

PREFACE...

To The Professor...

Teaching Comes Second

For four years as I wrote this book, I was paranoid about one thing: that I would end up not including someone's pet topics. Then the answer hit me: if I miss, students will still get them—from you, and much better. Relieved, I focused instead on making sure I included everything else. I can't say I succeeded.

As a teacher myself, I have gone through the cycle, sorting through all the reasons to adopt a book (or not). There have been different reasons at different times: a book that includes the latest academic theory-in-the-making; a book with some level of opaqueness so I would have a role; one set in the new cognitive, information processing framework; one with a post-modernist flavor; a book with cases; one that blends theory with practice. Now I will plead guilty: given my goal of making this a comprehensive textbook to serve the needs of our discipline, and following the wisdom of all our other textbook authors, I have ended up with a little bit of all of the above.

But I have strived to make all topics accessible to the student, so I named and renamed some concepts, and redrew a few flowcharts, and “decoded” many theories in student-speak. The resulting transparency now frees you from having to explain the basics and instead use the book as a launch pad for your own creative structuring of a hands-on learning experience for your students.

Guiding my writing throughout has been a singular goal, indeed an obsession: students should read it not because they have to, but because they want to. In this goal too, I have good company—all other CB textbooks do it, admirably well. I do it a little differently.

I made a choice: Teaching comes second; engaging the student comes first. A textbook can be good, very good. But can it also create excitement in the student about the subject itself? I wanted to absolutely, positively enthrall the student.

Toward that lofty goal, not fully met, here is my modest contribution, and I offer it for your consideration. And for a different kind of learning experience for your students.

Sincerely,

-bm

Contd...

To The Student...

MTV or This Book?

I won't promise that you will enjoy the book **lover partying**, or your favorite TV show, or people watching, or fantasizing about yourself.

Or wait a minute—this last one, we come pretty close. Maybe not fantasizing, but at least thinking about yourself—the book is all about that. **It is a book about you**. About why you enjoy the TV shows that you do, about your constant search in the store for a perfect match for your persona, about your enchantment with the world of goods.

You spend 80% of your waking hours being a consumer. Now enjoy a few hours reading about it. An impressive body of knowledge it is. But I didn't invent it; I just made it easy and fascinating. So you may relate every concept to your personal life. And at least a few times when you are idling, you may pick up this book instead of watching MTV. **Yep, once you get into it, it is sneakily enticing.**

Oh, and did I mention this whole fun thing will count as 3 (or 4 or 5) credits!

I wish you well, my friends!

Dr. B.

Contd...

To The Marketing Executive...

Happy Plotting....

This is not your usual professional reading. And given your busy work life, a 750-page book is the last thing you want to read. Fair enough.

But if your work entails, in one way or another, influencing your consumers, do you want to spend a whole lifetime trying to do it without knowing why it works or how you can make it work better?

You can read it one chapter a week. In 25 weeks, you will have put under your belt a comprehensive body of knowledge—a master template to guide your thinking about consumers.

I wrote it to be easy enough for college students, but also practical enough for the “Tell-me-something-I-can-use-on-Monday-morning” Marketing Executive.

I know, I know, when you graduated, you said, happily, a goodbye to textbooks. I will let you in on a secret: this is popular nonfiction in the guise of a textbook. I have “translated” a lot of things that were textbookish. Now it is a knowledge book that could genuinely compete with your other week-end reading. And something to bring to work on Monday. If your work on Monday will require thinking about consumers, that is.

Happy Plotting!

Ban Mittal, Ph.D.