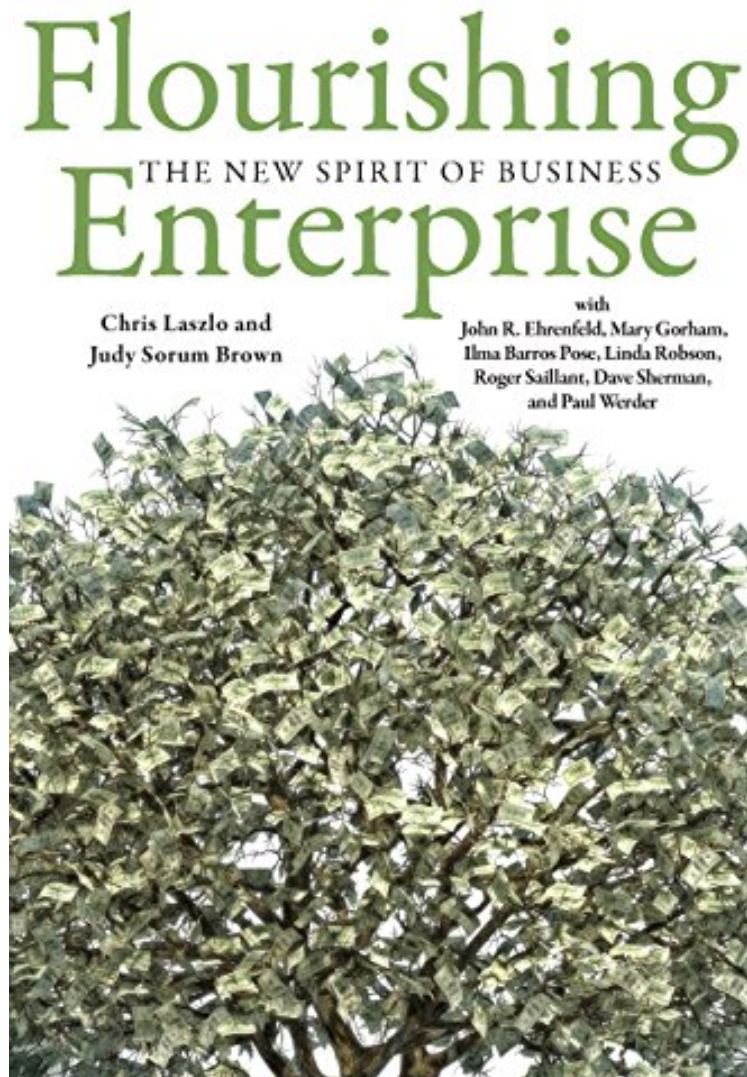


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Flourishing Enterprise: The New Spirit of Business

Chris Laszlo, Judy Sorum Brown

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Chris Laszlo, Judy Sorum Brown : Flourishing Enterprise: The New Spirit of Business before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Flourishing Enterprise: The New Spirit of Business:

5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. A timely and important book...By Lori D. Kendall
From the Foreward written by Peter Senge -- "William O'Brien, a successful CEO and mentor said: 'I go around talking with people about values-based, vision-driven businesses. People are always enthusiastic... This raises an obvious question: If everyone really wants this, why are such businesses so rare? I have come to conclude that most people have no idea of the nature of the commitment required to build such an organization.'"Indeed. This book makes a unique

contribution to the literature by presenting the case that change within the organization comes from a series of [spiritual] reflective practices from a multi-level perspective: foundational / individual practices; team and organizational practices; and systems-level practices. While few of the concepts are "new" strictly speaking, what IS new is the explicit linkage of systematically incorporating reflective practices into the hard-nosed work of business for profit. You see the thinking behind 9 diverse authors, writers, and educators in molding and shaping this idea - you would have read refrains of this in other texts. The proposition is simple to grasp: they suggest that for organizations to flourish from the systemic level down to the individual, we must connect how we engage in work with a daily rigor of reflection and discernment. Slow down to act fast. Listen with your mind and your heart to understand more deeply. Engage all of your senses, your body, your hopes and dreams, and not just your cognitive thinking. On an individual level, we already know that, right? If we're stressed out, the doctor tells us to slow down and listen. We're told to pay attention to our emotions, feelings, and physical state. Why? Because chronic stress is bad for our health! So what's different about a business or a collection of people engaged in work together? According to these authors, the same rules apply. Chronic "stress" shows up as companies that are dysfunctional. But the secret isn't to disengage. No, the answer is to engage, and to do so mindfully, reflectively, and purposefully with one's whole heart, whole mind, and whole spirit. Given the popularity of books of recent time on this perspective from a societal, community, parenting, and individual level, it's refreshing to see these ideas brought to a business paradigm, joining the literature from others on this important topic. I highly recommend it!

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Inspiring and Igniting a New Path Forward

By Jeana Wirtenberg

Flourishing Enterprise: The New Spirit of Business is a profoundly important work that helps move our individual and organizational practices to a whole new place, igniting new possibilities for business leadership aimed at prosperity and flourishing. Through the creative and artful co-mingling of poetry, multi-disciplinary scholarly research, business frameworks and models, personal experiences, practical applied exercises, stories and anecdotes, it offers the reader a whole new paradigm for sustainability as flourishing. The mindfulness practices provide a practical guide for individuals, teams, organizations, and systems change. I highly recommend it for practitioners working inside and outside organizations, including organization development and HR professionals, change management consultants, business leaders and managers, who are committed to building an inclusive and sustainable world that flourishes forever.

