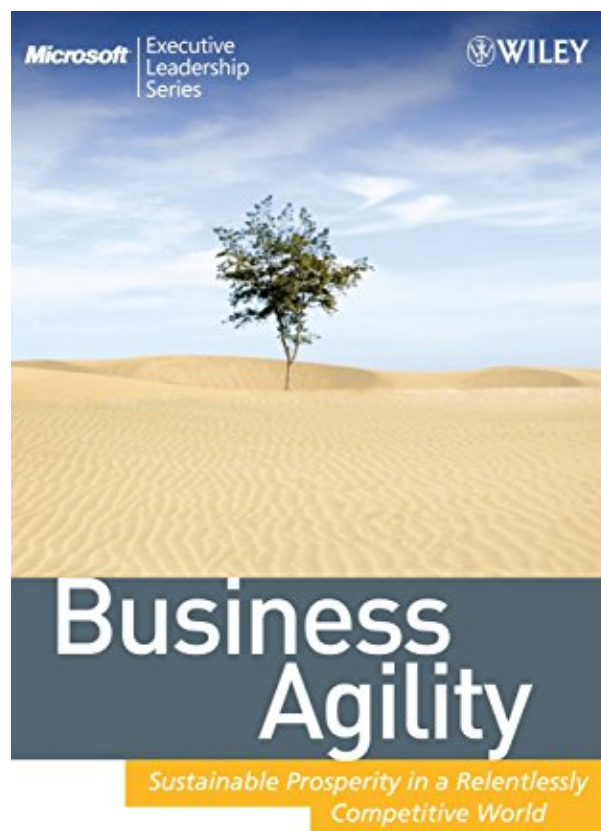


BUSINESS AGILITY: SUSTAINABLE PROSPERITY IN A RELENTLESSLY COMPETITIVE WORLD BY MICHAEL H. HUGOS



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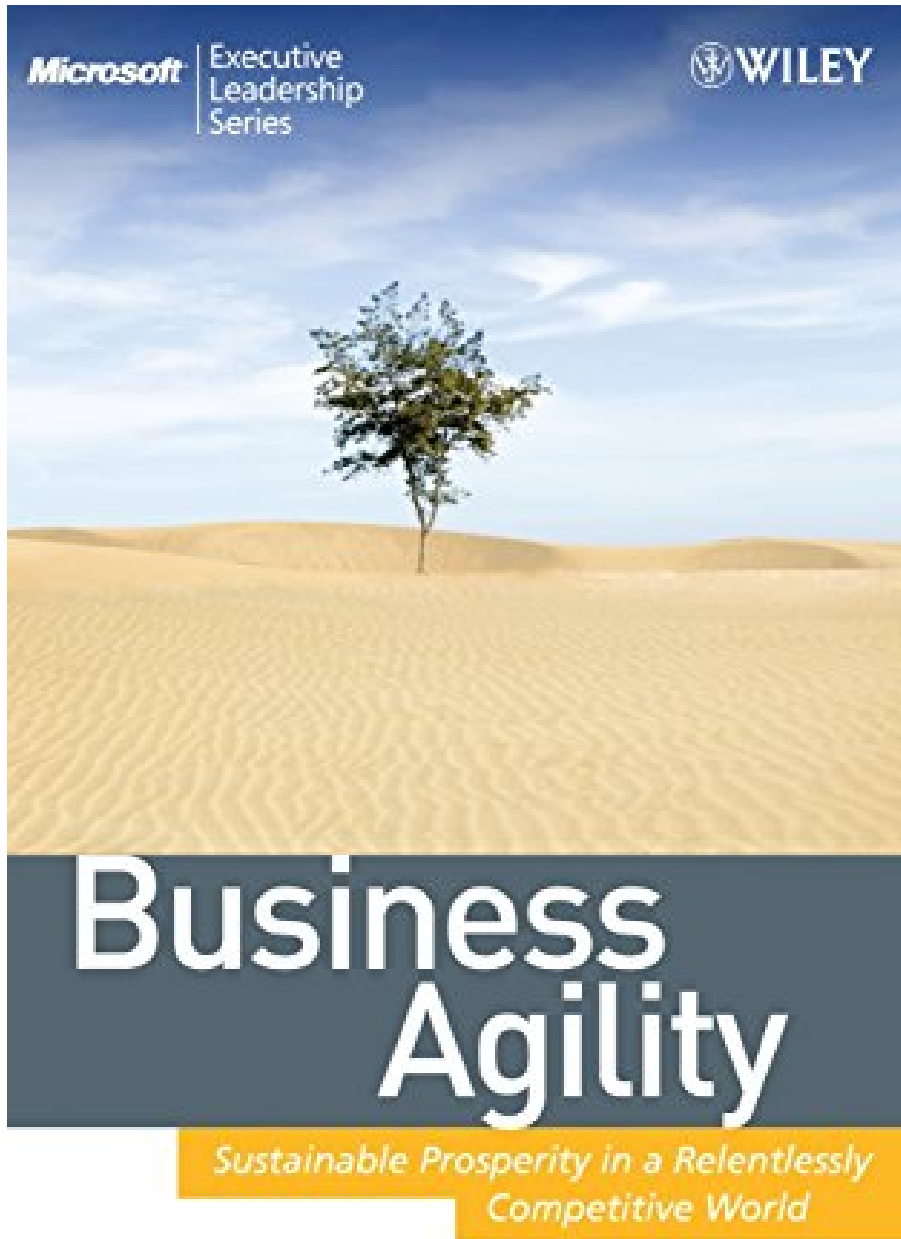
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The relentless pursuit of industrial efficiency no longer yields the profits it once did because it requires a level of business predictability that no longer exists. Instead, the Internet and global video and telecom systems provide a massive and continuous flow of data that causes the whole world to behave like a giant stock market, with all the volatility and uncertainty that goes along with such markets. Responsiveness now trumps efficiency.

