

Books

Strategies for Change

Planning Educational Systems: A Results-Based Approach, by Roger Kaufman.

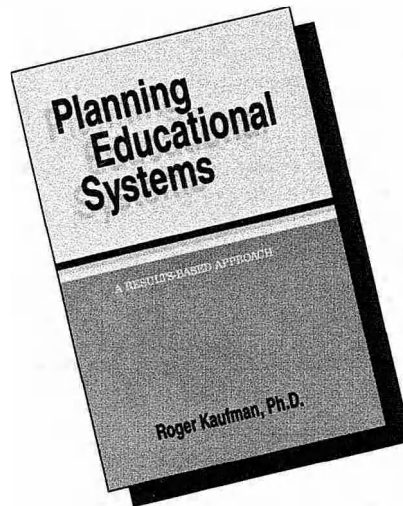
Planning Educational Systems "is a book for educators who care—care about results, about learner individuality and performance, about helping learners create a better future for themselves and society," the author states in the preface.

This planning approach is not a quick fix; it does not claim to be able to solve crises or put out fires. Kaufman presents a methodology for building and managing a proactive educational system with deliberately planned curriculum and learning methods. His holistic goal is to help process-oriented educators develop school systems that, from the start, cater to individual student needs, and that have a plan for resolving long-term educational problems.

Learners' "ambitions, capabilities, future potential, hopes, and aspirations," Kaufman writes, are important enough to warrant "precise, accurate, and systematic planning." From his perspective, ignorance about the purpose or direction of education and a lack of appropriate tools for making it individually responsive are not excuses.

Inspired by a book put out in the seventies called *Educational System Planning*, this eight-chapter volume presents

- new analytical techniques for developing programs;
- an organizational elements model;
- a nine-step needs assessment;
- methods for collecting and using hard and soft data;
- critiques of other long-range planning and evaluation systems;
- proven approaches used by top organizations, including the "Japanese management" approach;
- extensive examples of contemporary and hypothetical educational situations.



A glossary, detailed exercises, figures and flow charts, ideas for data collection, needs matrices, and more are included.

Kaufman claims his planning approach is equally transferable to other organizations, but the book seems most valuable for results-oriented educators who want a systematic process for planning an educational system.

Kaufman is professor and director of the Center for Needs Assessment and Planning at the Learning Systems Institute at Florida State University.

Understanding the Head Game

The Creative Brain, by Ned Herrmann.

Are you more a "feeler" or a "thinker," a "communicator" or a "conceptualizer"? Do you sometimes get a kick out of breaking the rules? Do you tend to make judgments based on first impressions or on careful analysis? Do you give a hokey about birth order, genetic makeup, and right-brain, left-brain theories? Do you ever wonder why you are the way you are? Author

Ned Herrmann has wondered about such things for years, and *The Creative Brain* is a product of his quest for personal and professional self-knowledge.

This is an insightful, creative book for people who care about the way the brain works. Herrmann deals with the brain as four "separate and distinct quadrants—each with its own language, perception, values, gifts, and ways of knowing and being." One side is logical and analytical; another is planned and organized; a third is holistic and intuitive; and a fourth is emotional and interpersonal.

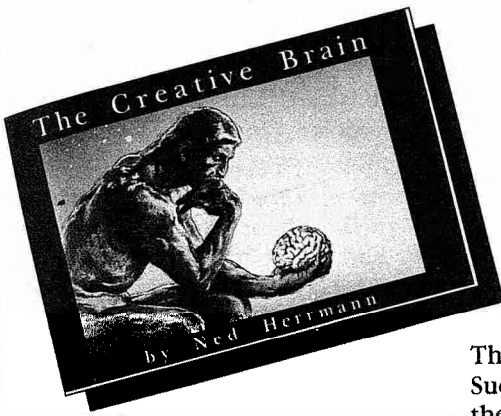
"We are all unique composites of differing modes, according to our particular mix of mental preferences and avoidances," Herrmann writes. Some people are analytical, organized, and precise, and may learn best by studying factual information. Others are creative and moody and may express themselves best on stage and learn through actual experiences. Each in their own way can be equally effective.

Herrmann explores methods of developing a whole-brain approach to life. He bases most of them on the Herrmann Brain Dominance Instrument (HBDI), an enclosed questionnaire that he encourages readers to complete and submit for a profile analysis. A loose insert shows the profiles of past presidents and current public figures, including those of Dukakis and Bush. (Perhaps by Election Day we'll be able to justify the result based on their HBDI profiles.)

Herrmann claims most people possess elements of each quadrant—personality duplicity, he calls it. The text offers practical guidelines for understanding each quadrant in ourselves and others and for developing and applying different personality facets.

The format of the book is an interesting blend of analytical and creative elements. The author has considered not only the content,

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but also how the package would appeal graphically to different types of readers. With the presumption that the right side of the brain processes "left-brain" information and vice versa, most of the illustrations appear on the left side of the pages and the text on the right side. The volume's horizontal design, measuring 11 inches wide and 8½ inches deep, makes it hard to shelve but a natural for a desk or table-top.

