

Review of The Strategic Use of Stories in Organizational Communication and Learning

Author Terrence L Gargiulo

Publisher ME Sharpe Inc, 80 Business Park Drive, Armonk, New York 10504

ISBN – 0 7656 1413 8

Price paperback £17.50

Hardback - £45.50

Innovation: 5 stars

Content – 4 stars

Clarity – 5 stars

Recommendation – 4 stars

Value for money 5 stars (for paperback)

Once upon a time, I picked up a book to review. The title did nothing for me, completely dampened my enthusiasm and curiosity; which was a pity as I love stories. However, as soon as I began to read the introduction I was hooked – this book is passionate about stories in all forms and how they can be used to communicate across organisations so that they can truly practise continuous learning, and deliver competitive advantage. If:

- you like stories, metaphors, analogy but are struggling to persuade people that they play a role in business
- you've ever sat in a meeting thinking that the wrong things are being discussed
- you want to enhance communication and learning in your organisation

then this book provides lots of evidence and practical ideas as to what to do.

Gargiulo manages to weave story telling and 'business speak' together really well so that there is no element of 'touchy feely' to the process – it's well defined and has clear business outcomes.

The structure of the book is extremely effective – the introduction tells you exactly what you're going to meet, there are three, clear, very different parts with a final summarising chapter, then an intriguing story to keep you thinking and plenty of references.

Gargiulo keeps the pace going with teasers to keep you reading on. Part 1 describes a theoretical approach introducing 2 frameworks that demonstrate some genuine communication gaps and how they can be filled using stories. Interviews with a range of business people make up most of part 2 – these are summarised to generate a set of competencies that are explored in part 3 where there are a whole range of practical exercises to develop the competencies.

The varied styles of each part make it a pretty easy book to read and there are lots of useful, well labelled diagrams. It will become a great resource to back up ideas that were previously more intangible.

So the business leader and the 'touchy feely' trainer went off into the sunset together and lived happily ever after in a wonderfully successful business.

Director: Stella Collins

Kelynack, Reading Rd, Burghfield Common, Berks, RG7 3BH Tel: 0118 983 6339

Registered Company No: 3930303 VAT Reg No: 787 1471 93