

Book Reviews

A Manager's Guide to Data Warehousing

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A Manager's Guide to Data Warehousing by Laura L. Reeves is an excellent book designed for strategists and policy makers who are working on solving the problem of handling the bulk of data with accuracy and authenticity while maintaining the integrity of data. This book provides a solid introduction to the fundamentals of data warehousing. The author details each step of a data warehouse project, and provides a clear explanation of what's involved in efficiently building a data warehouse and what must be done to deliver the data to the authorized users. The chaptalization of the book is into five parts that builds up the necessary knowledge for readers and gives them a fair idea about how to manage big data using data warehouse.

PART I

Chapter 1 Gives a broad overview of data warehouses and helps in setting expectations for what it will take to start from the

ground up. This is an excellent footage for executives and senior leadership across the industry to get base level knowledge about implementation of data warehouse. People at lower levels of the organization may find this section a bit lacking in detail. However it is still worth reading in order to be on the same page with leadership or to gain insight on how to communicate the information at an appropriate level to executives with proper guidelines and how to manage data in bulk. The book is no doubt a complete package for a manager to handle the crisis of managing data with accuracy and securely. The chapter is designed with the aim of helping business and IT managers clearly and it shows the path as to how the software can communicate with other networks without changing the portability or its configurations.

Chapter 2 Gives an insight about the issues which concerns data storing and data mining techniques. It also provides various practical methods for building a collaborative data warehouse. It gives clear explanations of the goals and objectives of each stage of the data warehouse lifecycle while learning the roles that both business managers and technicians play at each stage of

the implementation of data warehouse.

PART II

It is expanded into four chapters which deal with the business perspective of data warehouse. It is an important portion for both non-technical and technical people. The ideas that Author presents on this part is to help the managers to establish partnerships between business and IT, by showing how software can be portable and platform independent, while creating a collaboration within and outside the business. The content on roles and responsibilities of the policy makers and system developers as well as the steps requires for gathering information for setting up a data ware house for success of a business is explained properly with an example at each stage. It explains how each team members is likely to play his role while setting up a warehouse.

Chapter 2 of this section focusses on the of the most critical decision points for success at each phase of the development of data warehouse lifecycle which helps us to understand the ways in which both business and IT management can make decisions that best meet the unified objectives, keeping in mind the feasibility of the implementation of the project.

PART III

Parts Three gives further description about managerial aspects of warehousing where both the technical and non-technical details come into play. In contrast to the first two parts, it emphasizes more on the business team to checkout and skip the remainder of the material. Reeves has done a great job of keeping the information at a high enough level as not to bog down in minutia. This way operational level executives or Front line business team members will also benefit from having a solid basis for communicating with the IT team throughout the day to day project execution. It is important to note that this is not a detailed "how to" for IT to implement a data warehouse. This topic would not lend itself well to the context of Reeves' book, and Reeves rightly suggests that the readers interested in this should look to other resources as well.

The book written is an ideal guide for the non-technical professionals who are eager to learn more about data warehousing. It provides an

insight on how to build and maintain a data warehouse. It focuses on how designing a warehouse needs the combined efforts of both IT and non-technical personnel. This book fills that void and serves as an ideal resource for business and IT managers and others from the non-IT side who want to do their part to ensure data warehousing success.

Summarization:

A Manager's Guide to Data Warehousing is a complete one place solution which explains in details what we require to create the data warehouse in order to establish long-term success in business. The book covers broadly covers:

- The most common factors for ensuring data warehousing success and the roadblocks that can prevent its successful implementation.
- How to ensure that business and technical staff have a common understanding of the data warehouse project
- How to effectively communicate your business requirements

for the data warehouse to all levels of management.

- The tools one need to use to certain that data is organized and can be delivered as needed
- Ways to deploy the data warehouse and ensure sustainable success

The overall goal of the author of this book is - to bridge the gap between executives and the IT department. The only real criticism that I have is that it does seem to move slowly at times and lacks in moving towards the intricacies of implementation of the data warehouse. However, I believe that it is left since the author is catering to a diverse audience with different domains. The book is boon for the budding managers or an IT manager or above or a member of the business team who is new to data warehousing,

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The Power of Meaning

Author: Susan Cain

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"The Power of Meaning" is a book that attempts to explain the search for meaning of life from the area of psychology and philosophy. To understand life is itself a very vast topic and many books are penned on this. The author has tried to cover the meaning of life in seven chapters. She has tried to draw the meaning through the insights derived from diverse authors such as Homer's Iliad, Plato's dialogues, The divine Comedy, Shakespeare, Montaigne and Goethe. The philosophical, religious, literature and artistic approaches were used in a wholesome way to explore the nuances of existence of life. This book carries 9 chapters and have introduction and conclusion chapters individually written.

