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Managing The Unexpected: Resilient Performance In An Age Of Uncertainty, 2nd Edition



Synopsis

Since the first edition of *Managing the Unexpected* was published in 2001, the unexpected has become a growing part of our everyday lives. The unexpected is often dramatic, as with hurricanes or terrorist attacks. But the unexpected can also come in more subtle forms, such as a small organizational lapse that leads to a major blunder, or an unexamined assumption that costs lives in a crisis. Why are some organizations better able than others to maintain function and structure in the face of unanticipated change? Authors Karl Weick and Kathleen Sutcliffe answer this question by pointing to high reliability organizations (HROs), such as emergency rooms in hospitals, flight operations of aircraft carriers, and firefighting units as models to follow. These organizations have developed ways of acting and styles of learning that enable them to manage the unexpected better than other organizations. Thoroughly revised and updated, the second edition of the groundbreaking audiobook *Managing the Unexpected* uses HROs as a template for any institution that wants to better organize for high reliability. The accompanying reference guide is included as a PDF on this disc.

Book Information

MP3 CD

Publisher: Audible Studios on Brilliance Audio; MP3 Una edition (July 26, 2016)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1522698094

ISBN-13: 978-1522698098

Product Dimensions: 5.2 x 0.5 x 6.8 inches

Shipping Weight: 2.4 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.4 out of 5 stars Â Â See all reviews Â (34 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #1,138,484 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #243 in Â Books > Business & Money > Human Resources > Conflict Resolution & Mediation #7624 in Â Books > Business & Money > Small Business & Entrepreneurship > Entrepreneurship #9279 in Â Books > Business & Money > Management & Leadership > Leadership

Customer Reviews

This second edition - an update of the 2001 book that introduced us to the 'mindful' organization - is a timely and well-done re-write that furthers the authors' contention that mindfulness is at the core of a learning organization. By substituting a failed preemptive burn incident, (the 2000 Cerro Grande wildland fire that caused \$1 billion of damage to Los Alamos), for the 1st edition's Union

Pacific/Southern Pacific merger debacle as the central example of their 5 principles of mindfulness, the reader is able to feel the flames of the unexpected leap beyond the control lines of the HRO (High Reliability Organizations) environment. This wind-fed fire metaphor gives life to the uncontrollable nature of today's business environment and every business's need for a mindful response to the unexpected. Managing only for the expected will not provide containment when the winds of change blow into your marketplace. From the authors' perspective, the appropriate response is the creation of an infrastructure to provide the 5 principles of mindfulness.¹

Preoccupation with failure - treating any failure (often small ones) as a symptom that something is wrong with the system, a mindful organization is continually updating its understanding.²

Reluctance to simplify interpretations - ensuring a more complete and nuanced picture, simplifying less and seeing more.³ Sensitivity to operations - paying attention to relationships at the front line, where the work gets done.⁴ Commitment to resilience - maintaining a deep knowledge of the technology, the system, one's coworkers, and one's self as avenues for improvising and keeping the system functioning.⁵

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