Jeana Wirtenberg, Ph.D., Co-Founder and Senior Advisor, Institute for Sustainable Enterprise, Fairleigh Dickinson University, and CEO, Transitioning to Green. Author, The Sustainable Enterprise Fieldbook: When It All Comes Together, and Building a Culture for Sustainability: People, Planet, and Profits in a New Green Economy

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. There is great power and understanding in this book and unlike a ...

By Peter C. Adams

"Flourishing Enterprise: The New Spirit of Business" should be a must-read book in any ambitious executives library. Ambition isn't about going after more money, but about the mobilization of resources to produce a series of satisfactory future situations. This poses couple of fundamental questions: What do I care about? What outcome do I want to produce? The answer to these questions the authors suggest comes from within and can be glimpsed through a series of focused reflective practices. Simply put, this works for me and it is working for my company. There is great power and understanding in this book and unlike a lot of business texts, there are also some very pragmatic practices explored and proposed for adoption. Another powerful observation is the weakness of the sustainability mindset which tends to promote mediocrity rather than excellence or better yet, flourishing. Why just sustain when you can flourish?

The notion of responsible business has infiltrated our markets, and "going green" is now a part of our mindset. But, sustainability as we know it is not enough. Flourishing—the aspiration that humans and life in general will thrive on the planet forever—should be a key goal for every business today. This is a bold concept, like sustainability was a decade ago. Just as sustainability has become a matter of course, so too will flourishing become a cornerstone of business tomorrow. How are companies to attain this big-picture goal? Drawing together decades of research along with in-depth interviews, Flourishing Enterprise argues that many strategic, organizational, and operational efforts to be sustainable reach the potential of flourishing when they incorporate one additional ingredient: reflective practices. Offering more than a dozen such practices, this book leads readers down a path to greater business success, personal well-being, and a healthier planet. Readers will find that adding reflective practices to existing business efforts does not require more work; it simply changes the way we do our work and, more importantly, the results we achieve. Cultivating emotional and spiritual health is the next frontier; this future-oriented guide develops these core competencies while stretching the ongoing conversation about profitable, sustainable business.

"Organized around the notion that flourishing—the aspiration that humans and life in general will thrive on the planet forever—should be a key goal for every business today, this book advocates that businesses purposely connect with the natural world to promote sustainable practices . . . Flourishing is about prospering in a healthful and vigorous way supported by a positive environment . . . Summing Up: Recommended." (G. E. Kaupins CHOICE)"Flourishing Enterprise is one of the most important books of the 21st century. It elucidates what we all long for: genuine happiness and how to align our spirituality and our vocationour life's work. It offers the possibility for co-creating flourishing

communities and enterprises of genuine well-being." (Mark Anielski author of *The Economics of Happiness: Building Genuine Wealth*) "Academics Laszlo and Brown take a fresh look at sustainability, claiming there is a gap between talk about sustainability and the ability to actually create value from it . . . This is a road map for the future, with creative solutions for current leaders and those aspiring to be." (Mary Whaley) "Drawing together decades of research along with in-depth interviews, *Flourishing Enterprise* argues that strategic, organizational, and operational efforts to be sustainable reach the potential of flourishing when they incorporate one additional ingredient: reflective practices. Offering more than a dozen such practices, this book leads readers down a path to greater business success, personal well-being, and a healthier planet." "Flourishing Enterprise lays out a compelling case and pathway for business to help catalyze a world where all people and life can flourish. I applaud its inspiration and vision for how each of us can create the world to which we aspire for ourselves and our children." (Paul Rice, President and CEO Fair Trade USA) "A much needed business manifesto that shifts the focus of corporate sustainability to the pursuit of profit opportunities aimed at solving global challenges instead of only doing less harm. Through practices that reconnect us to what we care deeply about, it proposes to harness creativity and collaboration in service of a more prosperous and flourishing world." (L. Hunter Lovins, President Natural Capitalism Solutions) "The genius of this book lies in its marriage of inspiration with investigation, poetry with practice, and resilience with research. Its long view sets it apart from other books on the topic, and takes the conversation about business, sustainability, and spirituality from the margins into the mainstream." (Margaret Benfield author of *Soul at Work* and *The Soul of a Leader*)

About the Author Chris Laszlo is Associate Professor at Case Western Reserve University's Weatherhead School of Management, where he is Faculty Research Director at the Fowler Center for Sustainable Value. A Visiting Associate Professor at Claremont Graduate University's Drucker School of Management, he is co-founder of Sustainable Value Partners and author of *Embedded Sustainability*, *Sustainable Value*, and *The Sustainable Company*. Judy Sorum Brown is a poet and leadership educator. She is the author of *A Leader's Guide to Reflective Practice* and *The Art and Spirit of Leadership*. She is a Senior Fellow in the School of Public Policy at the University of Maryland and Distinguished Senior Fellow at Case Western Reserve University's Fowler Center for Sustainable Value. She has served as a White House Fellow and as Vice President of the Aspen Institute.