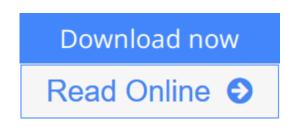# The Spider's Strategy: Creating Networks to Avert Crisis, Create Change, and Really Get Ahead

By Amit S. Mukherjee

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Selected by Soundview as "One of the 30 Best Business Books of 2009"

"Mukherjee beautifully weaves the ever-morphing web of technology, business, and organizational learning together and explains why both top executives and middle managers must care about their impact."
Sudipta Bhattacharya
President, Invensys Wonderware

"The business world is moving toward non-hierarchical networks.... The answer to these changes is a combination of network management and collaborative leadership. Mukherjee...goes beyond description of best practices. The four Design Principles that he has developed to implement networks are conceptually well thought through and actionable. This book deserves to be read by anybody who is interested in tomorrow's organization."
Arnoud De Meyer
Director, Judge Business School, Cambridge University

"An 'adaptive organization' must count as the response in the increasingly connected world in which business will operate in the decades ahead.… [Mukherjee] makes a terrific case of how to achieve the desired response. A great read for the 'concerned' before they reach the stage of being 'tormented.'"
R. Gopalakrishnan
Executive Director, TATA Sons Limited

"Beyond the obvious, this is a great and pragmatic book, demonstrating the incredible power of collaboration in action."
Jean-Francois Baril
Senior Vice President, Nokia Corporation

"Though many have sought to unlock the secrets of creating learning organizations, few have succeeded. In *The Spider's Strategy*, Mukherjee provides

the keys to the learning kingdom.… And he shows what it really takes to leverage the power of networks. It is that rare business book that deserves to be read from cover-to-cover."
Michael Watkins
Author of *The First 90 Days: Critical Success Strategies for New Leaders at All Levels*

"Mukherjee has written a very thoughtful and thought provoking book.… The adaptive network perspective with its four Design Principles and the accompanying five Capabilities inspired by a Chief Network Officer will be the organizations of the present and future.… The book presents good theory, research grounded in facts, and a clear picture of what is both necessary and possible, going forward."
Alexander B. Horniman
Killgallon Ohio Art Professor of Business Administration, Darden School of Business Administration, University of Virginia

To thrive in a world where networks of companies increasingly compete with other networks, managers can no longer focus solely on excellence in planning and execution. In *The Spider's Strategy*, top business consultant Amit S. Mukherjee provides the tools you need to sense and respond to unexpected events. He shows why and how managers in your company must apply four powerful "Design Principles" today:

- **Change everyday work practices** by embedding "sense and response" within your normal plan-and-execute processes.
- **Promote collaboration across partner companies** by establishing practical mechanisms that make "win-win" a basis for action not an empty slogan.
- **Ensure that work really teaches** by assuring the culture, processes, and organizational structure to improve your company's ability to learn.
- **Implement those key technological capabilities** that allow the network to function seamlessly.

The heart of this book includes proven implementation advice based on conversations with successful innovators at HP, Nokia, and beyond. Mukherjee offers new insight into everything from work practices to culture and corporate organization and shows how to overcome even the most stubborn obstacles to effective collaboration amongst partners.

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Praise for The Spider's Strategy

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"-About the time of the Nokia incident, the Toyota Group faced a similar situation in Japan and its actions were a good example of best practice—but in a setting of a local network, strong ties, and integral business architecture. I was not sure if a switch from a transactional mode to a knowledge sharing mode could happen in a global network with weaker ties and a modular business architecture. *The Spider's Strategy* convinced me that it is certainly possible—by building sense-and-respond capabilities, collaboration with network partners, organizational learning, and responsive information technologies."

—Takahiro Fujimoto Professor, The University of Tokyo, Author, The Evolution of a Manufacturing System at Toyota, and Co-author (with Kim Clark), Product Development Performance: Strategy, Organization, and Management in the World Auto Industry

"-Mukherjee captures very well the essential value that programs like PRM, Buy-Sell, and the internal knowledge management capabilities bring to HP every day."

—*Greg Shoemaker* Vice President, Hewlett-Packard Company

"-Once in a while I receive a book that makes me think 'Why did I not write this?' But of course, I could not. It takes a very experienced reflective practitioner, who in his heart is still an academic, to write such a wonderful book. I had the privilege to work with Mukherjee as a colleague at INSEAD almost 20 years ago.... I am truly pleased Mukherjee's ideas have finally found a place in a book."

—*Luk N. Van Wassenhove* Henry Ford Chaired Professor of Manufacturing and Academic Director of the Social Innovation Center INSEAD

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—*R. Gopalakrishnan* Executive Director, TATA Sons Limited

"-In *The Spider's Strategy*, Mukherjee...demonstrates how corporations that cultivate...strategic webs can thrive even in the face of...business challenges that undermine their competition. This book is a must read for executives who are willing to look outside their own corporate walls to create significant competitive advantage."

—*Pat Bentley* Senior Lecturer, MIT Sloan School of Management

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