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The Conversational Firm: Rethinking Bureaucracy in the Age of Social Media (The Middle Range Series)

Catherine J Turco

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Catherine J Turco : The Conversational Firm: Rethinking Bureaucracy in the Age of Social Media (The Middle Range Series) before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Conversational Firm: Rethinking Bureaucracy in the Age of Social Media (The Middle Range Series):

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. One StarBy Vadim ZhukLots of words little substance5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. The Conversational Firm is a nuanced, profound, elegantly ...By RickThe

Conversational Firm is a nuanced, profound, elegantly written story of today's workplace. It focuses on one young software company, but it is relevant far beyond the world of tech startups. Anybody trying to influence an organization today -- anybody curious how social media and technology can shape an organization -- should read this book.³ of 4 people found the following review helpful. DemandingBy DarrenIngram_dot_comFar too many companies do not communicate efficiently or effectively internally. Often the communications chain, should it exist, is just one-way, going down the hierarchy rather than also up and across it. Some companies, however, have understood the need of having a genuine open dialogue within. This yields benefits and even can extend to their external operations. So this book takes a look at the power and benefit of communications. It is built around what happened at a certain company, offering awarts and all look at some of things that worked and perhaps more importantly what didn't work and why it failed. In many ways not communicating will not be an option going forward; the younger generations are increasingly used to sharing and having access to information in the format they want when they want it. The author mixes, interprets and evaluates this through a host of different lenses including economics, anthropology, organizational theory and sociology. It all contributed to an interesting and engaging read, something that was a lot better than one had expected. Rejecting a communications-restricted, hierarchal approach and opting to get chatty is not an overnight process. Neither is it something that can be determined by decree or lip service. The change needs to be authentic, enthusiastically applied and made a credible part of the company's operations. The rewards may take a time to come through and not everything can be enumerated, yet in the long-haul it will be beneficial. You can view it another way too: it won't hurt by doing it! The book demands a certain disciplined reading mind to get the most out of it; yet this is no specific criticism. For many it won't be a light read, yet it contains a powerful mass of information that is deserving of the reader's undivided attention. Focus on the book, think about your company and then be prepared to get communicating.

A fast-growing social media marketing company, TechCo encourages all of its employees to speak up. By promoting open dialogue across the corporate hierarchy, the firm has fostered a uniquely engaged workforce and an enviable capacity for change. Yet the path hasn't always been easy. TechCo has confronted a number of challenges, and its experience reveals the essential elements of bureaucracy that remain even when a firm sets out to discard them. Through it all, TechCo serves as a powerful new model for how firms can navigate today's rapidly changing technological and cultural climate. Catherine Turco was embedded within TechCo for ten months. The Conversational Firm is her ethnographic analysis of what worked at the company and what didn't. She offers multiple lessons for anyone curious about the effect of social media on the corporate environment and adds depth to debates over the new generation of employees reared on social media: Millennials who are carrying their technological habits and expectations into the workplace. Marshaling insights from cultural and economic sociology, organizational theory, economics, technology studies, and anthropology, The Conversational Firm offers a nuanced analysis of corporate communication, control, and culture in the social media age.

Will twenty-first-century social media technologies finally liberate organizations from stifling bureaucratic hierarchies? After spending ten months closely observing a software firm, Catherine J. Turco, one of sociology's brightest young stars, surprises with fascinating and nuanced answers. Brimming with vivid examples, The Conversational Firm will not only shape scholarly debate but also engage general readers interested in corporate life. (Viviana A. Zelizer, author of *Economic Lives*) The Conversational Firm opens a new chapter in the study of workplace democracy by analyzing how social media enable a new balance between workers' autonomy and productivity in high-tech corporate settings. With a particularly keen ethnographic eye, the author reveals a brave new world in which some of the bars of the bureaucratic iron cage are pried open while others remain in place for the pursuit of corporate goals. While millennials gain a more personalized and empowering work environment in the bargain, business leaders gain fuller access to their inner thoughts and creativity. This book will have a lasting impact on the study of corporate cultures and new organizational forms. (Michele Lamont, author of *The Dignity of Working Men*) With The Conversational Firm, Turco uses the role of social media to challenge our fundamental assumptions about how modern organizations function. In this masterful work, she uncovers a new way of organizing where openness and hierarchy complement, rather than contradict one another. I'm putting this book next to my copies of Weber, Barnard, and Chandler. (Damon Phillips, Columbia Business School) In The Conversational Firm, Turco argues that organizations can transcend bureaucracy, but still they are held in check by certain workplace demands for reproduction and stability. These checks seem to prevent the organization from becoming complete anarchy. Yet perhaps just as important, The Conversational Firm is a rich and delightful organizational ethnography of how work is being transformed in the era of social media. (Brayden King, Kellogg School of Management at Northwestern University) With a book that is as readable as it is wise, Turco makes a powerful case for the depth of insight that can only come from the best ethnographies and is unavailable from the 'big data' analyses currently in vogue. Practitioners and scholars alike will come away with their understanding of firm hierarchy, culture, and communication transformed and enriched. (Ezra Zuckerman Sivan, MIT Sloan School of Management) [A] well-written, insightful ethnographic

study. (Theodore Kinni Strategy + Business)About the AuthorCatherine J. Turco is the Theodore T. Miller Career Development Professor and associate professor of organization studies at the MIT Sloan School of Management. An ethnographer and economic sociologist, her work has appeared in the American Sociological and the American Journal of Sociology.