The cover illustration depicts Rodin's Thinker holding a brain in his left hand and facing to the right, "thus honoring the right half of the brain," while the back cover shows the reverse, "thus honoring the left half." The inside covers feature an animated parade of people waving banners. It's supposed to be a highly unique, "right-mode" table of contents, according to Herrmann.

Although *The Creative Brain* is non-technical, one chapter briefly outlines the history of brain research and how the brain works. An extensive appendix by C. Victor Bunderson discusses the scientific validity of the HBIDI index. Several additional appendices explain how to read and recognize occupational and organizational profiles and illustrate the different elements, signals, and languages of Herrmann's brain theory.

This book is intended to help professionals understand themselves better and to show how behavior and thinking styles influence work habits, relationships, and lifestyles.

Words to Live By

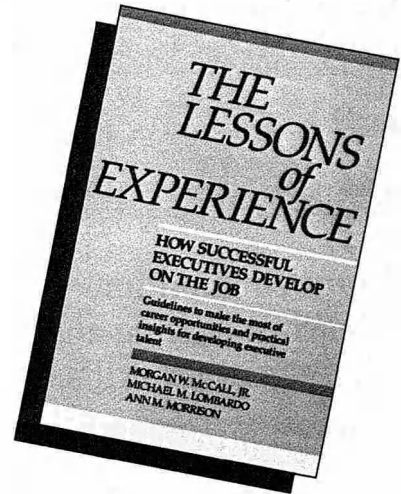
The Lessons of Experience: How Successful Executives Develop on the Job, by Morgan W. McCall Jr., Michael M. Lombardo, and Ann M. Morrison.

The Lessons of Experience originated from a question to human-resource professionals on how corporations could develop the executive talent needed to lead companies into the 1990s. An extensive research study was the result of that question, and the "lessons learned" by nearly 200 *Fortune* 500 executives form the backbone of this book.

In individual interviews, the executives were asked to consider the events or times that most influenced their management styles and their careers as managers. The answers, yielding 616 descriptions of events and 1,547 lessons, fall into five general categories: setting agendas; handling relationships; upholding basic values; having the right temperament; and being personally aware of oneself and one's work.

In the course of their research, the authors discovered that many commonly accepted development strategies, such as mentoring, career planning, and job rotations or internships, are of limited value in developing managerial talent. More instructive, they say, is the wisdom borne of experience by managers who've gone before.

Thus, they have put out an inspirational, how-to book for young, rising managers looking for advice from senior execs on developing their skills and using particular assignments to advance their



careers. Whether it's dealing with a totalitarian boss, overcoming a personal setback, learning vicariously in a foreign environment, or whatever, the book emphasizes the importance of learning a personal lesson in every situation. The clear, well-written chapters are packed with examples, quotes, advice, and brief case scenarios.

Even though the book essentially derives from old-school managers and doesn't present any real breakthroughs for handling the new organizational challenges promised in the next decade, the information is interesting and practical. Probably the strongest factor is that the authors tell the real-life stories that many senior managers have come to know and organize them in a way that may help younger managers learn the lessons more easily.

One executive gives this advice: "Resolve to be tender with the young, compassionate with the aging, sympathetic with the striving, and tolerant of the weak and the wrong. Because sometime in your life you will have been all of these."

The titles of the six chapters are: "Developing Executive Talent"; "Trial by Fire: Learning from Job Assignments"; "When Other People Matter"; "Hardships"; "Making the Most of Experience"; and "Making It

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Work: The Corporate Opportunity." An appendix describes the three-part format of the research interviews:

- the events that most influenced the managers' style and the most important lessons learned;
- managerial "firsts" and "rites of passage"; tough times and "rising from the ashes"; the role of other people;
- how they thought they'd changed; whether certain times seemed more conducive to learning than others; the best aspects of being a manager; and the best advice to younger managers.

The Lessons of Experience stems from the premise that good management is more an art than a science. It's a book about people and for people.

Planning Educational Systems: A Results-Based Approach. 213 pp. Lancaster, PA: Technomic Publishing Company, Inc. \$35.00.

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The Creative Brain. 456 pp. Lake Lure, NC: Applied Creative Services. \$34.95.

Circle No. 181 on Reader Service Card.

The Lessons of Experience: How Successful Executives Develop on the Job. 210 pp. Lexington, MA: Lexington Books, D.C. Heath and Co. \$19.95.

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Additional Reading

At America's Service: How Corporations Can Revolutionize the Way They Treat Their Customers, by Karl Albrecht. 241 pp. Homewood, IL: Dow Jones-Irwin. \$19.95.

Circle No. 183 on Reader Service Card.

Making the Message Clear: Communicating for Business, by James Eicher. 122 pp. Santa Cruz, CA: Grinder, DeLozier, and Associates. \$14.95.

Circle No. 184 on Reader Service Card.

The Consultant's Handbook: How to Start & Develop Your Own Practice, by Stephan Schiffman. 247 pp. Boston, MA: Bob Adams, Inc. \$12.95.

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The Human Resources Revolution: Implementing Progressive Management Practices for Bottom-Line Success, by Dennis J. Kravetz. 208 pp. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers. \$21.95.

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