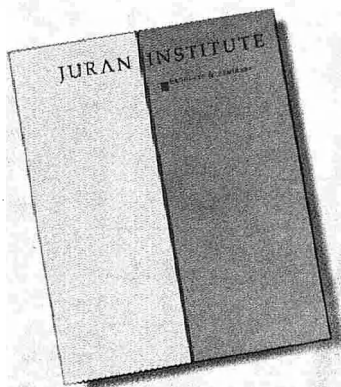


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## ▶ BOOKS

### At Your Service?

**How To Provide Excellent Service  
in Any Organization**, by Jeffrey E.  
Disend.

Customer service is one of the hottest business topics of the nineties. But most consumers believe the service they receive is anything but hot. Why? According to Jeffrey Disend, the reasoning is clear. Few organizations actually do anything about improving customer service, because most executives and managers don't know how to go about it.

"Making an organization service-oriented involves more than sending people to seminars," Disend says. "It must be an ongoing, organization-wide process from top to bottom."

In *How To Provide Excellent Service in Any Organization*, Disend describes the differences between excellent service and poor service, provides a seven-point plan for assessing service practices, and presents specific ideas and strategies for improving service. He discusses the importance of executive commitment, employee training, and organizational involvement.

"Building a service-oriented organization is similar to building a building. Although specific details may vary, the process is the same, regardless of the type or size of the building. You have to lay the foundation before putting up walls.

"The process for becoming service-oriented is also essentially the same for most organizations. Of course, the details of implementing this plan may be different because of the organization's unique culture, management style, current and desired service levels, commitment and willingness to change, competitive activity, or point of entry. But the blueprint for the process I describe can be easily adapted to work for any organization."

Jeffrey Disend is the president of the consulting firm duPont and Disend, Inc.

*How To Provide Excellent Service in Any Organization*. 256 pp. Radnor, PA: Chilton Book Company, 215/964-4729, \$14.95.  
**Circle 245 on reader service card.**

### 21st Century Power

**Powershift: Knowledge, Wealth,  
and Violence at the Edge of the  
21st Century**, by Alvin Toffler.

As an encore performance to his earlier works *Future Shock* and *The Third Wave*, Alvin Toffler provides us with more food for thought in his most recent book *Powershift*.

In this book, Toffler contends that significant, but largely unnoticed, shifts of power are taking place in our everyday world.

Focusing on the crucially changed role of knowledge in relationship to power, Toffler presents a new theory of social power—a "new system for wealth creation"—and explores the coming shifts in business, the economy, politics, and global affairs as they relate to this new power base.

"The spread of this new knowledge economy is, in fact, the explosive new force that has hurled the advanced economies into bitter global competition, confronted the socialist nations with their hopeless obsolescence, forced many 'developing nations' to scrap their economic strategies, and is now profoundly dislocating power relationships in both personal and public spheres.

"In a prescient remark, Winston Churchill once said that 'empires of the future are empires of the mind.' Today that observation has come true. What has not yet been appreciated is the degree to which raw, elemental power—at the level of private life as well as at the level of empire—will be transformed in the decades ahead as a result of the new role of 'mind.'"

Alvin Toffler is a prominent social thinker and popular futurist author.

*Powershift: Knowledge, Wealth, and Violence at the Edge of the 21st Century*. 585 pp. New York, NY: Bantam, 212/765-6500, \$22.95 (U.S.), \$27.95 (Canada).

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### Conflict or Cooperation

**Organizations and Nation-States: New Perspectives on Conflict and Cooperation**, edited by Robert L. Kahn and Mayer N. Zald.

This book explains how organizational theory and research can help us better understand and improve relations between nations. Throughout the book the authors examine the similarities between organizations and nation-states in how they function and are organized.

The book is divided into three parts:

■ Part 1 deals with formal and informal arrangements for managing and preventing conflict among organizations and nations.

■ Part 2 shifts the emphasis from the structure to the dynamics of international and interorganizational relations.

■ Part 3 addresses the continuing question of how to make major decisions under conditions of uncertainty and crisis while minimizing avoidable errors.

A theoretical framework and set of procedures for problem solving are derived and recommended as a foundation on which to base new international policy.

"The interdependence of individuals and of nations has always been greater than our comprehension of it, and it has been mediated by organizations to a greater extent than is generally acknowledged. Industrial development has greatly increased that interdependence, and multinational organizations have made it increasingly visible. Most important of all, the existence and proliferation of nuclear weapons have made the management of interdependence between nations a matter of species survival.

"The scheduled emergence of the European community constitutes a massive transformation of the complex interrelationships of many nations; a transformation that acknowledges their interdependence and signals their intention to manage this interdependence. The reduction of anarchical relations is what organization means, and organizational theory and research have much to contribute to this great task at the international level."

Robert Kahn is a research scientist emeritus at the University of Michigan. Mayer Zald is a professor there.

*Organizations and Nation-States: New Perspectives on Conflict and Cooperation.* 413 pp. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 415/433-1767, \$35.95.

