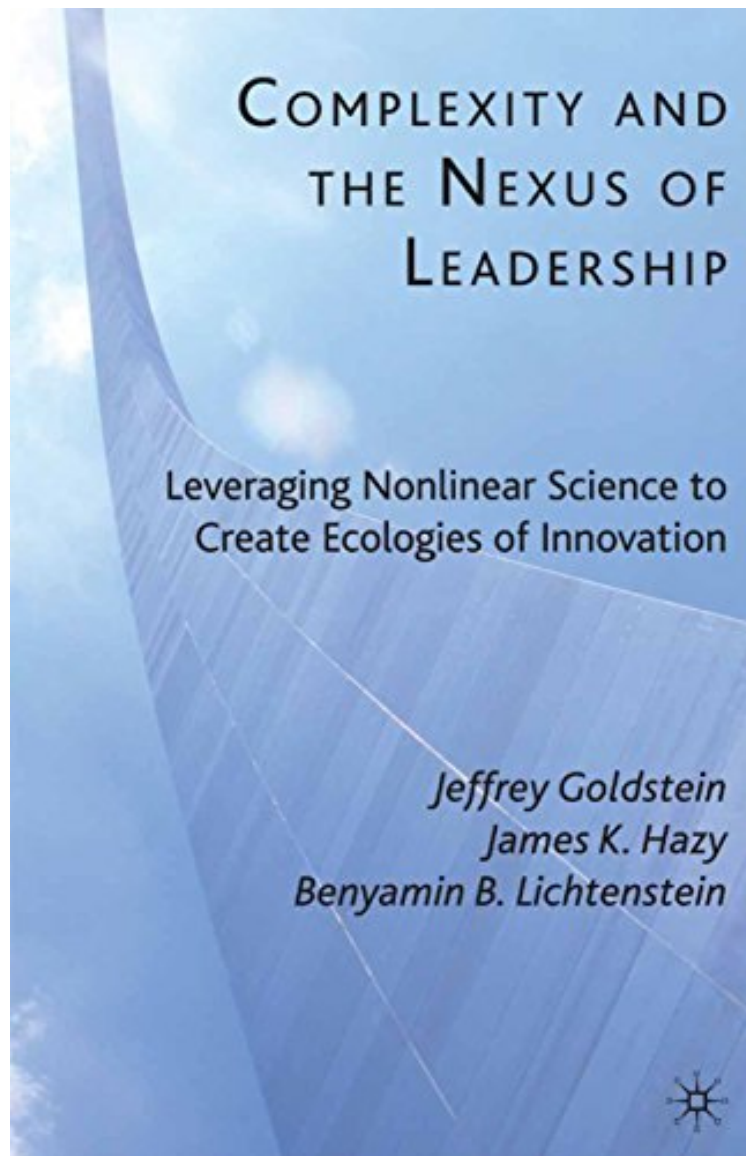


(Download) Complexity and the Nexus of Leadership: Leveraging Nonlinear Science to Create Ecologies of Innovation

## Complexity and the Nexus of Leadership: Leveraging Nonlinear Science to Create Ecologies of Innovation

*J. Goldstein, J. Hazy, B. Lichtenstein*

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**J. Goldstein, J. Hazy, B. Lichtenstein : Complexity and the Nexus of Leadership: Leveraging Nonlinear Science to Create Ecologies of Innovation** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Complexity and the Nexus of Leadership: Leveraging Nonlinear Science to Create Ecologies of Innovation:

12 of 12 people found the following review helpful. A Six Star Book on Complexity Management By William A. Reed This is a book about ecologies of innovation, experiments in novelty, and generative leadership. These are the authors' terms for recognizing and augmenting complex interactions among organizational members to achieve better innovation outcomes. It is about actively managing organizations from a complexity science perspective that appreciates how human interaction is primarily nonlinear and constantly adapting to changing contexts. It is also one of very few books that provides actionable advice for managing complexity rather than merely offering a set of metaphors about how complexity principals might apply in organizational settings. As a book which focuses on innovation from the network perspective, the authors explore and adroitly explain a number of related constructs such as interaction resonance, positive deviance, criticalization, micro-diversity, cusp-of-change, intercohesion, and of course, their central theme, ecologies of innovation. Overall, the book focuses on five factors of generative leadership: \* Differences and the end of groupthink \* The ubiquity of experiments and the power of power laws \* The hidden strength of weak signals \* Leveraging experiments through network intercohesion \* Increasing the frequency of experiments in novelty

Some favorite quotes: "Complexity science shows how the typical focus on 'heroic' and charismatic leaders can result in a lack of innovation in modern organizations" (p. 2). "Generative leadership is always probing for what is behind the scenes, exploring below the surface phenomena, looking for differences as well as sameness" (p. 71). "The key to generative leadership is to live with - and even embrace - the discomfort of disequilibrium, encouraging experiments and amplifying success in whatever form they may come" (P. 84). The unique contribution of this book is its instruction on how to manage and intervene in organizations to create the atmosphere for innovation and explores some practical techniques to foster emergence which the authors describe as the "basis for innovation" (p. 75). But, another chapter is needed to take us to the next step, which is to navigate through numerous possibilities and competing ideas to establish both a selection process and a development plan to exploit the ideas that are most valuable. These are similarly complex endeavors for organizations which deal with problems of uncertainty and risk. A few final points: \* This is the real deal - an excellent book about utilizing complexity science in the organizational context to move companies toward more effective innovation. \* Make time to read this book more than once. There is no fluff here, nothing to skip and much to absorb. \* The examples are important, useful, and non-gratuitous. They are illustrative in nature and not intended to justify the authors' framework. \* This is fortunately not a math book and explains complicated topics in easy to understand ways. \* This should not be considered an introduction to complexity topics and readers might benefit from other more introductory books before reading this (see my other reviews). If you found this review useful, please click "Yes".

