Praise for *Humanism in Business*

Values make a difference. For the most part, having a ‘purpose beyond profit’ has proven one of the best ways for a company to be profitable and socially valuable. Some of the earliest socially responsible businesses achieved this purpose beyond profit from the religious convictions of their founders. In this more secular age, there are many who will be interested in how such values translate into the pragmatic, success-oriented business environment of today. Those seeking a rigorously academic study from an avowedly humanistic perspective will find a wealth of food for thought in *Humanism in Business*.

*Mallen Baker*, **CEO Business Respect and Development Director for Business in the Community in the UK**

This book is a most crucial and insightful collection showing persuasively how humanism can be practiced creatively at the core centre of economic development policy agenda, not being a rhetorical flourish but the fundamental basis of economic prosperity and sustainability. Many contributors to this collection illuminate the role of business within society and its potential as a life-serving organ for positive social change. It offers an intriguing blueprint for how the world would be better with a more life-conducive economic system. A must-read for world policy leaders of the future.

*Kriengsak Charconwongsak*, **Member of Parliament, Thailand**

This book stresses the theme of humanism in business in terms of seeking the goal of sustainability, not only in terms of the earth’s resources, but also in terms of relationships to all the contributors to the creation of wealth. Call it sustainability plus.

*Paul Lawrence*, **Professor Emeritus, Harvard Business School**

The notion that “humanism in business” is an oxymoron is nonsensical, discredited by both history and logic. Ultimately, business – the centralization and utilization of physical, financial resources, human energy and intellect within organizations great and small – has the societal function of providing the goods and services essential for
human survival and well-being. How this function is fulfilled has varied greatly over time and place. An important factor in determining the “how” are the values which underlie the society and are manifested in the operations of its business institutions and those who lead them. The editors and authors of this creative volume demonstrate convincingly that business activity in the twenty-first century is not, and cannot, be governed by mechanistic markets operating autonomously of broader societal values and expectation. It is our humanistic traditions developed over millennia from philosophical, religious and cultural sources that in the final analysis define the appropriate role of business in society. Congratulations to the editors of this volume for underscoring this point so convincingly.

Edwin M. Epstein, Professor Emeritus, International and Area Studies and Haas School of Business, University of California, Berkeley

In the last few decades business has become increasingly aware that shareholder value cannot be the only indicator for success. Sustainable development and corporate social responsibility (CSR) concepts attempt to address negative trade-offs. But at the heart of the matter stands a humanistic attitude, an ethical stance towards all we do, be that in business or as private individuals.

Claude Martin, former Director General, WWF International
What is the purpose of our economic system? What would a more life-serving economy look like?

There are many books about business and society, yet very few of them question the primacy of GDP growth, profit maximization, and individual utility maximization. Even developments with a humanistic touch like stakeholder participation, corporate social responsibility, or corporate philanthropy serve the same goal: to foster long-term growth and profitability. *Humanism in Business* questions these assumptions and investigates the possibility of creating a human-centered, value-oriented society based on humanistic principles. An international team of academics and practitioners present philosophical, spiritual, economic, psychological, and organizational arguments that show how humanism can be used to understand, and possibly transform, business at three different levels: the systems level, the organizational level, and the individual level. This groundbreaking book will be of interest to academics, practitioners, and policymakers concerned with business ethics and the relationship between business and society.