By being responsive to the evolving needs and desires of specific groups of customers, companies can wrap their products and services in a tailored blanket of value-added services to consistently earn an additional four percent or more gross margin than they would otherwise earn for the product or service alone. This customer and market specialization is the most promising and the most sustainable source of profits in our fluid, real-time economy.

Part of the Microsoft Executive Leadership Series, *Business Agility* discusses the three fundamental process loops that drive an agile enterprise and how they work together to deliver the responsiveness that generates profits in a high-change economy. Providing strategies for innovative and pragmatic use of people, process, and technology to drive operations in an agile enterprise, this book reveals the principles of the agile enterprise, backed by real-world case studies from the author's own experience.

Michael Hugos is a speaker, writer, and practitioner in IT and business agility, and agile system development methods. He writes a column for *Computerworld* and a blog titled "Doing Business in Real Time" for *CIO* magazine.

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Most helpful customer reviews

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful.

Dear potential reader: Agility is the new key to success.

By sjef de corte

When trying to revitalize Office Depot, I was looking for ways to increase the overall business agility. As moving a giant isn't easy, I ordered over 10 books on agility, ranging from ICT to Logistics and Business. Big organisations face challenges in renewing themselves. Although it is not an easy endeavour to revitalize a giant, the principles as presented by Mr. Michael Hugos, clearly explain how to differentiate between Lean and Leap aspects in the organisation.

Perhaps even more important than the concept of Business Agility itself, is the practical way in which Mr. Hugos transforms vision into action. The book is suited for both conceptual and non-conceptual readers, offering practical advice to increase the overall Business Agility. Regardless if you are aiming to increase the R&D impact of your organisation, or if you are trying to optimize the overall efficiency, the book offers a guide to separate Lean from Leap and to harmonize energy in creating an integrated approach. Since the book connects well to all types of people, it introduces a common language that allows any board to discuss overall Business Agility, regardless of the background or orientation of individual board members. It connects beyond a board's or team's diversity.

