



# Alliances, Outsourcing, and the Lean Organization

*By Michael Milgate*

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**Alliances, Outsourcing, and the Lean Organization** By Michael Milgate

Alliances and outsourcing are flavors of the month, says the author of this succinct, tightly reasoned book, but how much is known about how to make them succeed? Too many are initiated for the wrong reasons, improperly thought out, and--as quick solutions to difficult problems--they just don't work. Dr. Milgate does not try to sell alliances and outsourcing as options, but instead asks, why consider them at all? And what must you do to get the most out of them, if you decide to proceed? He offers practical advice and illustrates it with real-world case study examples. The result is a lucid, readable advisory for corporate decision makers and a useful classroom aid for their academic colleagues.

Never have pressures on corporations to trim down in size been so great. But Dr. Milgate's research shows that corporations' efforts to make themselves lean, to focus on core competencies, and to create mutually advantageous alliances with other corporations have not paid off. The lean organization is clearly the paradigm for business at the start of the new millennium, but how is it achieved? Instead of pure theory, Dr. Milgate offers practical advice and illustrates it with real-world case studies, chosen for their ability to demonstrate best practices in lean organizations and to provide answers to questions that, inevitably, arise repeatedly. He agrees that corporations must focus on the basics and leverage their core competencies up through a range of alliances and outsourcings, toward the goal of creating a best of everything organization. But too many alliances and outsourcing strategies are initiated for the wrong reasons, improperly thought out, and--as quick solutions to difficult problems--they just don't work. Dr. Milgate tells us why and gives us strategic guidance on the critical issues that corporate decision makers must address as they strive to make their organizations as competitive as they must be in order to compete in the new global economy. The result is a succinct, lucid advisory for upper echelon executives and a necessary classroom aid for their academic colleagues.

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#### Review

"[T]his book is groundbreaking, interesting, and critical reading for practitioners, applied researchers and students of management and organization change."-Journal of Organizational Change Management

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"In a competitive age of global connections and networks Michael Milgate has explored not just the importance of strategic alliances but building blocks in constructing and maintaining them. This book is timely for academics and practitioners in the private and public sectors."-Kevin Sproats Director, Western Sydney Research Institute University of Western Sydney

"Partnerships-strategies for within and without! Michael Milgate probes the vital organs of business, disclosing the synergies between these internal elements and using them to create external networks that work. He defines best-practice for the lean enterprise and provides a practical blue-print to set apart the organisations which triumph from all the rest. A must-read for those new to strategic alliances and outsourcing, and for those who never stop learning how to maximise their benefits."-Di Yerbury Vice Chancellor Macquarie University NSW Australia

"Alliances and outsourcing as strategically desirable actions? Milgate shows us that, with appropriate processes, competencies, and modes of thinking, the answer to this question is a solid yes. In a balanced and engaging presentation laced with current corporate examples, Milgate reveals what is needed to get these new-age networks' right and explores what can make them go wrong. This is a book destined to both challenge and inform the interested reader. But be warned that the processes and ideas advanced in this book are not for the timid or risk-averse! Read and learn."-Ray W. Cooksey Professor of Human Resource Management University of New England

#### About the Author

MICHAEL MILGATE has worked with a number of national and international organizations as a consultant, in a variety of service and engineering-based industries, and focuses his research and lecturing on strategy, research methods, and marketing./e

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