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## OT Is OK

### Organization Transformation Theorists and Practitioners: Profiles and Themes, by Beverly R. Fletcher.

Organization Transformation, or OT, is defined as "a holistic, ecological, humanistic approach to radical, revolutionary change in the entire context of an organization's system." OT is also a new area of theory and practice that "effectively helps organizations make these large-scale changes in their purpose, structure, culture, and strategy."

In this book, Fletcher contributes a different type of research study to the somewhat limited amount of literature currently available on OT by studying selected theorists and

practitioners who are developing and applying it. Her basic assumption is that there is intrinsic value in exploring the OT phenomenon from the point of view of people who are a part of its practice and theory.

Following typical research writing style, Fletcher first presents an overview of the field and explains her research methodology. She then presents personal profiles of the study's participants—which she assembled from information collected during interviews with them—focusing on their organizational concepts, beliefs, values, and practices.

She concludes with an analysis of the differences and similarities she found among the participants and introduces possibilities for study and use of OT in the future.

"I believe the greatest power of the emerging new paradigm, Organization Transformation, is that it does not ignore issues that are experienced as the leading edge. It



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does not ignore questions that matter to people such as ethics, feelings, community, and the human spirit simply because they cannot be explained using traditional frames of reference.

"Organizational Transformation theorists and practitioners can assist in unfolding these issues by helping to reframe the turbulence in terms of opportunities for the future."

Beverly Fletcher is an assistant professor of Human Relations at the University of Oklahoma, Norman.

*Organization Transformation Theorists and Practitioners: Profiles and Themes*. 184 pp. Westport, CT: Praeger, 203/226-3571, \$42.95. **Circle 248** on reader service card.

## Building Working Relationships

**Getting Commitment at Work: A Guide for Managers and Employees**, by Michael C. Thomas and Tempe S. Thomas.

*Getting Commitment at Work* is a practical, easy-to-use handbook that explains the "how-to" rather than the theory behind building commitment in the workplace. Focusing on hiring, training, and development, the book offers practices, suggestions, and tips that beginning and experienced managers and supervisors can use to develop positive bonds between themselves and their employees.

Part 1 of the book focuses on hiring and on how to lay the foundation for mutually supportive relationships between new employees, their managers, and their co-workers. Part 2, which focuses on training, describes how to expand employees' understanding of their jobs and help them develop a broader perspective of how they fit into the organization. Part 3 focuses on development—specifically, how managers and employees can develop the skills needed to handle growing responsibilities.

"Each part of the book begins with a scene that is not unlike the settings where most of us work. The scenes are presented from the perspectives of management as well as employees and illustrate ways in which both unintentionally undermine the commitment they are trying to create. Although fictitious, they are based on the realities many of us experience daily. The chapters following each scene outline how to avoid similar problems in your particular situation."

Michael Thomas is a senior trainer and consultant with Farr Associates in North Carolina. Tempe Thomas is an educator and writer.

*Getting Commitment at Work: A Guide for Managers and Employees*, 128 pp. Chapel Hill, NC: Commitment Press, 800/752-2471, \$12.95. **Circle 249** on reader service card.

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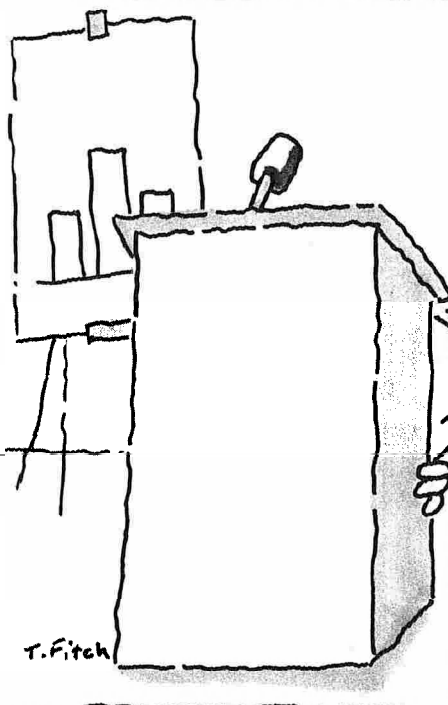
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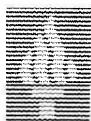
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ing, and Successful, by Roger Hiemstra and Burton Sisco.

*Individualized Instruction* details a comprehensive teaching and learning process for planning, organizing, and implementing effective, personalized instruction for adults.

The authors use vignettes of real-life situations at the beginning of each chapter to illustrate how to implement each step of the instruction process. They provide an extensive resource section at the end to address commonly asked questions about the process, tools, and techniques used with the system.

Part 1 states the case for using individualized adult instruction and discusses when its use is appropriate. It also covers the need to understand the characteristics of the adult learner.

Part 2 outlines the six-step individualized instruction system, describes the tools the instructor can use to implement it, and offers

effective needs assessment and evaluation techniques that can be incorporated into the process.

