

Even a change of title, more oriented towards 'realization and development of human potential and aspirations at the individual, organizational and societal levels (beyond any boundaries)', rather than 'managing organizational process', may not also be out of place.

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***Making Information Technology Work*** by Shivaraj Kanungo, Sage Publications, 1999, 430 Pages, Price Rs. 525

Delineating the scope of information technology is itself a formidable task and the management of IT is, naturally, no simpler. Although the importance of addressing the core issues underlying the management of IT has never been undermined, the existing literature is certainly far from adequate in offering concrete guidelines to managers knee deep in the problem. The author's attempt to bridge this gap is well timed and laudable.

The book is comprised of nine chapters. In the first chapter, the author discusses the role of information technology (IT) in organizations. How IT wave has been modulating work environments was discussed with pointers to a few examples worldwide. Chapter 2 has been devoted to discussing frameworks for understanding this role in organizations. The primary emphasis has been on Nolan's framework whose applicability got explored with references to some live information systems. Chapter 3 attempts to capture the issues that matter most in IT management in India. Management attitude across the entire hierarchy, prevailing nature of competition, organizational culture, and personnel related issues that make India different from others have been looked into. Facilitators and inhibitors of the use of IT in Indian organizations have been identified.

Chapter 4 delves into the difficult terrain of the relationship between IT and people in an organization, particularly in the domain of IT induced changes. Implications of roles played by people, especially by those at the top, have been addressed. Case studies of some Indian organizations included in this context are suggestive.

Strategic angles of IT management are addressed in Chapter 5, IS/IT planning issues have been elaborated with particular references to the context of Indian organizations. The case study of Gujarat Heavy Chemicals Limited (GHCL) discussed is enlightening. The succeeding two chapters dwell on stages of information systems growth and on understanding the IT dynamics of one's own organization.

Chapter 8, duly entitled *Organizing for Successful Information Technology Use*, would be useful to readers who had been particularly looking for mysteries surrounding the thumb rule of taking a satisfying plunge in the ocean of confusion engulfing *successful use of IT*. The book ends with an epilogue where the author identifies responsibilities of people who mattered in an organization in order to enable information technology play its effective role.

The strength of the book lies in its practical approach. The author implicitly recognizes the areas of practical difficulties of making information technology work and consciously resists his temptation of offering concrete recommendations often advised in popular literature supposedly to achieve miracles. Of particular interest to those having interest in Indian organizations would be the frequent references, though cursory at times, to experiences of a sizeable number of Indian organizations corroborating the author's views. The author's research in collecting such data is praiseworthy. The list of reading is also quite useful and is reasonably updated. The quality of printing is quite good. The language is lucid. The price, though not unaffordable, is a little on the higher side for an average Indian target reader, the university students in particular. The only aspect of the book a serious reader may not be fully comfortable with is its scope, which, perhaps has been a little too broad. Consequently, the depth had to suffer at times as the physical thickness of the book is quite reasonable. The depth of some chapters (like, *Information Technology and People*) left much to be desired. However, this could well have been the author's intention – the tradeoff between breadth and depth could certainly be his conscious choice.

The book should be useful to the readers in academic community as well as to those in corporate sectors, particularly to those operating in India. On the whole, the author's effort has been quite successful.

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*Business Economics* by Roger Perman and John Scouller, 1999, Oxford University Press, New York, Price not stated.

There are now a very large number of books on "Business Economics" or "Managerial Economics". Usually much of the material in such books is sourced from standard microeconomic theory, though authors who target students in business schools generally expend more effort to include real life examples and applications than authors of books aimed at economics students. These books also contain detailed analysis of topics like investment decisions, managerial decision-making, etc. These books are more properly thought of as books on *economics for business students*. It is felt that certain topics from economics might be useful for business students and these (sometimes disparate) topics are put together in a book. However, there is generally no attempt to develop an integrated view of "Business Economics" per se.

Some attempts are now being made to marry economics with management science. Economics is sought to be used as an unifying framework for understanding and analysing some of the most important questions faced by management theorists. This is what I want to refer to as *business economics*.

The book by Perman and Scouller is the first book I have come across that makes a heroic attempt to develop an integrated framework for business economics and succeeds to a remarkable extent. The central theme of the book is "value" and the search for value. The tools from macroeconomics, industrial organization, strategic management and business environment are relentlessly brought to bear upon the question of value creation. The questions raised are : When and how does a firm create value ? How does it appropriate value ? When is the process of value creation sustainable ?