

Knowledge Mindfulness: The Interconnections That Help Leaders Transform Their Business and Life

Laila Marouf

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Proposing better ways to work and live in today's chaotic, fast-paced, and unpredictable world, Knowledge Mindfulness is an inspiring leadership text.

Laila Marouf's business guidebook *Knowledge Mindfulness* proposes a holistic approach to leadership.

Arguing that business leaders are held back by management techniques and processes derived from the twentieth-century characterization of organizations as machines, this book calls for personal and organizational change. It confronts contemporary issues of volatility, uncertainty, and ambiguity in a strategic manner, envisioning organizations as living organisms made up of interrelated living parts, each with their own knowledge, experiences, and connections to other individuals and groups. If businesses are treated as wide-ranging, dynamic networks, it says, they will secure a competitive advantage.

Drawing on research in psychology, neuroscience, business, economics, and the social sciences, as well as on experiential evidence, the book includes ample references and real-life examples, as with that of a Microsoft CEO who, failing to examine and change his long-held views, told a group of women to "have faith" that their compensation would be fair and to refrain from asking for raises, drawing serious backlash against the company. And the book illustrates values like resilience with geopolitical stories, as of Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, and in the story of a stroke-surviving journalist who wrote a whole book by blinking an eye to indicate each letter that his assistant was to write.

The book is structured in an instructional manner. First, Marouf argues the need for change; these arguments are followed by explanations of strategies and procedures for achieving change, each of which is supported with updated knowledge management theory. And each chapter ends with an engaging lead-in to the next, making the book's transitions smooth.

But clichés mar the book's otherwise accessible prose, as when it discusses "killing many birds with a single stone." However, often-vague terms are given new meaning in this text as well: here, success includes personal happiness, and wisdom is defined as the "ability to exercise good judgment and perceive things without being pulled off course by biases, egotism, identity, and untested beliefs." And the book distinguishes itself by promoting intuition as useful to decision-making, saying that the subconscious mind can provide "compressed expertise" under pressure. These elements add up to a convincing picture of how organizations and the people who work within them can benefit from a whole-brain, whole-person approach to leadership.

Knowledge Mindfulness introduces a holistic, interconnected leadership approach that integrates strategies for competitive advantage with corporate and personal well-being.

KRISTINE MORRIS (August 14, 2023)

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