Part 3 addresses how this instructional method can be adapted to special-case, nontraditional, and informal settings to accommodate different audiences.

"The ultimate challenge for any instructor is to find ways to ensure success in learning. Content mastery is important, but so is the process that enables mastery to occur. Understanding the instructional process, helping participants realize their potential, being supportive and flexible when the need arises, and varying methods so that active learning can occur are all ingredients for instructional success. We offer specific methods that you can use to become a more effective instructor of adults."

Roger Hiemstra is a professor at Syracuse University. Burton Sisco is an assistant professor at the University of Wyoming.

*Individualizing Instruction: Making Learning Personal, Empowering, and Successful.* 304 pp. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 415/433-1767, \$27.95.

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## Ethically Speaking

**Working Ethics: Strategies for Decision Making and Organizational Responsibility**, by Marvin T. Brown.

In *Working Ethics*, Brown shows how attention to ethics can improve communication, resolve disagreements, and set standards for employee/management relations. He provides advice and practical exercises for bringing people's observations, value judgments, assumptions, and opposing views into the open, so they can be a resource for quality decision making.

Brown also shows how to use argument constructively as a way to direct ethical discussions toward subjects such as inequalities and the



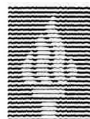
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proper exercise of power. Using real-life examples, Brown explains how to build an organizational process of ethical reflection that encourages managers and employees to take personal risks to better their decision making skills, and identifies the conditions under which this process can thrive.

"Although this may sound odd, the purpose of ethics is not to make people ethical; it is to help people make better decisions.

"From my experience, I know that ethical reflection can empower people and increase their responsiveness to organizational and social issues. When people become aware of their choices and have the resources to choose and carry out the best ones, they contribute to the development of a more humane society. Engaging in ethical reflection is a learning process and can create a learning and changing organization."

Marvin Brown is a consultant and educator at the University of San Francisco.

*Working Ethics: Strategies for Decision Making and Organizational Responsibility.* 219 pp. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 415/433-1767, \$25.95.

Circle 251 on reader service card.

## Stuck in Neutral?

**Shifting Gears: How To Master Career Change and Find the Work That's Right for You**, by Carole Hyatt.

Right now, nearly 12 million people are engaged in switching careers. Another 12 million are actively planning such changes. And the Rand Corporation projects twice that number of career changes by the year 2000. But it's not easy, says Carole Hyatt, author of *Shifting Gears*.

"For most of us, intricately overlapping layers of skill, self-esteem, emotion, and a measure of power make up the work day. When you're in a state of transition, these layers dislodge and pull apart. You are set temporarily off balance."

*Shifting Gears* maps the excursion through this "anatomy of

change," describing the key stages of transition. Through practical advice featured in enlightening profiles, readers begin to understand the psychological aspects associated with career change and to learn what they must do to master transitions.

"What is fascinating about the anatomy of change is that I've presented it in linear form, but in real life, change itself is never so orderly. The past tells us where we've been and what we've accomplished. Change will always derive from this past, but intention, growth, and courage arise from a respect for the future.

"If any theme came up in the course of this study, it is that everything ends, but a belief in tomorrow restores confidence and keeps most of us going."

Carole Hyatt is a researcher, author, and lecturer.

*Shifting Gears: How To Master Career Change and Find the Work That's Right for You.* 271 pp. New York, NY: Simon and Schuster, 212/698-7541, \$18.95.

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## Additional Reading

*Human Resource Forecasting and Strategy Development*, edited by Manuel London, Emily S. Bassman, and John P. Fernandez. 280 pp. Westport, CT: Quorum Books, 203/226-3571, \$45.00.

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*Values and Ethics in Organization and Human Systems Development: Responding to Dilemmas in Professional Life*, by William Gellerman, Mark S. Frankel, and Robert F. Ladenson. 529 pp. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 415/433-1767, \$39.95.

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*The Global Negotiator: Building Strong Business Relationships Anywhere in the World*, by Trenholme J. Griffin and W. Russell Daggatt. 198 pp. New York, NY: HarperBusiness, 212/207-7000, \$24.95 (U.S.), \$32.95 (Canada).

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*Parallel Learning Structures: Increasing Innovation in Bureaucracies*, by Gervase R. Bushe and A.B. (Rami) Shani. 184 pp. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 617/944-3700, \$22.75.

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*Learning To Learn Across the Life Span*, by Robert M. Smith et al. 382 pp. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 415/433-1767, \$32.95.

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*From Vision to Reality: Strategies of Successful Innovators in Government*, by Russell M. Linden. 313 pp. Charlottesville, VA: LEL Enterprises, 800/662-9673, \$12.95.

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*Your Career in Human Resource Development: A Guide to Information and Decision Making*, by Robert W. Stump. 49 pp. (Order Code: STYCP) Baltimore, MD: ASTD Publishing Service, 703/683-8129, \$10 for national members; \$15 for nonmembers.

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