

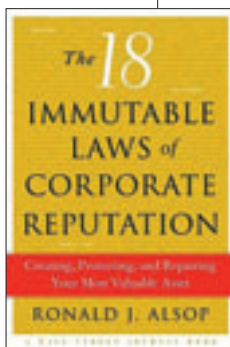
Bookshelf

A Book of Good Repute

Almost nothing is harder to earn and easier to lose than a good reputation. CEOs desperate to figure out how to craft and protect their reputations could hardly do better than to read Ronald J. Alsop's *The 18 Immutable Laws of Corporate Reputation*. Crammed with facts, anecdotes, surveys, and interviews with executives and "reputation managers," Alsop's book is practically a handbook for a company looking to create—and keep—a good name for itself.

In easy, engaging prose, Alsop takes a step-by-step approach to establishing and keeping a reputation, or repairing it once it's been damaged. He efficiently covers topics such as developing a code of ethics, getting known for supporting a particular charitable cause, and conducting research to understand how one's company is viewed by the public. While companies must always please their key stakeholders, Alsop warns CEOs not to forget entities that can be hugely important in the realm of reputation—not just customers and employees, but retirees, suppliers, investors, competitors, government officials, regulatory agencies, the media, and social activists.

Every chapter incorporates intimate stories of corporations that faced crises and fought to bring themselves back from the brink of disaster. Companies like FedEx, Johnson & Johnson, Timberland, and Avon are examined for their ethical positions, commitment to corporate social responsibility, and quick thinking

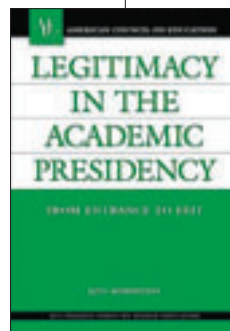


when under siege. Alsop, a longtime writer for the *Wall Street Journal*, knows how to tell a story that grabs the attention of the reader and teaches a valuable lesson that any CEO can incorporate into daily life. (Wall Street Journal Books, \$26)

Quick Looks

"Never mind the cheese—who moved my weekend?" The opening line of Ricardo Semler's *Seven-Day Weekend*, now available in the U.S. after European publication, immediately conveys the author's appealing, iconoclastic style. His premise is that, since technology and complex work environments make it impossible for anyone ever truly to escape the office, corporations need to re-examine the very structure of the workweek. If an employee works all day Sunday, he should take Monday off to see a movie. If he wants to take mini-sabbaticals during his most productive work years, he should be able to do that, too, coming back to

the corporate headquarters when he's older, refreshed and ready to focus again. Semler encourages employees to sample other jobs, to tap their unused reservoirs of skills, and to make work an enjoyable part of their lives—which also include time for home, family, and outside interests. Semler writes with such charm that even his most radical ideas sound appealing, and when he lays out how well those ideas have worked at the Brazilian company Semco, they start to sound reasonable instead. (Portfolio, \$22.95)



One of the more challenging jobs of the past 20 years has been that of a university president. The position is "at once a calling, a chief executive role, and a tough job," says Rita Bornstein in *Legitimacy in the Academic Presidency*. Recent budget

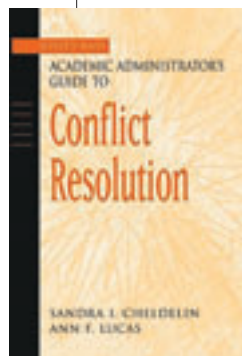
constraints and roller-coaster economies have made it crucial for a president to have technical skills in finance and fund raising, but stakeholders still want to see a strong and visionary leader. Bornstein analyzes what factors will influence a new president's tenure,

from the institution's prevailing culture to external economic forces to the candidate's own personality. She also looks at how presidents can guide their institutions through change—and into the next presidency. While much of the book is drawn from interviews with university presidents, Bornstein offers many personal details of her own struggle for legitimacy at Rollins College in Winter Park, Florida. It's a compelling read for anyone considering this big step up in the academic hierarchy. (Praeger Publishers, \$42.95)

When so much news about business is bad, it's encouraging to turn to news that's good. In the wholly revised third edition of *Companies With a Conscience*, Howard Rothman and Mary Scott profile twelve companies dedicated to improving the world in addition to making a profit. Examples are diverse—including carpet-maker Interface, employment agency America Works, and ice cream purveyors Ben & Jerry's. All of them show a commitment to car-

ing for employees, the community, and the environment. “Do we feel companies with a conscience offer a socio-economic cure-all for these confusing and turbulent times? Certainly not,” the authors write. “But do we believe that they provide a viable alternative for an Enron- and World Com-weary world? Absolutely.” (The Publishing Cooperative, \$15.95)

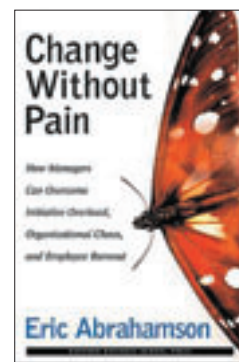
People argue; institutions fight over scarce resources; countries make war. Conflict is all around us, on both the grand and personal scale. Because it is such a powerful force, “conflict must be managed, although it cannot always be resolved,” say Sandra I. Cheldelin and Ann F. Lucas in *Academic Administrator’s Guide to Conflict Resolution*. They discuss the types and sources of conflict and how it is influenced by personal, cultural, and social contexts. While they note that much conflict



occurs between two parties, some of their more intriguing chapters deal with the internal conflict individuals might experience when trying to balance contradictory roles in their lives. Not only do they identify sources of conflict on the university campus, they offer practical guides for how to defuse it, and how to make a school stronger for having survived it. (Jossey-Bass, \$20)

The very title of Eric Abrahamson’s book is intriguing and curiously hopeful: *Change Without Pain*.

Decrying the recent theory of “creative destruction” as the best way to effect organizational change, he instead proposes “creative recombination.” This model uses the systems, employees, networks, and strengths that a corporation already possesses and redirects them toward



new goals, while causing a minimum of disruption in the workplace. Abrahamson compares the process of creative recombination to what

goes on in an inventor’s basement workshop as he takes existing parts designed for other uses and reworks them into an exciting new product. More practically, he walks the reader through various “creative recombinations” successfully implemented at companies like Westland Helicopters and Continental White Cap. He also cites statistics about how destructive “creative destruction” really can be, numbers that should make savvy managers seriously consider the principles in his book. (Harvard Business School Press, \$26.95)

Bookshelf

Do you spend more of your time planning for the future, working in the present, or analyzing the past? Your answer will help determine your temporal alignment, which in turn predicts how you will function as a leader. So says Peg Thoms in *Driven by Time*, in which she examines the strengths and weaknesses of each type of time orientation. “Highly future-oriented leaders are more likely to transform organizations and more likely to alienate followers,” she writes. Present-oriented leaders are excellent for making sure specific tasks get accomplished, but not so good at leading a company through change. Past-oriented lead-

ers tend to ignore the threats of the future, but are extremely capable at running stable organizations. Thoms offers exercises to help readers gauge their temporal alignment and find compatible positions and companies. She also presents chapters designed to help even past-oriented leaders develop an outlook toward the future. (Praeger Publishers, \$54.95)

Living the Dream is a warm and personal look at almost 40 minority professors who have successfully pursued doctorates in business. Published by the PhD

Project, which encourages minority candidates to enroll in business school, *Living the Dream* presents

simple but moving tales of widely diverse individuals who followed a calling or sacrificed much to achieve their degrees. An excellent read for Hispanic, African American, or Native American business students who wonder if a career in

academia is right for them. (PhD Project, \$8) 