The author introduces the relevance of the title of book in initial pages. According to her, in developed world, the religion has already lost the authority to convince people about the existence of life and in the developing world, people are still relying on the religion itself. Generally people are attaining

education not for moral and intellectual growth but they are taking it as an instrument for seeking job (merely for earning livelihood). Thus it has created a quenching thirst to know about the futility of life. Hence, in the nineteenth century, universities and college curriculum tried to quench the thirst about life through various master pieces such as The divine comedy, Homer's Iliad, Aristotle's writings on ethics but in twentieth century, the universities shifted to specialization based education whose objective was to produce professionals in different areas. Over the last few decades, a group of social scientists has begun investigating the reasons to live a quality of life. Pennsylvania's Martin Seligman founded "positive psychology". Researches had grown in search of happiness manifold as google searches of 2014 reveals. It is good to see this change but depression has become the number two killer disease that reveals our society is becoming miserable day by day. The author has mentioned the ideology of Nozick who had worked very closely with Martin Seligman on 'Positive Psychology'. Their work distinguished between happy life and meaningful life. First concept that has been addressed is 'Hedonic' which means 'striving after happiness' and it decides the

purpose of life for most people. Another means is concept of 'Eudaimonia' - a Greek word for "human flourishing". Aristotle endorsed the concept of Eudaimonia more and he distincts Hedonia as "feeling good" but eudaimonia is "being and doing good". Henceforth, this introductory chapter has tried to pose certain sincere question about life such as why people of certain communities are more takers or how living meaningful life affect's one's health and how do we might find a meaning in the face of death?

First chapter is titled "The Meaning of Crisis". It starts with the US author Durant's work especially about The Story of Philosophy (1926) and the story of Civilization. He explained that for astronomers, human affair constitutes a moment in the trajectory of star, whereas geologist considers that civilization is a prelude between ice ages. Further, the biologist refers to life as a war. Interestingly, the historians refer to the human progress as delusion and psychologists regard human self and will power as the helpless instruments of heredity and environment. Durant specified that life from philosophical perspective is a fitful population of human insects on earth, a planetary eczema that may soon be cured. Carrying forward the outcome of Durant's view, few

researchers from Japan analyzed the data by country on various variables like wealth, rates of suicides and other social factors and it was found that wealthier nations had significant suicidal rate. The author also narrates about severe depression of famous Russian novelist Leo Tolstoy once he turned fifty year old in 1870. Although, he is known for his excellent master pieces like, 'A confession, War and Peace, doctrine of nonresistance', etc. but still in the last years of his life, he started leading a life of simplicity and became a believer of "infinite" that lies beyond self. In this context, Tolstoy writes "every answer of faith gives infinite meaning to the finite existence of man meaning that is not destroyed by suffering, deprivation and death." Another French novelist, Albert Camus in his essay "The Myth of Sisyphus" is about how to live in such a world and he concluded to carry attitude of defiance toward the absurd. Camus also explained about the three qualities for a meaningful life - revolt, passion and freedom. Tolstoy found meaning of life in infinite but Camus found it in finite in the daily task of living. On the basis of these different views presented by different philosophers, the author reached to four pillars of meaning of life, they are - 'Belonging, purpose, storytelling and transcendence'. All these pillars are accessible to everyone irrespective of their religious belief.

