

support. For example, when the case is posed and the concepts to be applied explained, providing a definition of these concepts would be appropriate. In my opinion, an introductory chapter on the basics of Excel would have improved the usefulness of the book. Furthermore, as the book does not embrace or deal with how to use Excel, a reading list could be included in order to complement it and make it easier for students without the assumed background in Excel.

Although this book does not add to knowledge in the way that academic research might expect to, L&I would, nonetheless, be a useful tool for beginners. The book is clearly written and comprehensive in its coverage. Although it assumes familiarity with Excel at a basic level, it illustrates a practical problem solving technique using this spreadsheet package very well.

Encarna Guillamon Saorin
University College Dublin

W. Warner Burke, *Organization Change: Theory and Practice*, Sage: Thousand Oaks, CA, 2002, 325 pages, Paperback, €25.00 approx.

W. Warner Burke is a major figure in the field of organisation development and change, and has been for over 40 years. This book, published in the Foundations for Organisational Science series, is the outcome of his study and reflections on current theory and practice in the field of change management (which, he wryly suggests, might be an oxymoron).

The central theme of the book is that, while the environment for organisations is discontinuous and highly unpredictable, organisations are created to last and so aim for stability and continuity. So, in order to understand the theory and practice of organisational change, the organisational literature is not sufficient. We need to study the life sciences to see what they say about complexity. In the first chapter, Burke lays out the key issues, which become the structure for the main themes of the book. These are the metaphor of choice: open systems and life sciences, types of organisational change, organisational levels, data-based change, content and process, the use of frameworks, and leadership. Each of these receives thorough treatment.

Chapters 3 to 7 deal with theory and research of organisational change and explore the literature on evolutionary/revolutionary change, individual/group and organisational change, content and process, and conceptual models. In these chapters, Burke reviews familiar fields, such as Lewin's three stages of change, the Chin and Benne strategies, and many of the theories that have shaped our thinking about change. There are two particularly important chapters in this section. Chapter 3, in my view, is the central chapter of the book, as it is where Burke is explicit about what he sees as critical to understanding organisational change. In this chapter, he discusses two themes: open systems theory and living systems. He presents open systems theory through the well-known Katz and Kahn work. It is, however, the living systems approach that is new and Burke explores this through the work of Fritjof Capra and presents Capra's criteria for understanding life, pattern, structure and process. After his discussion of Capra, Burke provides what he sees as the implications for organisation and organisation change. The second important chapter in this section is Chapter 6, where Burke reviews the various reviews of the field of organisation development and change and highlights contemporary issues in organisation change theory. The chapters in this section are conceptual and, in my view, require a knowledge of the field and of the theoretical issues under consideration. This is not a book for undergraduates.

Chapters 8-12 deal with implementing change and, in this section, Burke summarises several well-known change frameworks, such as Weisbord's 6 Boxes, the Nadler and Tushman Congruence Model, and Tichy's TPC model, and explores the advantages and disadvantages of each. He devotes a chapter to his own model, the Burke-Litwin model, and provides illustrative examples of how it has been used. There is chapter on the leadership of change.

The concluding chapter of the book is not a synthesis of all that is gone before, in a way that we might expect. In this chapter, Burke introduces Malcolm Gladwell's book *The Tipping Point*, which deals with how viruses spread to become an epidemic or how a fashion trend starts and becomes a fad. He identifies three characteristics: a) contagiousness, b) small causes can have big effects, and c) change occurs at one dramatic moment. Burke applies Gladwell's work to organisation change.

I found this to be a most interesting book for several reasons. The first reason is the expected one: as one of the major figures of the field, Burke reviews the current state of theory and practice and

comments wisely. The second reason is that Burke opens up a new world of literature and thinking. His exposé of the theory of living systems and its application to organisation change is illuminating and practical. The third reason is that he consistently shares what he is doing and why he is doing it. He informs the reader of how he got to read the life sciences literature and how it challenges his thinking. He tells us what books he read and even provides an annotated bibliography at the end to encourage us to read those books too. In short, this is a book by a master, and like all good masters, he helps us to learn too.

David Coghlan
University of Dublin, Trinity College

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