

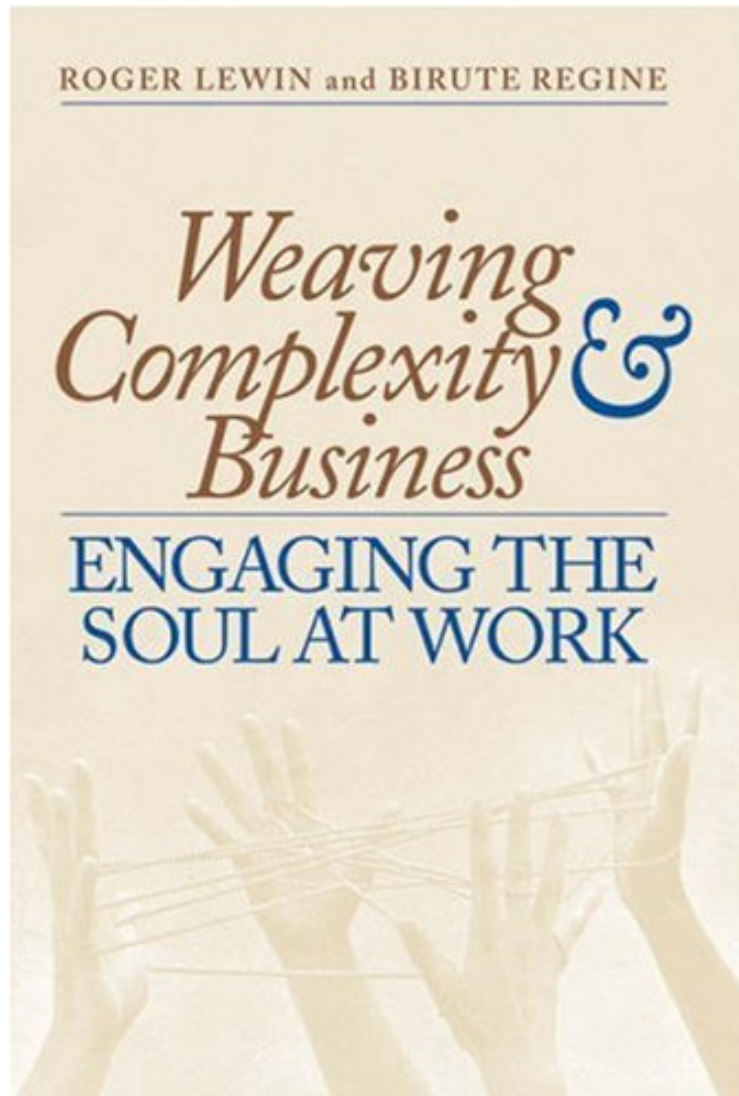
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Roger Lewin, Birute Regine
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(Free) Weaving Complexity and Business: Engaging the Soul at Work

Weaving Complexity and Business: Engaging the Soul at Work

Roger Lewin, Birute Regine : Weaving Complexity and Business: Engaging the Soul at Work before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Weaving Complexity and Business: Engaging the Soul at Work:

13 of 15 people found the following review helpful. THIS IS THE BEST BOOK I HAVE READ ON COMPLEXITY SCIENCEBy Donald MitchellThis is the best business book I have read since Arie de Geus's, The Living Company. THE SOUL AT WORK is beautifully written, delightfully edited, and full of useful advice for how to benefit from complexity science in your organization. Many books on this subject are very turgid, focus mostly on explaining complexity science, and have few examples and little specific advice. If you only want to read one book on complexity

science, this is the one for you. If you like a humanist approach to management (people come first), this is also a book you'll be glad you read. The authors do a very nice job of comparing the humanistic tradition in management and complexity science as bases for putting human relationships in the forefront of what needs to be accomplished. I especially enjoyed the many case histories of organizations applying complexity science, which included the thorns along with the roses. Only one case was familiar to me, that of Vodafone, and that one included a lot of material that I had not read or heard before. Obviously, a lot of careful research went into the work. The conclusion, that trust is essential, is one that other authors of books on complexity science agree with. I think the basis of that conclusion is explained better in this book. If I may expand on what the authors wrote, the reason that trust is so important is that it serves as a mediator to overcome the many sources of stalled progress in organizations. For example, trust helps straighten out miscommunications by encouraging dialogue rather than misinterpretation of motives, reduces misconceptions by increasing communications, softens the repugance that the ugly and repulsive can inspire (hiding us from what we need to focus on), assists in overcoming mindless following of traditional ways, inspires people to overcome procrastination, makes people open to new ideas which allows them to overcome disbelief about the new, and encourages flexible solutions that are normally stifled by bureaucratic processes. I hope the authors will write a sequel that has detailed directions about how to surpass the state of the art in using complexity science in organizations. I would read that book as well. I strongly urge you to read this book because its basic conclusions are very important for the type of virtual communications-driven organizations that will be everywhere in the future. You'll feel better about the new technology if you see, hear and feel how human relationships become even more important in this context. If you have friends or family members who are overwhelmed by the rate of change today, you should share this book with them as well.

