



Purpose & Impact: How Executives Are Creating Meaningful Second Careers

Review by Kenneth McKellar (Meyler Campbell Graduate and Career Transition Consultant)

Purpose in corporate life is a key aspiration for our times. It is simply not enough now, for various reasons, to fulfil our own or our organisation's objectives in corporate life. The wider objectives of a civilized society also need to be addressed and aligned with individual and organizational objectives in a three-sector approach.

In her thorough and fascinating book, Anita Hoffmann returns to this three-sector approach time and time again.

"Purpose & Impact" takes a refreshingly practical and holistic view of a subject about which much has been written but relatively little is still known. Few people are better placed, with the necessary skills, to tackle the subject than Anita. Her formative years as one of the first female chemical engineers at Exxon and Dow give her the necessary analytical rigour and commercial acumen to set out the subject matter credibly. Her executive search background as a successful partner at Heidrick & Struggles has brought her into contact with countless senior executives searching for three-sector alignment. Her third career as a top business coach, in a founding cohort of Meyler Campbell, has allowed her to broaden and deepen her insights into the challenges which many top executives face in mid- to late-career. On top of all of these skills, Anita is also keenly interested in the spiritual worlds of comparative religions.

The book itself is multi-faceted: it is at the same time a practical handbook, a work of philosophy and an academic treatise, all dedicated to purpose and impact in business careers. It is well laid out for the needs of either a casual browser or an in-depth reader. Part 1 of the book is a multi-disciplinary examination of why now is the time for purpose and impact. Part 2 gives expert insights into how career development really does work in practice. Part 3 maps out how to create a purpose driven career; whilst Part 4 illustrates current organizational best practice in promoting purpose-driven careers. There are also exercises which guide the reader towards first steps in the creation of a purpose driven career.

The most distinctive feature of the book however is the detailed contribution of a wide range of executives who describe, sometimes with disarming candour, their journeys to find purpose in their careers and lives. Their willingness to contribute in this soul-baring way is testament to the impact which Anita has had on their lives whilst following her own purpose. Here is an author who practices what she preaches.