

**Planning for Student Services:
Best Practices for the 21st Century**
Edited by Martha Beede and Darlene
Burnett
Society for College and University
Planning, 2000, \$45.00 (\$30.00 SCUP
members), 150 pages
ISBN 0-9601608-9-2

Reviewed by Marsha Maxwell

This easy-to-read book may be read from start to finish or simply used for reference. In either case, *Planning for Student Services* offers ideas and proposes solutions for many of the challenges that face us today.

The main theme of the book is to identify projects that were the most innovative in improving student services. The projects fundamentally fall into two categories: process reengineering or redesign as the change agent, or technology as the change agent. The authors were clear, however, that the projects using technology were not delivered for technology's sake but as the tool to implement the desired change. Technology for technology's sake is such an easy trap to fall into that it was refreshing to see a discussion that warned about that possibility.

One example of the projects covered is Seton Hall's reengineering of enrollment services. That discussion also emphasizes the need for customer involvement in any process change: "One of the fundamental rules in planning for and delivering high quality service is the importance of talking to your customers." At Seton Hall this critical aspect of the process was handled through interviews with the recipients and providers of the services. Following up on this theme, the editors also included a summary chapter on customer-based transformation to explore

further the concept of being student centered.

Real-life examples, theoretical concepts, and thought-provoking strategies are intertwined in this fast-reading book. I would recommend scanning it first for the overall concepts and then putting it in your library. I am confident that you will go back and re-read 1 or 2 of the 14 best practices or summary chapters.

Finally I must also note that although this book is sponsored by IBM, it is not a sales document nor does it promote IBM products.

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The Knowledge Management Toolkit: Practical Techniques for Building a Knowledge Management System

Amrit Tiwana
Prentice Hall, 2000, \$44.99, 608 pages
ISBN 0-13-012853-8

Reviewed by Gerald Bernbom

Knowledge management (KM) represents an evolutionary step in the use of information technology to transform organizations—the natural successor to information resource management (IRM), management information systems (MIS), and electronic data processing (EDP). Developments in knowledge management are enabled by advances in computing and communication technologies, but as was the case in these earlier stages of IT transformation, KM depends equally on innovations in business strategy, organizational design, and methodology.

As suggested by its subtitle, *The Knowl-*

edge Management Toolkit is most valuable when it focuses on these less-technical aspects of KM, with an emphasis on methodology and the practical techniques involved in building a knowledge management system. The book offers a 10-step roadmap to KM implementation, starting with an analysis of existing infrastructure and the alignment of KM goals with overall business strategy. The roadmap includes organizationally focused tasks like designing the KM team and conducting a knowledge audit and analysis, which provide the foundation for more systems-oriented tasks like creating a KM system blueprint and actually developing the KM system.

Especially valuable is the author's discussion of prototyping and system deployment, which incorporates the methodology he refers to as RDI, or results-driven incrementalism. RDI emphasizes short development cycles and intensive implementation cycles, "each of which delivers a *measurable* business benefit." In this section of the book (as throughout the text) the author provides a number of checklists, key questions, and a summary of lessons learned.

The importance of measurable benefits is re-emphasized in the final step of the author's KM roadmap, which focuses on measuring performance—what he calls RoKI, or return on knowledge investment. He points out a number of common pitfalls in choosing performance metrics and provides a brief but useful introduction to three recommended methods of performance measurement: benchmarking, quality function deployment, and the balanced scorecard.

Like a real-world "toolkit," this book contains more good ideas than can be productively used in any given organization or set of circumstances. The 10-

step roadmap is a helpful framework for planning a KM project, but few organizations are likely to follow all 10 steps in full detail.

Gerald Bernbom (bernбом@indiana.edu) is director of research and academic computing and special assistant to the vice president for information technology at Indiana University and author of the third title in the *EDUCAUSE Leadership Strategies* series, *Information Alchemy: The Art and Science of Knowledge Management*. An excerpt from this book begins on page 28.

Teaching with Technology Seventy-Five Professors from Eight Universities Tell Their Stories

David G. Brown, Editor
Anker Publishing Company, Inc., 2000,
\$25.95 (paper), 250 pages
ISBN 1-882982-34-7

Reviewed by Margaret Massey

Teaching with Technology is an insightful collection of vignettes on teaching through the magic of today's technology. The vignettes are provided through the real-classroom experiences of 75 pioneers in education at eight highly respected universities in the United States. David Brown, editor of *Teaching with Technology*, employs his extensive experience in education as he sets the stage for the reader. The collection includes a presentation of some of the inherent obstacles to teaching through technology and a candid description of the infrastructure in which each professor works.

The format of *Teaching with Technology* can be particularly helpful to those of us who are just wading into the vast sea of computer technology in education. The vignettes are grouped into useful academic areas, and each vignette tells a different real-life story of the patience, expertise, involvement, and dedication required to be successful in today's educational environment.

Teaching with Technology can provide encouragement for an educator. It illustrates an innovative journey in teaching by presenting experiences of determined practitioners. Such experiences can serve as a practical guide for creating new approaches for course and curriculum deliveries as well as an excellent set of prototypes for preparing course materials for face-to-face or mixed-mode deliveries. Rather than rehashing examples of the way teaching should be, it provides a resource of experiences that, in turn, can benefit the seasoned professional as well as the novice—anyone who is or would like to be involved in instructional technology. Those in education who have forethought and resources can take an educational leap ahead in today's as well as tomorrow's technology.

Regardless of the size or type of institution of higher learning, *Teaching with Technology* can be an excellent resource as educators proceed with new and exciting strategies for course development. On such a journey, it makes better sense to stand on the shoulders of those who have gone before and prepared a way.

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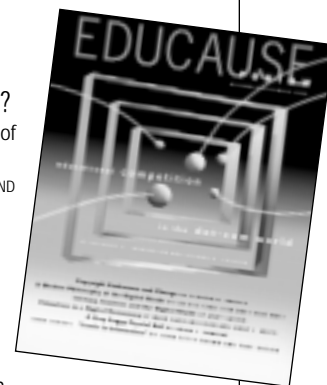
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