Although one could argue if I succeeded in renewing Office Depot's overall agility, I have applied the principles multiple times at both corporate organisations as SME companies. These companies include Philips, Unilever and HAL Investments. The principles that Mr. Hugos explains are universal and practical. This is a must for anybody that realizes that organisations have a life cycle. In current environment it's important to maintain operational efficiency whilst simultaneously organizing market driven innovations that have a relevant impact at corporate level. This is where Business Agility makes the difference and adds on to existing literature. I have applied the concept of Mr. Hugos in both big and small companies, ranging from 20 FTE to 90.000 FTE.

Business Agility is a must for any modern self-conscious business leader or any person that wants to contribute to the overall organisational agility. This book is the missing link between a lot of the existing literature and allows you to accelerate your company in multiple ways. It connects well across functional disciplines and allows you to create an overall agility agenda for your company. Business Agility by Mr.

Michael Hugos has made it to my personal top 5 of favourite business books. Feel free to just buy the book, or connect with me at Linked-in if you have any further questions.

Kind regards,
Sjef de Corte

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful.

Business Agility a must in the Information Economy

By William E. Mellor

This is the third book I've read by Mr. Hugos and he never disappoints! Writing in an entertaining style that is easy to understand, informative without being pedantic Mr. Hugos skillfully delivers on making business perform and more profitable in the information economy. I have run a business for a quarter century in an industry where the operative buzz word has always been urgency but after reading Business Agility Sustainable Prosperity in a Relentlessly Competitive world my philosophy of conducting business and my understanding of how businesses should operate have been fundamentally changed.

By introducing and /or elaborating on three concepts OODA, Six Sigma, and Mr. Hugos' own DDB Define Design Build, and melding them all together in a cohesive plan to attain business agility he has delivered a powerful new book to the bible on how to properly conduct business, and how to stretch the almighty profit margin!

The concepts of business agility are cleverly conveyed by his use of drawing analogies from how a sun flower functions to the military tactics of great military minds of the past. While this book was probably written with the idea of making a large enterprise more nimble (it takes a while to turn an ocean liner) I see where the ideas and concepts presented will be useful in my small business (canoes have to be navigated too!)

In this book Mr. Hugos has shown how the old hierarchical controlling ways of doing business should be, must be replaced with a coordinated network approach. An approach that enables innovation, and promotes visibility, training and creates motivation. In this book Mr. Hugos has created a blue print to transform any organization from a staid assembly line, monolithic dinosaur to a dynamic, responsive and adaptive modern firm capable of growing the bottom line.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful.

A Must Read!

By Eugene

Michael Hugos is one of my new Intellectual heroes. His works blend theory with reality in a fascinating way, he's like a Thucydides in business: His ideas don't come merely from study, he's actually been practicing them in the real world! I'm a business student, so perhaps I just don't have the experience to completely apply the theories in from most business writers, but reading Michael Hugos work just makes the theories click inside my head from his real world examples and super description. Example: I might read about Porters 5 Strategy Test and drill in my head "I must apply Fit across my value chain" but don't really know what that actually means. Hugos gives real life examples and step by step descriptions on how to apply this on businesses, and NOW the theories I've previously read begin to make sense and I can apply the ideas on a broader concept.

Another example is Porters claim that you must reduce costs from business activities or increase the price of your products and services with tailored value propositions. This is too abstract, its difficult to apply this concept into a real world setting, but Hugos gives the most brilliant and clear description of how to achieve this through Information Technology and achieve Alpha Profits.

Overall this is one of the most influential business books I've read and has completely altered the way I understand business and the career path I had planned. It shows how IT interconnects with every aspect of the company from Operational Effectiveness, Value Proposition, Corporate Strategy, Human Resource Management, etc. Its the kind of book I can't wait to reread several times and completely internalize its ideas on my head.

-Eugene V. Sheely

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