

The concluding chapters provide valuable insight into the authors' perspectives on the continuing challenges facing the researcher pursuing empirical scholarship in the field of business ethics (such as biased responses of participants and confidentiality) as well as the many questions that continue to emerge in the field. Trevino and Weaver note that:

[C]hanges in technology, culture, politics, demographics, and other areas of life, for example, globalization, workforce diversity, and so on, continue to challenge organizations by creating new ethical issues and questions and by forcing new ways to manage with those issues.

The book is an ambitious undertaking that seems intended and has clear merit for the serious scholar seeking to appreciate the completed research, as well as the theoretical questions and new and ongoing challenges, in the field of business ethics scholarship. The authors state their intent to bring together and "draw conclusions between aspects of [their] work that have always been obvious to [them] but perhaps have not been apparent to others." This bringing together did not always flow smoothly for this reviewer who felt the book might have benefited from smoother transitions. Although the book is a challenging and exhaustive (figuratively and literally) read, the authors' work has been completed in the real work places of America, as well as in the halls of academia, and, as such, has significance for the practitioner as well as the scholar.

The first section of the book is very academically focused and could lose the company manager or ethics officer who might most appreciate the middle sections of the book, which deal with concrete organizational issues and practices, and with the findings from the authors' and others' research. The concluding chapters are very provocative, as the authors identified the multiple dimensions of corporate culture and environment that will continue to challenge the thinking of both academicians and business practitioners about managing ethics.

Abbass F. Alkhafaji. Strategic Management: Formulation, Implementation, and Control in a Dynamic Environment. New York: Haworth, 2003, 317 pages, \$39.95 softcover.

Reviewed by *Victoria Buenger*, Visiting Assistant Professor, Department of Management, Texas A&M University, College Station, TX.

Alkhafaji has written a compact (10 chapters) strategic management text that covers the essentials of strategy. It includes most of the standard strategy topics (environmental analysis, corporate, business, and functional strategies, and implementation and control issues) and a couple that are usually shortchanged in strategy texts (corporate culture and strategy for not-for-profit organizations). The 21 cases included with

the text contain one or two paragraph synopses of each company and a handful of Internet sources for each that students can peruse for more information.

The chapter covering strategic management in the international environment is the most interesting part of the book, by far. Alkhafaji goes beyond the usual forays into whether international, multinational, transnational, or global approaches make the most sense for a particular company or whether the mode of entry should be by exporting, licensing, franchising, joint venture, or wholly owned subsidiary. The discussion probes deeply into the drivers for internationalization and barriers that firms will likely encounter. As an strategy instructor who is tired of students blithely suggesting that the solution to most firms' strategy woes is to "go global," I was pleased to see that Alkhafaji's international strategy chapter offers students a systematic approach for evaluating and making decisions about when and how to enter international markets. He then takes the next step and explains how firms that find compatible opportunities in international markets must then determine the scope of operations, international corporate objectives, and, finally, what international strategy they should adopt. Much of this chapter is supplemented by interesting and fresh examples, such as a description of Coca-Cola's move into new markets, including American Samoa, where the population drinks 500 eight-ounce servings of Coca-Cola products each year, and Iceland with an average consumption of 397.

Equally useful is the chapter on assessing the environment, especially the appendix that discusses the use of financial ratio analysis. This discussion includes information about interpreting financial statements and about calculating crucial ratios. Given that students in strategy classes will vary considerably in their ability to use numbers to guide strategy, these discussions will help bring even reluctant quantifiers up to speed. Alkhafaji also sets students on the right track when he points out and defines the many qualities of the strategic management process: futurity, long-range impact, iterative process, systematic and rational, integrated function, means to an end, and high stakes. The idea to let students build their own strategy cases, with a brief prompt and some key Internet sites is appealing (although perhaps not as helpful to instructors who depend heavily on case notes). Students can learn more about companies they are currently reading about, rather than about those that made headlines a couple of years ago.

