

**BOOK REVIEW for Training Media Review <http://www.tmreview.com>**

<b>TITLE:</b>	Purpose
<b>AUTHOR:</b>	Nikos Mourkogiannis
<b>PUB DATE:</b>	2006
<b>LENGTH:</b>	263
<b>PUBLISHER:</b>	Palgrave Macmillan
<b>PRICE:</b>	27.95

**REVIEW OUTLINE**

Opening

After the Enron scandal and the resulting regulation of business behavior, some people thought enough had been done to ensure company leaders would behave differently in the future. Not Nikos Mourkogiannis, author of Purpose: The Starting Point of Great Companies. Mourkogiannis, a London-based management consultant and co-founder of the Harvard Law School Center on Negotiations, believes that leaders of successful companies build and drive those companies from a strong sense of moral purpose, beyond the goals of profit and success and that it's time to return to a focus on that purpose. Four categories of purpose reside in the conjunction of competitiveness and morality and can serve as a compass driving strategy for today's businesses.

Description

According to the Preface, Purpose was written for CEO's, executives on the CEO path, and business students. Part I first introduces four philosophers and types of moral ideas: Kierkegaard and "the new," Aristotile and "the excellent," Hume and "the helpful," and Nietzsche and "the effective." Mourkogiannis then devotes a chapter to defining the opposite of Purpose; it is not vision, mission or branding. Individual chapter case studies on Tom Watson of IBM, Warren Buffett of Berkshire Hathaway, Sam Walton of WalMart, Siegmund Warburg of S.M. Warburg, and Henry Ford of Ford Motor Company explore how each leader demonstrated his particular sense of moral purpose in building and maintaining his company. This background of philosophy and history comprises the

first seven chapters. In Part II, the remaining four chapters provide direction on how CEOs and other business leaders can use the concept of foundational moral purpose today. Here readers will find tools such as “Six questions to discover Purpose,” models, and tables that can be applied to identify and strengthen purpose in both people and strategy. The book concludes with four appendices, notes, and a critical bibliography.

### Evaluation

This book digs deep and will pose a challenge to readers. Many of us have not studied philosophy since the first year in college and have forgotten much. Faced with Aristotle and Kierkegaard in the first chapter, readers may be tempted to put the book aside without exploring the case studies. These abound in rich information, although they do require frequent stops for reflection. For example, the author places Henry Ford and Siegmund Warburg in the same category. Using Nietzsche to make the connection between Ford’s interest in improving the world through his automotive company and Warburg’s drive to create an elite class in society through investment banking takes time and effort. Also, the case study chapters are ordered differently than the set of philosophers and moral ideas presented in Chapter 1, a situation that can confuse readers expecting a logical connection in the book’s organization. In Part II, Mourkogiannis provides a synopsis of steps to identifying and implementing Purpose in a company rather than prescriptive details in the four chapters here. The recommended steps and models, while useful, are lightweight for a reader interested in applying the author’s ideas in an organization. Appendix 3, containing 64 key points intended to give readers the gist of the book’s argument, is the most understandable and valuable section of the book.

### Recommendation

The book will definitely find a place in the college classroom among MBA students. Perhaps only there will readers have enough time to consider whether the purpose concepts as presented by the author can be applied in an existing organization in addition to one purpose-driven through the efforts of its owner/creator. The book demands discussion and debate for readers to absorb and understand its ideas. A venue that can provide this environment will find this book a thoughtful addition to its library.

### Product rating (see rating category definitions below)

	<b>4 Outstanding</b>	<b>3.5 Very good</b>	<b>3 Good</b>	<b>2.5 Above average</b>	<b>2 Average</b>	<b>1.5 Below average</b>	<b>1 Poor</b>
Holds reader interest						XX	
Instructional value					XX		
Self-study value							XX
Value of content				XX			
Value for the money					XX		
Overall rating						XX	