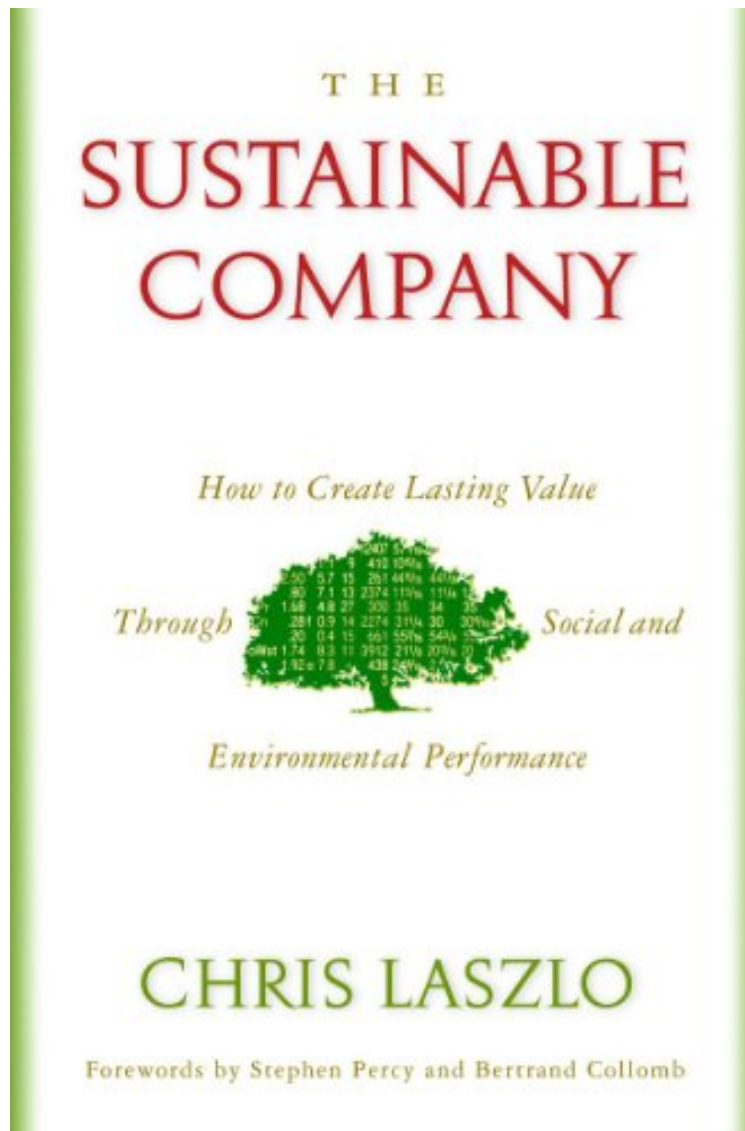


The Sustainable Company: How to Create Lasting Value through Social and Environmental Performance

Chris Laszlo

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Chris Laszlo : The Sustainable Company: How to Create Lasting Value through Social and Environmental Performance before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Sustainable Company: How to Create Lasting Value through Social and Environmental Performance:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. not convinced "the value creation toolkit" adds valueBy EliRather than take an integrative, systems approach, Laszlo prescribes 8 disciplines which seem to add another layer onto

corporate strategy. This is at odds to the CSR strategies employed by many of the leading companies today who integrate social responsibility into their core business. The nail in the coffin for this book, and a point which highlights the superficial nature of the value creation toolkit, is the forward was written by the CEO of BP in January of 2003. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Green Companies By Brad Lane Came in fairly quick, good condition, great read. Interesting amount of case studies for ecologically aware companies. Chris Laszlo writes in a very easy to follow narrative. 4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. A great primer By Alan Lekan This book is an effective primer on this important cultural trend and is divided into three parts: (1) The basic ideas behind sustainable development and value (2) Four examples of sustainable companies (3) Some business tools for creating and measuring stakeholder value In Part I, Chris Laszlo presents the key concepts, history, importance of developing an increasingly conscious, sustainable and responsible business. He covers all the major elements of sustainability (such as triple bottom-line, various stakeholders, measurements, ethics etc.) but in language that does not reduce these exciting topics and trends to dull, academic abstraction. Most interesting is Part II on successful corporate models of sustainability (such as Patagonia clothing, ARCO) which give a real human face to the concepts. Many managers will find most useful the charts, graphs, models for creating, communicating and managing an effective sustainability program. Its not an MBA-level of detail, but a solid, conceptual starting point that will be appreciated to those newer to these ideas. However, I found his language a more academically labored in Part III, reducing its effectiveness to engage. Other popular books on the topic worth reading are "Natural Capitalism" and "Cradle-to-Cradle."