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Nobel should recognise this genre

By Christopher Macrae

The Nobel prize for economics has often been awarded for subjects of far less organisational value than complexity science - the emerging curriculum which authors Lewin and Regine develop in this book and encourage you to translate into practical action. In my mind, every CEO 'should' profit hugely from reading this book. However, to do so requires sharing a belief. Namely that organisational decision-making now needs to be designed so that everyone is connected to relationship-building with stakeholders. This is a very different operating standard from the transactional one that most 20th C companies institutionalised. So, for some the challenge of change will be that the transparent communications nature of "the net" is changing everything. Read for example the with fellow marketers. The authors' reply comes firstly from a human resources perspective. The following is an over-simplification of the story that resonates through their book. Today's organisations can't expect to keep on growing by swapping knowledge workers on ever shorter tours of duty before they're recruited by someone else. Designing into work an environment in which a knowledge worker passionately connects his or her own skills with serving stakeholders is the smart way forward. Ultimately, most humans care more about working to make a difference than the short-term figures on the paycheck. Recent interviews show the emergence of a critical mass of companies that understand this picture, and are working to realise it by truly caring about the people relationships they have with every type of stakeholder. If one of your competitors has matured into this 21st C of organisational being and you haven't, how long do you have before each of your types of stakeholders discovers this and quits you for a place where everyone has more soul at work and more integrity in the way external customers are related to? The following extract provides an insight into why this book's human curriculum should be worth your while they have a mutual effect on one another something novel emerges. Anything that enhances these interactions will enhance the creativity and the adaptability of the system. In human organisations, this translates into agents as people, and interactions with mutual effect as being mutual respect, and have a mutual influence and impact on each other. From this emerges genuine authenticity and care. Care is not a thing but an action - to be care-full - to care about your work, to care for fellow workers, to care for the organisation, to care about the community. Companies guided by complexity science use open and prolific communication - a system grounded in genuine care that enhances relationships - with CEOs engendering trust and loyalty in their people, and the people being more willing to contribute to the needs of the company..."

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. I am buying multiple copies for leaders in my community!

By Roger E. Breisch

I recently heard Margaret Wheatley say it's difficult to dislike someone whose story you know. How powerful. What I love about this book is its emphasis on stories. Not only do Roger and Birute tell the stories of those who have listened to their intuition regarding the world, they encourage each of us to tell our own story and listen to the stories of those around us. It is through our stories that we find genuine connection, and through genuine connection that we find community. I LOVE these ideas and am thankful for this thoughtful and generous reminder. I enjoyed this book from the first to the last page. I leave with many thoughts and ideas on how to move into the rest of my life. I do intend to buy multiple copies, send them as gifts to key leaders in the community where I live and then invite them to join me in discussing the implications for our children and grandchildren. This is a wonderful companion to the work of Margaret Wheatley, Myron Kellner-Rogers, Tom Petzinger, Dee Hock, Stuart Kauffman, Per Bak, and so many others. Thank you Roger Lewin and Birute Regine.

Weaving Complexity and Business brings business people a new way of thinking about and working in the new economy, one that draws on the new science of complexity, which recognizes that business organizations are complex adaptive systems, in which people are crucial but unpredictable factors in their development. It offers managers and companies a deeper understanding of the organizational dynamics of today's fast-paced/changing business environment both within companies and among them. Moreover, the book outlines a new theory of business that places human-oriented management practices under a theoretical umbrella of complexity science. The book also contains detailed case studies of successful UK and US companies that have embraced the principles of complexity science.

For businesses to succeed in the 21st century, people can't be treated like cogs in a wheel, ready to be sacrificed for profits, say authors Roger Lewin and Birute Regine in *The Soul at Work*. Instead, people must "become the new bottom line," they say, drawing this conclusion with the help of complexity science and their own study of companies that profit by putting people first. "In today's business environment of rapid change, a collective effort, a recognized need for others, becomes the means of survival and success," say Lewin, a science writer, and Regine, a psychologist. Businesses that follow the principles of complexity science are distinguished by fewer levels of hierarchy and more open communication, and they value people "as a way to promote adaptability and business success." To show the principles of this new science at work, the authors profile organizations as diverse as the VeriFone division of Hewlett-Packard, DuPont, Monsanto, Babel's Paint and Decorating Stores in Massachusetts, Greenwich Village restaurants in New York, and Muhlenberg Medical Center in New Jersey. And they identify three practices common to these organizations: a style of leadership that guides without being controlling, the creation of dynamic teams, and the development of strong relationships among workers, customers, and community. *The Soul at Work* is an excellent resource for businesses and individuals interested in succeeding by getting the best out of people. --Dan Ring
Library Journal
In a nutshell, "complexity science" refers to how things interact with each other in the natural world. Lewin and Regine, respected academics and authors, attempt to build on this model, pointing out its applications in the business world. The world is often chaotic, though properly challenged people can often surmount and even thrive amidst the chaos. But what does this have to do with business? The authors argue convincingly that the old mechanistic, command-and-control workplace model has outlived its purpose. Industry is "in the throes of revolutionary changes," and companies must see themselves as "complex adaptive systems" more akin to "environmental ecosystems." Employees are not cogs but people, and authentic employer-employee relationships must be cultivated. Does this sound like the latest flavor-of-the-month management trend? Perhaps. But the authors are onto something here. Surveying a number of companies in both the United States and England, they show how large and small businesses that have embraced the principles of "complexity science" have turned themselves around, often dramatically, with improved profits and, more significantly, a more humane workplace for management and employees alike. Recommended for larger business collections.
Richard S. Drezin, Washington Post News Research Ctr., Washington, DC
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From Booklist
Organizational theorists have begun to look at the traits of complex adaptive systems to help understand how organizations work. At their conferences and in their papers, they rely on computer algorithms and mathematical models to make their arguments. Skeptics, though, ask, "What about people?" Lewin and Regine, neither of whom are managers, attempt to answer that question. Lewin is a popular science writer and the author of *Complexity: Life at the Edge of Chaos* (1992). Regine is a developmental psychologist who has investigated the "complexity of relational dynamics within human systems," such as families. Relations are the focus here. Complexity theory analyzes the mutual effect on one another when agents interact. In management, "agents" as often as not are people. The authors introduce the basic ideas behind complexity science and tell the "stories" of people's experiences at organizations that have begun to understand and attend to the interactions of people within them so that they become the "source of novelty, creativity, and adaptability." David Rouse