



Review posted the week of August 4, 2003:

## Companies Are People, Too

by Sandra Fekete with LeeAnna Keith  
John Wiley & Sons, 254 pages, \$29.95

### Growing a Company's True Personality

When customers think about a popular company, they often feel a sense of personality projected from the products and services it offers. This sense of self can be seen in Disney's imagination, Nike's drive, or Nordstrom's service. Successful companies know who they are and behave consistently according to their core personalities.

Sandra Fekete, the founder of a successful marketing consultancy, has developed a program to help business leaders understand the individuality and personality of their organization so they can maximize performance, ease organizational change, articulate company-wide values, and send consistent messages. Her work offers organizations new ways to assess their innate strengths and recognize opportunities for growth so they can build better brands, differentiate themselves from the competition, and solve vexing problems.



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### Workplace Psychology

Fekete's insights into business management are based on psychological concepts that have been applied to the workplace. Her work draws on the theories of Carl Gustav Jung and the mother-daughter team of Katherine Cook Briggs and Isabel Briggs Myers, who applied Jungian psychology to their profiles of bank employees, schoolchildren, and medical students. Their diagnostic tool, the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI®), was designed to help individuals assess their personality preferences and find a preferred way of dealing with the outside world. *Companies Are People, Too* (CAP2) applies the range of diversity represented by the 16 MBTI personality types to companies to help them find preferred ways of focusing energy, gathering information, making decisions, and structuring work.

To help leaders get a better view of their organization's character, Fekete presents an 84-item questionnaire. By answering the questions offered and applying the many enlightening tips and strategies, companies can gain a clearer perspective of their businesses as well as a more realistic portrait of themselves. After completing the questionnaire and exploring the theories on which the CAP2 system is based, business leaders can use the next section of Fekete's book to help them articulate their company's persona. By doing this, leaders are better able to define their organization's core vision, mission and values.

The final section of *Companies Are People, Too* provides examples and ideas that can help leaders make better decisions and enact changes that appropriately fit with their company's unique personality.

Armed with this new-found self-awareness, companies are ready to grow and maximize the benefits of their personalities. Through examples of companies that have reinvented themselves after rediscovering

leaders how they can act on values and adapt behaviors to support a core vision and mission. She writes, "Companies need an architecture or space that allows them to build their culture in line with their needs and goals." By helping leaders assess how they fulfill their company's physical needs, she provides them with ways they can mitigate organizational change and build a work environment that will support the company's preferences.

### **Conquering Old Fears**

Using AOL Time Warner, Xerox and Home Depot as examples of organizations that have undergone major restructuring, Fekete describes the processes and results that occur when leaders shift the identity of a company in an effort to cultivate the culture of an industry leader. By using CAP2 methods, a company can assess the ways its behaviors conform to its ideals and anticipate the consequences of a new orientation in other aspects of the work environment. She writes that when leaders remake a company to better suit its industry and its mission, it can create new sensibilities, confidence and greater harmony in the workplace.

After describing better ways companies can align their personalities with the way they hire and fire, merge and acquire, set goals and build culture, Fekete discusses the fundamental importance of clarity, alignment and consistency. She writes that when an organization works to discover, articulate and live the full dimensions of its personality, it can accomplish new feats, conquer old fears, and generate momentum and unity. ~

### **Why We Like This Book**

*Companies Are People, Too* opens up a new perspective on the ways companies view themselves and the benefits that self-awareness can have on accomplishing business goals. By showing company leaders a simple way to discover their organization's preferences and priorities, Fekete offers them a unique way to become equipped to make better choices about future changes and fulfill the organization's mission and ambitions while capitalizing on its core strengths.