"What Mr. Laszlo calls 'Planetary Ethics' or the integration of economic, environmental, social and high ethical objectives into long-term business strategy, is the new price of entry for corporate survival. Those who 'get' this and do it best will enjoy increasing shareholder value. I believe this book carries a critical message for today's corporate executives." -DEBORAH D. ANDERSON, PH.D., FORMER VICE PRESIDENT, ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY WORLDWIDE, THE PROCTER GAMBLE COMPANY Corporate governance and sustainability are moving from important peripheral problems to core business concerns, as winning companies discover stakeholders as new sources of value. Yet there are many obstacles to bringing these issues into the mainstream of business. Concepts like sustainable development can be confusing for operating managers, and even those who support the underlying issues find it difficult to frame them in ways that are useful for making business decisions. As a manager you have a responsibility to deliver financial returns to your shareholders: how can you balance this obligation with your responsibilities to society and the environment? The Sustainable Company articulates an innovative approach to meeting this challenge in a language familiar to business. The key is to create value for investors as well as society and the environment in an integrated bottom line. The Sustainable Company provides detailed case studies of leading companies illustrating this new paradigm in practice. The "how-to" section with a tool-kit for managers elevates The Sustainable Company above other recent eco-friendly business books by providing the Eight Disciplines necessary to create value for shareholders and stakeholders. Its engaging, straightforward text tells the reader how to compete and thrive in an increasingly complex world. The Sustainable Company is the solutions manual for the 21st century manager.

From Publishers Weekly Corporations can indeed do well by doing good, argues this dutiful if not entirely convincing manifesto on responsible capitalism. Laszlo, a consultant and co-author of *The Insight Edge: An Introduction to the Theory and Practice of Evolutionary Management*, urges corporations to adopt a "planetary ethics" of environmental and social sustainability, one that cherishes "stakeholder value"-for everyone from employees to environmental activists-as much as shareholder value. He showcases companies whose enlightened policies have enhanced the bottom line in the form of reduced waste and cleanup costs, fewer regulatory hassles, new business opportunities and heightened appeal to socially conscious investors and green consumers. Laszlo endeavors to translate social and environmental concerns into the language of marketing and corporate strategy, writing in the kind of flow-charted, bullet-pointed management-ese ("Process cost reductions can be addressed in the framework of existing operational efficiency initiatives such as Six Sigma...") that executives feel they can understand and implement. So thorough is the corporate sustainability overhaul he demands that it involves "five logics," "five phases," "six areas of strategic focus" and "eight disciplines." Laszlo's belief that there are no unresolvable conflicts between shareholders and other stakeholders, or between profit and ethics, may strike readers as wishful thinking, and his assumption that self-interest will impel corporations to clean up their act can seem optimistic, but well-meaning executives will find much food for thought here if they can digest it. Copyright 2003 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Booklist Laszlo, a consultant with a corporate resume, contends that companies that make the transition from focusing exclusively on shareholder value to integrating into their bottom-line strategy stakeholders' economic, social, and environmental interests will significantly enhance innovation and growth. Using the terms corporate responsibility and sustainability interchangeably and identifying stakeholders as employees, local communities, and nature, the author notes that the likely leaders in sustainability will be the private or semiprivate companies with sales of \$100 million to \$2 billion; the largest corporations may fear stockholder lawsuits claiming their interests are not being served. He presents the basic

concepts of sustainability, how it can be measured and benchmarked and how it can make good business sense, and he offers a tool kit for transforming an organization into one that creates sustainable value for shareholders and stakeholders. Although this book is clearly an infomercial for Laszlo's consulting activities, it offers an important roadmap for gaining marketplace advantage or "doing well by doing good." Mary Whaley Copyright copy; American Library Association. All rights reserved "The Sustainable Company offers some genuinely practical insights into what it really takes to improve stakeholder impacts."