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**Amartya Sen**

Amartya Sen is Lamont University Professor and Professor of Economics and Philosophy at Harvard University and was until recently the Master of Trinity College, Cambridge. He has served as President of the Econometric Society, the Indian Economic Association, the American Economic Association, and the International Economic Association. He was also Lamont University Professor at Harvard earlier, from 1988–98, and before that was Drummond Professor of Political Economy at Oxford University and a fellow of All Souls College (where he is now Distinguished Fellow). Prior to that he was Professor of Economics at Delhi University and at the London School of Economics. His research has ranged over a number of fields in economics, philosophy, and decision theory, including social choice theory, welfare economics, theory of measurement, development economics, public health, gender studies, moral and political philosophy, and the economics of peace and war. Among the many awards he has received is the Nobel Prize in Economics 1998.
Ulrich Steger holds the Alcan Chair of Environmental Management at IMD and is Director of IMD’s Forum on Corporate Sustainability Management. He is Director of the DaimlerChrysler Partnership Programs and Allianz Excellence Program and Co-Director of Building High Performance Boards. He also holds an Honorary Professorship in International Management at Berlin Technical University. He was minister of economics and technology in the state of Hesse and a member of the managing board of Volkswagen, in charge of environment and traffic matters and the implementation of an environmental strategy within the VW group worldwide. He has published extensively, most recently Inside the Mind of the Stakeholder: The Hype behind Stakeholder Pressure (2006).

Peter Ulrich

Peter Ulrich, born 1948 in Berne, Switzerland, is Full Professor of Economic and Business Ethics and Director of the Institute for Business Ethics at the University of St. Gallen, Switzerland. After his studies in business administration, economics and social sciences at the University of Fribourg (1967–71) and his doctorate at the University of Basle (1972–6), he spent four years as a management consultant in Zurich. A scholarship from the Swiss National Science Foundation enabled him to complete his habilitation thesis (“Economic Sciences and Their Philosophical Foundations,” 1986) at the University of Witten-Herdecke, Germany for a venia legend. In 1984, he was appointed as Full Professor in Business Administration at the University of Wuppertal, Germany. In 1987, he was appointed to the first chair for Business Ethics at a German-speaking faculty in St. Gallen. In the twenty years since then, his approach of integrative economic ethics has become widely accepted in the German and European debate.

Allen L. White

Allen L. White is Vice President and Senior Fellow, Tellus Institute, Boston, and directs the institute’s corporate design program. Dr. White co-founded the Global Reporting Initiative in 1997 and served
Stephen B. Young

Stephen B. Young, Global Executive Director of the Caux Round Table, is a lawyer and writer. He has served as Dean of the Hamline University School of Law and as an assistant dean at the Harvard Law School. He has taught law and Vietnamese history and served on the boards of numerous non-profit organizations. While Dean of the Hamline University School of Law he initiated the Journal of Law and Religion. Young studied anthropology and government at Harvard College and took his law degree at Harvard Law School. In 2004 Berrett-Koehler of San Francisco published Young’s book Moral Capitalism. It has been translated into Japanese, Spanish, Polish, and Croatian. Young has contributed chapters to a number of recent books on ethics and corporate social responsibility and blogs regularly for the Twin Cities Daily Planet. As an attorney, Young has both served corporate clients and litigated in state and federal courts. In 1966 Young discovered the Bronze Age site of Ban Chiang in northeast Thailand, now a UNESCO world heritage site. In 1975 Young initiated efforts to open the United States to refugees from South Vietnam and later served on the Citizens’ Commission for Indochinese Refugees. He later suggested the framework of a United Nations trusteeship interim administration for Cambodia as a means to end the civil war in that country.
Muhammad Yunus

Muhammad Yunus earned the nickname “banker to the poor” by giving small cash loans to the poorest people in Bangladesh. Yunus completed his PhD in economics at Vanderbilt University in 1969. He taught at Middle Tennessee State University before returning to Bangladesh in 1972 to teach at Chittagong University. His first loan was given to a group of very poor village women in 1974, an amount equivalent of $27. Yunus founded the Grameen Bank two years later to institutionalize this small-scale loan giving, usually to people who had no collateral and would have been turned away by the traditional banks. This notion of “microcredit” has now become a worldwide phenomenon, giving millions the opportunity to pull themselves out of abject poverty. Yunus and Grameen were jointly given the Nobel Prize for Peace in 2006. By that time the bank had helped more than six million borrowers, the vast majority of them women. In awarding the prize, the Nobel Committee stated: “Lasting peace cannot be achieved unless large population groups find ways in which to break out of poverty. Microcredit is one such means.”
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Humanistic Management Network: paving the way towards a life-serving economy

