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Understanding Management: The Social Science Foundations

Paul Willman

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Paul Willman : Understanding Management: The Social Science Foundations before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Understanding Management: The Social Science Foundations:

Management is a fragmented and interdisciplinary area of study, with a lot of academic branches. Willman argues this tree is narrower at its roots, and these roots lie primarily in social science. Key to the purpose of the book is to present management theory as applied social science. Developed out of a core management course at Master's level, this book

introduces the field to students who may have little prior knowledge of management. Willman interprets 'management' broadly to embrace the sub-disciplines of strategy, finance, accounting, marketing, organisational behaviour and operations management. The text aims to show how they arose and how they relate, thus engaging the reader in a little history. The book is integrative, in that it seeks to find common concerns in disparate literatures. It is also critical in that it seeks to comparatively evaluate contributions to the management field both in terms of theoretical contribution and practical impact. It is intended to be accessible to a range of readers, presenting technical materials in an informal way. Finally, it is introductory in that it assumes no previous knowledge of the academic management field.

A significant examination of our understanding of management, the interrelationship between its various disciplines, and its institutional underpinnings. Willman is equally, and uniquely, at ease discussing finance as well as culture. Incisive, broad-ranging, engaging and enjoyable to read. * Barbara Townley, Professor of Management, University of St Andrews. * Paul Willman shows how the best management theory finds its origins in academic research in established disciplines. It is a provocative and in Willman's hands persuasive thesis. * John Kay, author of *Foundations of Corporate Success* and *The Truth about Markets* * [continued from above] In essence, Willman manages to combine a persistent curiosity about what does and does not work in management, with a strong sense of the history and dynamics of the field. *Understanding Management* is not only an essential text for management students and their teachers, but also for the many thousands of managers who may, in a quiet moment, be puzzled about why they continue to do things which don't seem to work. * Michael Power, London School of Economics and Political Science * Paul Willman has created a new genre of management text. Being neither a manual of how to do it nor an abstract critique from the outside, *Understanding Management* explores the complex exchanges between management theories and management practice. It brilliantly squares the circle of being both a semi-popular easy read, yet also rich in scholarship. It is also a very personal account emerging from years of teaching which provides a roadmap through the tangled and fragmented archipelago of management sub-fields. What do they teach in business schools, and where did these ideas come from? Paul Willman lays out the central concepts that animate the six core disciplines (accounting, operations, management, marketing, strategy, and finance) in a compact and enjoyable way. He also traces the often surprising origins of contemporary business ideas, from mass-production shipbuilding in 16th century Venice to heat diffusion equations from engineering. [A thinking person's guide to the theory behind management.] * Gerald F. Davis, Wilbur K. Pierpont Professor of Management, The University of Michigan * About the Author Paul Willman, Professor of Management, London School of Economics Paul Willman is a Professor of Management at LSE. He was head of the Employment Relations and Organisational Behaviour Group from 2008-11. He designed and launched the two year Masters' in Management degree, and launched a modular Executive version (Global MiM) in 2013. He was Professorial Fellow of Balliol College, Oxford and the inaugural Ernest Batten Professor of Management Studies in the Saïd Business School, Oxford University, 2000-2006. He was Director of Executive Education at Oxford 2001-3 and founding Director of the Oxford EMBA. He was Professor of Organisational Behaviour and Industrial Relations at London Business School from 1991-2000, Director of the Sloan Msc Programme, 1989-92 and Head of the Organisational Behaviour Group 1998-2000.