

BOOK REVIEW / CRITIQUE DE LIVRE

Business Cases for Info Pros: Here's Why, Here's How. By Ulla de Stricker. Medford, N.J.: Information Today, Inc., 2008. 120 pages (soft cover). ISBN 978-1-57387-335-2. US\$39.50.

A business case is a document that lays out the motivation, justification, and anticipated benefits of a proposed project or purchase. Many librarians are not in positions where they can make large-scale decisions without the approval of a higher authority, either another librarian higher up in the organizational hierarchy or an individual or committee responsible for administering the finances of a corporation or research institute. Librarians also offer a type of service that can be difficult to measure, thereby making negotiations for additional expenditures more complex. Librarians must therefore become adept at presenting their case in a manner that ensures success, and author Ulla de Stricker provides us with a practical guide for doing just that.

Business Cases for Info Pros: Here's Why, Here's How begins with general information about business cases, including what they are and what they are intended to do. Ordinarily, when we make decisions we do so in a context that is familiar to us, and we can rely on the benefit of our previous experience and current knowledge of the situation at hand. When people in positions of authority need to make decisions, they often do not have the benefit of this detailed contextual understanding, so it is up to librarians to ensure that decision-makers have all the information necessary to make an educated choice. By following the process outlined in de Stricker's book, we should be able to do so. Details about whom we need to consult while preparing our business case and how the business case should be formatted and written are provided. The most appropriate format will depend on your organization's preference, and de Stricker presents examples outlining the necessary components of both a detailed business case framework and a more concise memorandum. The application of the business case framework under various circumstances and at different levels of detail is illustrated in three case studies. *Business Cases for*

Info Pros concludes with tips on how to present your case in person, along with sample slides and a blurb about the importance of the appearance of your document. de Stricker's examples highlight the importance of using tables and bulleted lists of key points to ensure that the message is presented clearly and concisely to your audience.

Business Cases for Info Pros is clearly and simply written. The reader can choose to read all or only parts of the book, as not all examples will be from equivalent contexts and may be at levels of detail that are less relevant to his or her particular situation. The index and the fact that much of the text is in tabular format or bulleted lists make it easy to jump in and out of the book for quick reference. Chapter 4 will likely be the chapter most frequently referred to, as the segments of the business case are listed, and for each section questions to be addressed and other explanatory elements to be included are recommended. Reading this book gets you thinking in the appropriate manner to be able to prepare a business case unique to your situation. At 102 pages of text it is a really quick read even if you choose to read it cover to cover.

Those who are not able to attend de Stricker's continuing education session at this year's CHLA conference should read this book. New information professionals will find it a valuable resource in preparing their first business case, while experienced individuals may gain new insight or ideas about preparing proposals. Local chapter members could use some of these tips while preparing their CHLA Chapter Initiative Fund requests! The content of the book is applicable and versatile, and therefore would be useful to librarians employed in any sector.

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