12 of 12 people found the following review helpful. Bringing complexity science to public, private and nonprofit management By Nicholas C Peroff Jeffrey Goldstein and his co-authors really hit a home run with Complexity and the Nexus of Leadership. I've been waiting to see a book like this for a long, long time. I'll use it in my graduate "capstone" course in our Masters in Public Administration (MPA) program and in an executive education course also offered by the the University of Missouri-Kansas City's Bloch School of Business and Public Administration. Could be I'm getting carried away by my enthusiasm for it, but the book could be the butterfly preceding the phase change "complexifiers" have been looking for in the way we think about managing organizations. Bringing in the concept of an ecological system as a metaphor to convey complexity thinking works especially well. And, maybe a minor thing, but I really liked the Benard story about heating fluids and how that was a root idea behind dissipative structures and even, to some extent, self-organization. I have read a lot of complexity-related literature over the years and always wondered where the terms came from. From the standpoint of teaching a course about managing complexity in public, private and nonprofit organizations, two things about the book are especially strong. The first is the authors' extensive use of "real world" cases or stories that helped me respond to students who, once introduced to complexity theory, ask: So what? Or this is interesting, but it's too abstract. How can I apply it where I work? The cases in the book show them how complexity thinking is applied and how it can lead to the emergence of new ideas and new innovations in organizational management. The second thing I liked is the concluding chapter. Again, from the perspective us using the book in a classroom, the last chapter summarizes the previous chapters and ties them all together to reinforce the central concepts in managing complexity without excessive repetition of material previously covered in the book. The end result is a valuable textbook in leadership and managing organizational complexity. Based on all of the complexity-related books and articles already out there, the audience should be warmed up and ready for this book. No doubt, the fact that traditional management models and ideas have taken a serious hit or two in the financial markets crisis, the world-wide recession, etc. too also make this book an especially timely and needed addition to the literature in organizational leadership and management. I noticed that the book is already scheduled to go into paperback so the publisher must agree with me.

14 of 14 people found the following review helpful. Learn about leadership from a new complexity framing By Dr. M. May Seitanidi This book is essential reading for today's leaders. This book describes key findings from complexity science and applies them to management issues in business, but also in the nonprofit sector. Writers have applied complexity science to the problems of management before, but often the reader comes away not knowing what to actually do differently the next day. This book should change all that. In a series of clearly written chapters, cases and stories are used to illustrate key points from complexity science and the actions that practitioners can take to take advantage of these ideas. It was

interesting to learn that success stories like Netflix, Starbucks, Apple, Merck and IBM can all be explained and their secrets understood using these ideas. I believe that this book clearly shows that even the most savvy executive can learn about leadership from this new complexity framing. A useful summary chapter that closes the book is a gem. I know that I will return to it for review again and again to remind me of the key insights that I was able to take away from this book. Reading this book is a very worthwhile investment in time. I strongly recommend it.

The authors present a new approach to leadership based on findings from complexity science. Integrating real case studies with rigorous research results, they explore the biggest challenges being faced in fast-paced organizations, and provide a host of concrete tools for leading during critical periods.

"This wonderfully useful book integrates the best thinking in the fields of complexity science, leadership, and innovation. The result is a useful and practical guide to using key complexity concepts to understand and enact leadership in a way that facilitates continuous innovation." - Ellen Van Velsor, Senior Fellow, Center for Creative Leadership "For the lifelong student and (hopefully successful) practitioner of leadership, the authors greatly enriched my understanding of leadership and break new, exciting ground. For the engineer and technologist, they give me comfort that there is real science underpinning the art of leadership. They provide broad shoulders for others to stand on." - Reed Harrison, CEO, Antietam Strategy Partners, Inc. "The authors have stepped out of conventional management studies to synthesize ideas from the sciences of ecology and mathematics to articulate a new view of management and complexity. This is a well-timed analysis of how leaders can leverage networks, not in a superficial manner, but in concrete terms, to increase the velocity of innovation in their organizations." - Dan Keoppel, Executive Director, Strategic Investments, Verizon Communications "In this scholarly treatise the authors create a compelling argument that there is a new science of leadership. This book is for the serious reader who believes that you can apply generative leadership to your organization and win. Use your time well and read this book!" - Phil Harkins, CEO, Linkage, Inc. About the Author JEFFREY GOLDSTEIN Ph.D., is Full Professor in the School of Business, Adelphi University, Garden City, New York, USA. JAMES K. HAZY is Founder and CEO of Leadership Science, LLC. BENYAMIN B. LICHTENSTEIN is Assistant Professor of Management and Entrepreneurship at the University of Massachusetts, Boston, USA.