

Why corporations rule our world by Wade
Publishing, 2006), is a non-fiction book I
LA Times. It's got its pluses and minuses,
at stayed with me is the idea that the best
corporation is not as groups of people but
entities in their own right. They are like alien
in their own way. It's a good way of explaining
things, which are made up of decent people, do
ous things.

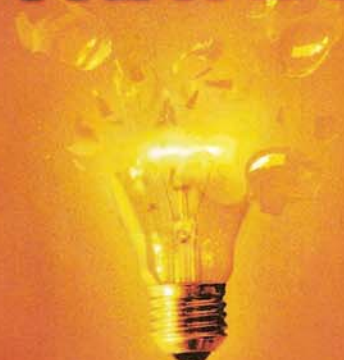
137: *The Dark Phoenix saga*, by Chris
Marvel Comics, 2006) is a comic book. When
school I read comics until my eyes bled. But
this ago I started to get emails from people
and said a copy of my book, *Jennifer*
as being read by Superman in a comic. I
is true and got in touch with the comic writer.
about the coolest thing that happened to me.
Maybe I would be interested in writing
it. And I said, "You want me to write
it, I'll do it." So I've been talking to them and
it. And I went back to the *X-Men* saga, which
loved by nerds everywhere to be the best.
10th-old daughter and I've been reading
books, including *Girls will be Girls: Raising
ourageous daughters*, by JoAnn Deak and
Hyperion, 2005). I wished I'd read some of
a teenager – it might have helped with dating.
Deak describes how females are less
in ambiguity. There's a whole lot of stuff
ed my view. Now I cringe; I have become
d in women's rights and I get enraged
exism. Deak writes about confidence,
and connectiveness. It's got that American
theory that keeps getting trotted out. It
in the US last March and Deak has worked
is a specialist on brain development.
to read next is *Asbestos House*, by Gideon
Publications, 2006). Gideon is the reason
being published in Australia, and we had
an Australian publisher for it. I don't know
em was. I'm not sure how he found out
I interviewed me for a radio show. I'm
see what his book says about James Hardie.
FOX

THE PAGE

g Sales, something terrible is happening
in: she is finding Roger attractive. It
like, arranged by her treacherous body
ancy-fuelled hormones. But Elizabeth
ing Roger? Anyone who would set
Roger doesn't know the first thing
Elizabeth is shocked by her body's
er. She hasn't decided what to do
uation. At first it seemed obvious.
face in her career for a baby. But that
an has tempered. A hidden, furtive
and, the part that vetoed the condom
rowing in influence.

by. by Max Barry
ations)

BREAKOUT STRATEGY



MEETING THE CHALLENGE OF DOUBLE-DIGIT GROWTH

SYDNEY FINKELSTEIN,
CHARLES HARVEY, THOMAS LAWTON

Breakout Strategy:
Meeting the challenge
of double-digit growth
Sydney Finkelstein,
Charles Harvey and
Thomas Lawton
McGraw-Hill
\$50

THIS BOOK addresses the nirvana of strategy, and of organisational life: how does an organisation grow rapidly and yet still manage to maintain high performance over the long term?

Having just begun a major research project on this topic, I approached the book with alacrity. It is based on 100 international case studies of varying depth, although unfortunately no Australian organisations are included.

The book has three significant contributions. First, there are four types of companies that succeed in achieving nirvana: start-ups (called taking by storm);

revitalised, mature companies (called laggards-to-leaders); geographic growers (called expanding horizons); and restructuring transformers (called shifting shape).

Second, these four types operate in two different types of markets – emergent markets and established markets. Achieving, maintaining or rediscovering nirvana requires different applications of similar concepts. It's not very sensible trying to follow Google if you are Southwest Airlines, Michelin or Burberry.

Third, all organisations need to work on five key strategy concepts to succeed: pursuing and developing a realistic and encompassing vision; developing a value proposition for customers aligned to the vision; developing an internal business model to deliver that value proposition;

developing the change management and business transformation skills necessary to make the business model work; and having leadership to drive the whole, aligned process.

The key insights here are around the value proposition and business model concepts, important aspects of strategy that normally receive little or no attention. Practical approaches and tools are demonstrated to show how an organisation can develop these. The role of speed, learning (and unlearning), being open to ideas, flexibility and balancing the technological and social systems during growth are pushed throughout the book.

Importantly, too, *Breakout Strategy* is not just about successes. Examples of failures are given. It is often these examples from which we have most to learn.

Having said that, the book has its problems. There are no figures to demonstrate that the "success" cases are indeed successful, and over what time period. There are no clear examples of their approach to developing vision. The successes are mostly ascribed to the genius of new, individual superstar CEOs, when most recent research has discredited this approach.

While arguing that it is execution that is important, the book spends most of its time on developing the strategy, and the alignment of the strategy, vision, value proposition, business model, with little real attention given to a true implementation process.

Despite these issues, the key contributions are significant and make this book worth reading for those pursuing high performance. The frameworks for thinking and key concepts will repay application in practice.

GRAHAM HUBBARD