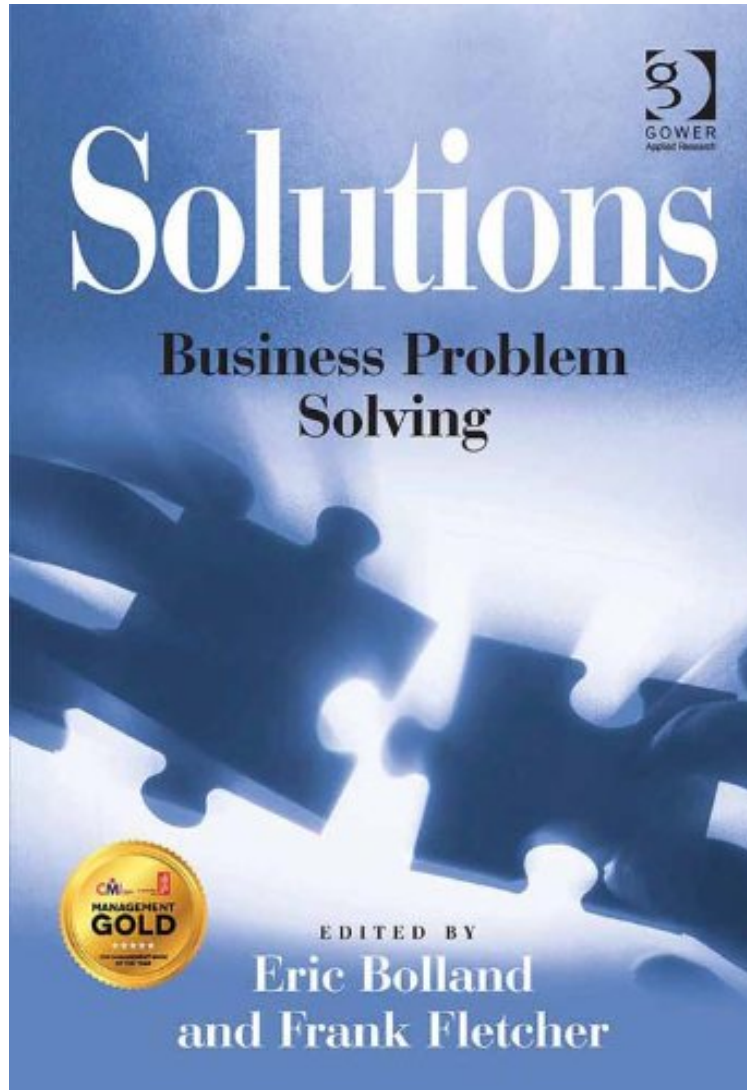


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Solutions: Business Problem Solving

Eric Bolland, Frank Fletcher

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Eric Bolland, Frank Fletcher : Solutions: Business Problem Solving before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Solutions: Business Problem Solving:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Good reference guide By Nicole Montoya This was required for my college course but found that it was a good reference guide. The fact that it is written by my professors makes it that much better. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Paul Sanders review in Business Lexington By Frank Fletcher Midway faculty collaborate on worthwhile compendium Posted on August 16, 2012 By Paul Sanders in Business Lexington Collaboration, working together to achieve a common goal, can be challenging for any business organization. When that organization is an academic group whose goal is to share knowledge and learning, as well as build consensus, the challenge can be daunting. That's why, when done successfully, it is particularly noteworthy.

Solutions: Business Problem Solving, edited by Eric Bolland and Frank Fletcher and written by the business faculty at Midway College, is an example of how a team can succeed brilliantly at addressing a common goal -- finding answers to business questions. Collaboration requires leadership and Bolland and Fletcher appear to have provided it in ways that released the collective intelligence and capabilities of a distinguished team. The result is a fresh and compelling guide that can be used by anyone with business needs, from executives to students. "It is really remarkable that any college faculty could pull something like this off," said Fletcher recently. "Our division operated in a team culture, and people focused on the bigger picture. This is something we teach our students, so we have to practice it." The book is geared to help "problem solvers," Fletcher noted, including anyone who works in or deals with an organization. People can keep the book on their desks and go to it whenever they need answers to problems they are facing, he said. As such, it can be used both by academics as well as businesses and organizations. Chapters are built around common business questions that came from Kentucky business professionals, the Midway College Business Advisory Board and others. Questions were screened by the authors and editors. The determination as to the best author for that area was decided based on background and experience, Fletcher said. Organized by functional area of business, the book's order allows the reader to turn to the chapter that deals with the particular subject in question. Among the strengths of each chapter is the inclusion of a broad base of tools that can be used to problem solve. More than 50 tools are provided to help the reader gain understanding of an issue or problem, as well as determine a solution. A table found in the introduction outlines the major tools found in each chapter. In addition, each chapter cross-references other chapters. The esteemed writing team included 15 Midway College business faculty from both the undergraduate and MBA programs. The author bios are listed in the front of the book and for good reason: reading through them gives a sense of the impressive depth of expertise and experience of this group. Like a patient who chooses the best possible team of doctors before surgery, the reader can't help but want to choose this team for business procedures. Solutions begins, appropriately enough, with a chapter on problems and decision making, by Wendy Hoffman. In addition to the aptness of this topic as the book's starter, Hoffman's reader-friendly style sets a tone for the ensuing chapters. The question-and-answer process set up in this first chapter has been carefully followed throughout the book. Each chapter also includes highlighted problem solving tips, appropriate models and functional charts. As editors, Bolland and Fletcher have maintained a disciplined, uniform approach, resulting in an easy-to-understand and solution-filled book. The chapter on leadership by Sal Mirza and Fletcher approaches many of the perennial questions on this topic. Beginning with the basics of defining leadership, it discusses the importance of critical thinking and decision making. The chapter aptly covers a myriad of topics surrounding leadership assessment and development in a concise, meaningful way. Also insightful and succinct is the chapter on communications by Karen Clancy and Linda Eldridge. The authors begin with a foundational basic: what are the essential components of communication? Once established, they expertly provide a quick but concise insight into the areas of feedback, active listening and a number of other communication basics. The applications provided for presentations should be of particular interest for many readers. The chapter on strategy by Bolland and Jerry Wellman is an excellent primer that builds on the strategic theories put forth by Michael Porter. Bolland and Wellman put the focus on the everyday need for business strategy in ways that consider both what the strategy should be and who should formulate it. They provide insights that can benefit any level manager. Other chapter topics on competitive intelligence, identifying and serving customers, distribution, accounting, finance and information technology are among those that make this book a near-encyclopedia rendering of business. Editors Bolland and Fletcher and the Midway College team have given us an extraordinary blueprint for building success in business. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A useful business book By pamelawhite In a short period of time I was able to find a quick answer to a business problem I was facing. Overall the book is a great resource and is very user friendly. The writing is clear and the book is well organized.

