

10-1986

Reviews

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Recommended Citation

Shane, Jewell Lewis; Cantrell, Gaylah R.; and Powell, Norma (1986) "Reviews," *Woman C.P.A.*: Vol. 48 : Iss. 4 , Article 8.

Available at: <https://egrove.olemiss.edu/wcpa/vol48/iss4/8>

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encountering in the field. However, to ensure that these benefits are realized with the minimum amount of associated costs, firm management must properly plan and control.

Summary

The subcommittee believes that many of the technological trends that will impact the profession are now well established. The views that the subcommittee has expressed in its report are based on the personal and professional observations of its members, all of whom are actively involved in EDP and information technology within their respective firms or universities.

A compelling case for a significant response by the profession to changes in information technology can be made if one accepts one or more of the following observations:

- a. The rate of technological change, particularly the cost/benefit characteristics of such change, is currently high and will increase.
- b. The changing technology has potential business and competitive implications which will impact some areas of current practice and the structure and economics of future practice.
- c. Since the mid-1950's, the profession has been in a reactive, catch-up posture with the result that some professional mechanisms are badly in need of a major overhaul, not simply a minor tune-up.



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BOOK REVIEWS

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Become A Top Consultant by Ron Tepper, John Wiley & Sons, Inc., New York, 1985, 243 pp., \$19.95

You believe you can do it! Then you have the key — the key to success in the consulting field. So states Ron Tepper in his new book, *Become A Top Consultant*.

"It is far more important than people realize. What you believe yourself to be, you will ultimately become . . . We are in a people business. We relate to them daily. What we think comes across and causes them to either believe in us or reject our ideas," agrees Arnold Van Den Berg, one of the consultants Mr. Tepper interviewed for his book.

The experiences of ten men considered to be successful in the consulting field are the basis of *Become A Top Consultant*. These are consultants who have diverse abilities and backgrounds and who have utilized various methods in their quests to obtain success in the consulting field. In his interviews with these ten men, the author does not limit his focus to their successes but brings to light some of the mistakes and pitfalls encountered on the pathway to establishing profitable consulting firms.

Each consultant is introduced in an informative paragraph in the "Preface" of *Become A Top Consultant*. The reader gets an insight into the personality of each man from the brief but descriptive introductions Mr. Tepper makes.

Larry Nickels is described as "quiet, soft-spoken," while Hugh Holbert is "gregarious, outgoing." Ed Pearson is "analytical and observant," and Hank Zdonek is "busy and always on the move." Their areas of consulting are as diverse as their personalities.

Despite their differences, a posi-

tive outlook is a shared characteristic. "Think well of yourself," advises Jack Spahn, and Fred Peters adds, "believe in your product."

As in any business, there are risks involved in consulting, yet Tom Hopkins believes there can be no progress unless some risk is involved. Van Den Berg agrees: "If there is no risk involved, there is no opportunity."

Consulting means answering needs, and these consultants have found that specialization is vital to success. Their recommendation is to target an industry and focus on its needs.

These men credit much of the growth of their businesses to contacts through volunteer activities and to referrals from other clients. Most of these consultants have volunteered for civic activities, for they believe that becoming acquainted with other business people generates business.

With few physical assets, beginning consulting firms have found bank loans difficult to obtain. Lack of working capital can be a pitfall and may be a good reason for starting as a part-time consultant. Part-timers can enter the business slowly and determine whether it is what they want. Knowing one can pay the bills can free the mind for productive thinking, allow one to be more selective, and allow for some of the inevitable mistakes that will be made.

How to determine the market, generate clients, and set fees are important areas discussed. Mr. Tepper devotes several pages to sources of free or low-cost research information, one source being "picking the brains" of successful consultants.

A willingness to work in order to achieve goals is another common characteristic of these men. All made a conscious decision to put in the hours required, averaging 63 hours per week at the beginning of their

consulting careers. These consultants agree, however, that the rewards make the efforts and risks worthwhile. They enjoy being creative, financially independent, and in charge of their lives.

