Advanced Introduction to Scenario Planning

Elgar Advanced Introductions series

Paul J.H. Schoemaker, University of Pennsylvania, US

Providing a panoramic overview of the evolving world of scenario planning, this Advanced Introduction uses topical case studies to analyze the developing methodologies of scenario planning. Written by Paul J.H. Schoemaker, a leading authority on the topic, this book synthesizes rigorous theory and practical experiences including best practices, normative views, and future challenges or opportunities for scenario planning.

‘Deep uncertainty and associated “black swan” events underscore the continued relevance of scenario planning. This book outlines how this management tool can be used to enhance a firm’s dynamic capabilities. Scenario planning builds a coherent narrative around possible futures or “states of the world.” Their delineation supports rapid decision making when crises erupts, thereby protecting stakeholders and addressing new opportunities while the competition suffers from “deer in the headlights” syndrome. Schoemaker shows the reader how scenario planning can improve decision making and organizational responsiveness in turbulent times and reminds us that there is no one recipe for scenario planning, and that management teams will improve over time as they conduct scenario planning exercises. A “must read” for practitioners and scholars trying to understand the origins of scenario planning as a tool for better strategic management.’

– David J. Teece, University of California, Berkeley, US

‘Masterfully laid out, this engaging book provides leaders a practical toolkit to proactively navigate an increasingly uncertain world. Its scope, depth, examples and wisdom will enable students, academics and professionals from many walks of life to lead change and orchestrate success as I experienced first-hand with Paul.’

– Govi Rao, CEO of Phase Change Solutions and former head of LED at Philips

‘A wonderful introduction to the field of scenario planning, replete with a comprehensive background history, summary of the necessary tools, and biases to be aware of when managing clients. There simply is not a better basic introductory text written in the history of scenario planning up until now. This book will sit alongside other landmark introductions to the field such as van der Heijden’s Scenarios and Schwartz’s The Art of the Long View. It is as useful for students new to scenario planning as for long-time academic practitioners looking for a refresher or a handy text for their clients.’

– Nicholas J. Rowland, Penn State University, US

‘A remarkably thoughtful overview of the art and science of scenario planning. No author is better equipped than Paul Schoemaker to bridge the world of practitioners and of academics.’

– Philip E. Tetlock, Wharton School, University of Pennsylvania, US

‘This volume, illustrated with compelling examples, presents in a coherent way the work of the most cited scenario planning scholar. His approach in scenario planning is to inform decision-making by foreseeing possibilities early. The book covers theoretical as well as practical aspects of scenario planning which will be of interest for beginners and seasoned practitioners alike.’

– Rafael Ramirez, University of Oxford, UK

‘Schoemaker’s book is, simply, a tour-de-force from one of the founders of both the academic study and consultancy application of the scenario approach to improving decision making in the face of uncertainty. It is a book that every professional, consultant or student, facing the challenge of trying to make decisions in a fast-moving and uncertain world, should read.’


‘This book provides a clear and comprehensive overview of the field of scenario planning. It is an excellent resource for anyone interested in learning about the process and applications of scenario planning.’

– Elizabeth R. Ashcraft, University of Virginia, US

‘Schoemaker’s book is an essential read for anyone interested in understanding and applying scenario planning. It is a must-read for practitioners and scholars alike.’

face of future uncertainty. In it, he covers the development and status of research endeavours that underpin growing academic and practitioner interest, in our post-Covid era.

– George Wright, Strathclyde University, UK