

Business Cases for Info Pros: Here's How, Here's Why

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This is a practical book and a valuable guide for submitting proposals for new information projects. It also serves as more than a guide to Information professionals to actually realize that the given ideas lie within the grasp of the professional and the potential within them and how to unleash it to the corporate decision makers. It gives a direct exposition of the inherent problems for the information specialist and their difficult role in convincing the management hierarchy in the case of venturing into new information schemes or services. It is a very useful book that discusses critical issues for justifying novel schemes or services in the information arena. The author has embarked on an issue of immense significance for the LIS professionals. It is undoubtedly useful for both the practitioner and the student of Library management.

Stricker hits the nail on the head with a typical scenario of how information professionals face challenges in receiving due recognition for their proposals and not achieving any investments. It provides existing situations, justifying therein why to offer business cases, what to propose, which to go for, what to avoid and how best to avoid them. Although information professionals offer quality services, it seems an intangible effort and thus becomes difficult to show any cost benefit analysis or a return on investment position. Most of the time this fact is ignored by "upstairs" and fails to provide an image booster for the professionals that makes them stagnant in getting due recognition and promotions.

Each chapter of the book contains a great deal of practical information, which the author has gained through experience gained over several decades, discussions she has had with professionals and her own ideas. She presents her own appraisals on the current situations in the information field and their implications. The entire book is written in a plain and easy to understand style with a continuous flow of lucid explanations and matrices. Decision makers' perceptions are given in the introductory chapter and such allusions in other chapters as well by alerting on the unfavorable/favorable decisions that may be made, at the outset. She has explained as to why this guide is prepared, and why information professionals should make a strategic business case when planning to overcome inherent challenges in the LIS field. This is an encouragement and a motivation for the LIS Professional.

The book consists of eight chapters and a lengthy introduction. However, the book does not contain a bibliography or reference citations which would have helped the progression of such an enterprise undertaken by those aspiring to negotiate a successful outcome.

The first chapter defines a business case and also describes it further. It is implied that it should be delivered clearly, with a systematic plan that also calls for one's common sense. The investment that need be made in lieu of a project proposal needs to be justified for the expenditures that will be incurred on. Hence the author signals on rationales and incentives to advance a proposal and provide an analogue to a personal scenario. It gives the reader a correct perspective of advancing such a venture. The methods of achieving this are reported in the ensuing chapters by giving a business case approach, framework and memorandum. There is a flow of continuity in the authors' concluding phrases "What next" in each chapter. Chapter 8 contains business case studies, which gives weight age to the entire book. There are three different cases, which are well presented to form concepts of business cases. However the author states that the cases or not actual incidents, organizations or individuals, but her experience over many decades. The concluding chapter is noteworthy as it gives examples of presentations of a proposal that has been meticulously planned. At the end a final checklist is provided to facilitate a last minute check and corrections to be done if needed.

*Business cases for information professionals* is not just a technical guide and also not a beginner's guide. It is neither a fact sheet nor a list of just what to do. But it is a very practical guide to strategy with professional advice that shows that the professionals themselves have to do a lot of groundwork and thinking and planning. Stricker gives a practical message that to have a positive outcome, the info pros must reshape their outlook towards such problems, format their own styles, and start doing it right now. It is not a descriptive book, but simply deliberated on how to convince the decision makers into accepting a rational proposal, in practical terms.

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