In the Aristotelian concept of the economic system, the economy served political goals. As far as these political goals were democratically legitimized, the economy directly served the people. The humanist credo of “man as the measure of all things” (Protagoras) led us to a free, liberal, and democratic world. However, the current global economic system more often than not treats humans as instruments for profits or GDP growth, ignoring the democratic rights and liberties they enjoy within their nation-states. The effects are injustice, environmental degradation, and unhappiness – even for those who currently profit from the existing system. To counter these inhumane effects, Humanistic Management Network creates and disseminates actionable knowledge that puts humans first and supports the creation of a life-serving economic system.

Humanistic Management Network’s vision is to encourage businesses to embrace a more ‘life-serving’ approach by integrating humanistic values into their core strategy. Our mission is to influence business academia, management, and the general public in defining the purpose and role of business in a global society. We foster the creation and dissemination of actionable knowledge to change business practices towards humanistic ideals.

In a first step, Humanistic Management Network is focusing on the creation of a research platform based on humanistic principles. We are establishing a common research agenda for researchers of various disciplines and fields to address the need for a life-serving economy and to build our network of likeminded think-tanks and research groups around the world. In a second step, we will create products and services based on humanistic principles and offer them to organizations in consultations. In a third step, we will use the insights gained from research and practice to influence public discourse and policy decisions towards a human-centered economy. These three steps will be the basis of a continuous feedback loop, which will
slowly but systematically support the creation of a life-serving eco-
nomic system in which authentic human needs will be served.

Humanistic Management Network currently consists of the edi-
torial team of this book.

They are:

Wolfgang Amann
Shiban Khan
Michael Pirson
Heiko Spitzeck
Ernst von Kimakowitz

Our pledge

If we do not take responsibility for reshaping our economic system
and business organizations, who will? And even if – in the end – our
collective efforts fail to reach the goal of a humane future, we can
say that we tried our best in order to achieve it. Or as Martin Luther
put it: “Even if I knew that tomorrow the world would go to pieces,
I would still plant my apple tree.”

This is easy to demand but hard to live up to. However, if we do not
strive for the highest goals right at the beginning, we will not get very
far at all. This is why we as editors pledge the following and encourage any reader, student, colleague, and critic to hold us accountable to this and to indicate if we lose our way to a humane future.

Our pledge:

- As researchers, we aim to generate actionable knowledge to help others to grow as humans. We will focus on publishing books and articles of which we can be proud, but we will also act on this knowledge as teachers and consultants.

- As teachers, we will make sure that our students understand the duality of success and humanism and, in case of doubt, to strive to make man the measure of all things. Our duty as education professionals is to help our students grow professionally and as humans.

- As consultants, we make sure that we combine our ideals with our capabilities to generate pragmatic solutions that make a difference to humans as well as to business.

- As citizens, we will foster discourse on humanism in business to enable people to understand the challenges of our shareholder economy and to start thinking of creative solutions.

- Finally, we hold ourselves accountable, open to discourse, and undertake to be transparent, to develop measures for academic accountability.

This pledge mirrors what this book is about: reflection, principles, and action. However, as editors, we would not be the servants we strive to be, if we were merely satisfied with the publication of a book that includes a pledge. We are striving for a real-life impact towards a more humane business environment.

Where do we go from here?

We encourage fellow researchers from diverse disciplines to cooperate and evaluate the interactions between business and society, and, we hope, to exemplify that humane and successful organizations and institutions are feasible. This would encourage practitioners to experiment with similar life-conducive endeavors. In the same spirit, we encourage practitioners to share their stories of what worked and what did not. Research, case studies, etc. would help to initiate a constructive public discussion about humanistic values in our current business environment – a topic that we believe affects each of us.