve Jobs of Apple Walt Disney and the ubiquitous guru Peter Drucker. Less expected and most welcome are figures from the arts realm and pop culture. Dr. John Nash finds his Game Theory Miles Davis makes the masterpiece *Kind of Blue* by trusting the improvisational skills of other top drawer musicians. Rapper Eminem's role from the movie *Eight Mile* is cited for its handling of fear and risk-taking. Harmon synthesizes widely divergent sources of information into sensible unitary prose asking "What are our challenges to achieving purpose / meaning and survival?"

Franchee Harmon is a native Chicagoan who has worked as a management consultant in

both the United States and the United Kingdom. She is currently the Managing Director of Leaps of Thought LLC. The author has a firm grounding in a number of fields of science and humanities. The trouble is the targeted audience of business students and managers want to know which specific improvements a given book can help them make within their areas of responsibility. They may not stick with it past the hippocampus and David Hume. Readers with multidisciplinary interests on the other hand will feel more engaged and challenged into considering new views. *Making Purpose Work* will be supported by a multi-city tour.