Unfortunately, the remainder of the book does not offer as complete and fresh a look at strategy as these sample topics indicate. Although the author suggests that the "duty of the strategist is to see the organization as a whole, to understand the interdynamics of the organization, and to make decisions in light of the environment in which the organization op-

erates," the text does not highlight these subtle activities. In fact, it more closely fits the description that appears on page 72 (italics added for emphasis): "Formulation of strategy will allow executives to know *the exact strategy* that should be followed *in every situation* if executives understand the environmental variables and organizational variables that have significant input on the context of strategy." Many of the chapters read like cookbooks. . . in situation X, use strategy Y. Students may conclude that devising a winning strategy is merely a matter of putting the right ingredients together in the mixing bowl. Here are a few examples drawn from among the many included in this book:

"Cost leaders offer to customers only products that are proven to be wanted and therefore the company seeks to gain market share." Do all cost leaders stick with proven products and market share?

"A good strategy for a firm in this position [in the BCG matrix] would be to continue its current course of action and make every effort to maintain the status quo even though this may require substantial investment." Do firms in growth markets with high share really just stand pat?

"Two factors trigger the consideration of a vertical integration strategy: Diminished profit potential. . . . Inability to realize economies of scale and performance." Only these two? Do they trigger anything else?

Prescriptive advice in a textbook is not necessarily the kiss of death, but this book has a few other problems that might give an adopter pause. The overall structure and organization of the book does not provide an easy platform to teach from. Each chapter is strung together stream-of-conscious style with little to join sections to each other besides the headings and subheadings. The chapter on business and functional strategies moves from contingency theory, through generic theory, including sustainable advantage and Porter, and through the use of descriptive characteristics, such as those coined by Peters and Waterman. It then moves into a discussion of competitive strategies and the health care industry, past various functional strategies, and ends with strategy types (three forms of strategy: globalization, multinationalization, and triadization). Students will have difficulty recognizing how all of these topics fit together and how they should make sense of them in light of the overall topic of business strategy. A more informed reader might imagine that the author wanted to cover all or most strategy topics written about in the last few decades, but had decided in advanced that everything had to fit into 10 predetermined chapter categories.

The "tossed salad" approach to textbook writing is fairly common, as authors don't want to offend someone by leaving out their pet topic. An-

other flaw, however, is much less common. The current business model for textbook publication calls for new editions of popular textbooks to be released every second or third year to cut back on the sales- and profit-stealing effect of the used book market. Most of these texts differentiate themselves by adding the latest strategy research findings and eliminating old or tired company and industry examples in favor of brand new cases and illustrative material. Although this book makes an effort to be up-to-date with its unique case scenarios tied to the Internet, the bulk of the book stands in contrast to the mainstream model. It relies heavily on timeworn examples such as Honda's original entry into the U.S. market, KFC's foray into Asia in the 1970s, and John Deere's response to the economic downturn in the early 1980s. A quick glance through the chapter notes finds a majority of the references to articles published more than 20 years ago and many that are cribbed from other textbooks. Even the Internet scenarios could become dated quickly as links change and companies evolve.

Although there are other nits I could pick, I will leave this review with three questions that I do not have an answer to: Why review a textbook in this journal? Why review a strategy textbook in this journal? Why review "this" strategy textbook in this journal?

Haridimos Tsoukas and Christian Knudsen (Editors). **The Oxford Handbook of Organizational Theory: Meta-Theoretical Perspectives**. Oxford, UK: Oxford, 2003, 644 pages, £70.00 hardcover.

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Tsoukas is Professor of Organization Theory and Behaviour at the University of Strathclyde, and the George D. Mavros Research Professor of Organization and Management at ALBA, Greece. Knudsen is Professor of Economics of the Firm and Methodologies at Copenhagen Business School. They took on the charge of creating a collection of contributions specifically focused on meta-theoretical reflections or research on organization theory (OT) itself. The main question that the scholars were to debate concerned the status of OT as a social science discipline, including under OT both organization theory and organizational behavior. The 23 papers have been divided between five parts (I've included also the lead author of each part): I. Organization Theory as a Social Science-Donaldson; II. The Construction of Organization Theory-Starbuck; III. Meta-Theoretical Controversies in Organization Theory-Reed; IV. Organization Theory as a Policy Science-Argyris; and V. The Future of Organization Theory-Burrell.