The principles brought out in *Become A Top Consultant* appear to be basic and applicable to anyone aspiring to enter the consulting field. Had it not been for Mr. Tepper's statement on page seven that leads one to believe his book was directed to the male population, the fact that all ten of the interviewees were men might easily have been overlooked.

You believe you can do it! Then you have the key — the key to success in the consulting field. However, Mr. Tepper very ably points out that satisfactory performance requires long hours and hard work. What is clear is that following no one set of rules can assure a person's becoming a successful consultant. Each of those interviewed built his practice using his own unique methods, combined with a positive attitude, specialized knowledge, and a willingness to work.

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Re-Inventing the Corporation: Transforming Your Job and Your Company for the New Information Society by John Naisbitt and Patricia Aburdene, Warner Books, Inc., New York, 1985, 308 pp. Hardback, \$17.50.

John Naisbitt collaborates with Patricia Aburdene to present the sequel to *Megatrends*. In *Megatrends*, Naisbitt identified ten political, social and economic trends that are occurring to de-industrialize the advanced economies of the world and move them toward information societies. The new information society is a multi-option society that finds its structure shifting to a high tech/high touch, networking, participatory, self-reliant society that takes a long-term global view. Naisbitt and Aburdene take the trends developed in *Megatrends* and integrate them into corporate life, citing

changes companies are experiencing as examples.

An information society's production inputs are information, knowledge and creativity. Since humans are the source of these resources, human capital will replace financial capital in importance as we move from the industrial age to the information age.

This increased emphasis on human capital comes at a time when the baby boomers are in their 20s and 30s and nearing middle management, with those at the beginning of the baby bust in their teens. According to Census Bureau statistics, by 1987 there will be a negative net gain in the labor force; that is, more people will be exiting the labor force than entering. A negative net gain will begin to create a seller's market for human capital. It is the human resource shortage that will bring about many changes in the workplace. One change will be the utilization of the wasted resources of the fastest growing sector of our society — the retired.

Corporate structures will change in response to the atmosphere necessary to nurture the new society. An important key to success in the new society will be the ability of entrepreneurs, both inside and outside the corporate shell, to create a vision (goal) and to motivate associates to adopt and share responsibility for achieving this vision.

Naisbitt and Aburdene promote the idea of a win/win relationship between entities and their employees. The changes discussed not only make a better workplace for employees, but entities also benefit as a result of happier, more productive employees. As more and more computers perform middle management's functional tasks, managers will become the teachers, mentors, and developers of human potential.

The educational sector will have to develop a curriculum to provide the basic skills of a high tech/high touch society: thinking, learning, creating. A firm foundation in technical aspects with the flexibility of creativity is needed. Corporations will become more involved with education, not only of their employees but also in their community. Increased corporate involvement in wellness and fitness programs will also occur. The benefits will be im-

proved resources (people) and reductions in fast-growing health care costs.

The chapter on "Women and the Corporation" is honest and direct. Women have already been active in reshaping the economy. As many women in their 20s and 30s work as do men. Job styles will be more flexible as dual earner couples invade the workplace. The need for child care and changing attitudes about family responsibilities is at the core of the new relationship of the corporation and the family. By 1984, 1500 companies were already involved in child care. Maternity-paternity leaves, child care, and flexible hours are all issues that concern today's young family.

Corporations have been slow to change when it comes to a woman's pay and management opportunities. But the new society brings new opportunity. Who is better than a woman to be a teacher, a mentor, a nurturer?

Baby Boomers, accustomed to education and affluence, have different social values than their parents. But this alone will not bring about change in the workplace. It will be the shortage of entry level workers and changing social values that will require corporations to change in order to successfully compete for top talent in the baby bust.

Naisbitt and Aburdene simply document and put into some order what one can see currently taking place in society. The question is not will the changes take place, but rather to what extent will the changes continue. Having fun at work — how nice!

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