There are some events in life that are inevitable, and the emergence of problems in the workplace is one. Solutions sets out to provide remedies that are accessible, practical, meaningful, and final. Well organized, and referenced to specific operations, this book provides troubleshooting and other assistance, and serves as an encyclopedic reference for answers to organizational problems for managers and practitioners. All the functional activities and operations of organizations are included, so that almost any problem or issue that may occur will be addressed in one or more chapters. Readers will be able to quickly locate, understand and use a specific tool or technique to solve a problem. The different tools available are described, or a single most useful tool indicated. The tool is then explained in depth with an example of how it can be used. The strengths and weaknesses of individual tools are identified and there are suggestions for further help. Solutions is essential for anyone wanting to learn the basics of business problem solving and those who might know the basics but want to expand their understanding.

Solutions was shortlisted in the New Manager category of the CMI Management Book of the Year competition <http://yearbook.managers.org.uk>. CMI consider the shortlisted and winning books as "Management Gold". These faculty authors have created a very useful guide to organizational decision making. Starting with commonly asked questions, they introduce and plainly explain tools that private and public sector managers and supervisors can use to

make better business decisions.' John Baldacci, former Governor of Maine "'Keep asking questions until you are satisfied with the answer" is the best business advice I've ever been given This extensive research done by the Midway College business faculty will be a useful roadmap in finding answers based on experience instead of guesswork. Bottom line: The lamp post of the past is the guide light of the future.' John Y. Brown, Former Governor of Kentucky and former CEO partner-owner of Kentucky Fried Chicken 'A great resource in solving business problems. See how others face similar issues-what works and what doesn't work.' Thomas F. Gilbane Jr. Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, Gilbane Inc. 'This guide to business problem solving provides readers with a broad array of tools they can use to solve everyday business problems. As the former CEO of the CUNA Mutual Group, I appreciate the need for sound business decision making and this book will help employees at all levels of their organizations and business students do just that.' Richard M. Heins 'The business faculty at Midway College have produced something long missing from the shelves of managers - a simple guide to evidence-based tools and solutions for age-old management questions. Good luck trying to find the information packed into this treasure trove through a Google search or on a bookseller's sagging shelf of management tomes. Fortunately, it's all here in this handy collection.' Greg Shaw, Former Microsoft Executive and General Manager 'Each chapter is well written and the ideas models and the theories are clearly laid out and amply illustrated... Studying the chapters on Leadership, Communications and Strategy would not waste any military student's time either. In fact, given the patchy record many governments have when it comes to managing projects, Civil Servants world wide would benefit from reading this book too...In all, this is a very useful reference book...'

Sensor, June 2013

About the Author

Dr Eric Bolland is currently Chair of the MBA Division at Midway College, Kentucky, USA. Dr Bolland was formerly adjunct professor at the University of Wisconsin Madison School of Business. He has thirty years private and public sector managerial experience and has authored three books (Future Firms: How America's High Technology Companies Work. Oxford University Press, 1998; Financial Analysis for Credit Union Managers. Kendall-Hunt. 2000; Cost Justifying Automation. Technical Insight-John Wiley. 1989) and over fifty articles in business and economics. Dr Frank Fletcher is currently Chair of the Business Division of Midway College. He has spent more than twenty-five years in teaching and administrative positions at the University of Texas-El Paso, Husson College and the University of Massachusetts-Boston. Dr Fletcher is an independent consultant and staff member for organizations including National Alliance of Business, Gulf + Western Corporation, McGraw-Hill. He is a Certified Professional Fundraiser and Certified Professional Marketer. He has also served on the Board of Examiners for the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award.