The second chapter is titled "Belonging". It is the first pillar of meaning of life. The author has tried to explain belongingness with a story of Tangier island's unusual practices of having graves near to their dwelling places. People living closely knitted feel more cherished and they feel happier for their existence. The author also wrote about the John B. Watson and warned against "the danger of too much of mother's love" mentioned in a book titled Psychological Care of infants and child. People took seriously Watson's advice and suddenly mortality rates started increasing. In 1945, Rene Spitz insisted to give the babies back to their mothers with his series of experiment. Further Emile Durkheim (father of sociology) investigated the relationship between suicide and variables like marriage, education levels and religious orientation and found suicide is not an individual but social problem. The author indicated "privatizing of the leisure time" tendency i.e. spending time with electronic device is making the people growing apart from one another in many important ways and this is a dangerous sign for the society. People are now no longer mingling with their real set of friends and families. The author has suggested that keeping connections with few people leads to high quality and meaningful life. Both close relationships and high quality

connections requires one to focus on others. This chapter is completed with a small anecdote of Buddha's life. When Buddha was about to leave the world, he took a meal prepared by a person who hated him, so Buddha devoted his last time in ensuring safety of this person. Thus this incident contains a lesson that search for meaning is not a solitary philosophical quest, but focusing on the other one can build the pillar of belonging for both oneself and themselves.

The third chapter is titled "Purpose". It is the second pillar of meaning of life. The author explored the purpose of life through many small stories. William Damon a developmental psychologist at Stanford identified two dimension of purpose, one is stable and far-reaching goal (all mundane activities) and other is contribution to the world. Living purposefully requires self-reflection and self-knowledge. Researchers at Texas A&M University have examined the tight relationship between identity and purpose and they concluded that knowing oneself is very important predictors of meaning in life. Because of this Adam Grant a professor from Wharton School of Business concluded that people must have service mindset. The author ended the chapter by focusing to our respective family, communities and at work. This would be the part of a legacy that

each one of us will be leaving behind in this mortal world.

The Fourth chapter is based on "Story Telling". It is the third pillar of meaning of life. Anthropologist Marry Catherine Bateson writes that stories are an act of creation which is the composition of our lives and our lives do not follow a predefined arc. By defining the disparate pieces of our lives and placing them together into a narrative, one can create a unified whole that makes life as a coherent whole and this is a key source of meaning. Mc Adams introduces a concept of "narrative identity" that is an internalized story one create about oneself- a personal myth. This identity becomes one's own fictional story. We tend to share our personal story with others and it focuses on our most important good or bad experiences and they are called "NARRATIVE CHOICES" (coined by Mc Adams). Once individual learns to develop stories, they start imagining about life gracefully. It leads to the power of counterfactual thinking and it engages the sensory organs more rigorously than simple thinking about the meaning of life. The Chapter concluded with the insight derived from novel "Life of Pie" and it suggested that the world isn't just the way it is but it is how we understand it.

Fourth chapter is "Transcendence". It is the fourth and the last pillar of meaning of

life. Author starts this chapter with beautiful description of the journey and experience of Mc Donald Observatory that is a star gazing mesmerizing experience that leads to understand cosmos is chaotic, unpredictable place for us. This feeling of meaninglessness of the life paradoxically fills one with a deep and powerful sense of meaning. It is power of transcendence that means "to go beyond" or "to climb". Transcendence in Buddhism is the metaphor of flight. Transcendence or mystical experiences share four qualities; they are passive, transient, ineffable and noetic. They are illuminations, revelations and full of significance all inarticulate through they remain and they carry a sense of authority for after time. During transcendence, one's sense of self (concerns and desire) washes away and a deep connection happens to other people. Emotional response to mystery is called awe and it challenges all mental models that we use to make sense of the world. Thus SELF is an illusion therefore author suggested for practicing mindful meditation (heightened awareness). In this way one can be in present moment with nonjudgmental attitude. Author concludes this chapter with a beautiful analogy as clouds are not lost they are transformed into rain, then rain into grass and the grass into cows and then to milk and then into ice cream. Thus clouds do not die but

it transforms in the universe in one way or another.

Nect chapter is "Growth". After understanding four pillars of life, author tries to make one grow beyond adversities. It is new idea in mainstream psychology as earlier traumas used to be catastrophic stressor. Author quoted the work of Tedeschi and Calhoun that one can grow after crisis in five different ways. Firstly, relationship strengthens, discovers new paths and purposes in life, thirdly strong inner strength, fourthly spiritual life deepens and finally gets a new insight for renewed appreciation for life. By adopting these means one can overcome the traumatic experience both physically and emotionally. Sense making and narratives are other techniques that make one bounce back. Author quoted the work of Southwick and Charney that distinguishes resilient from the rest are purpose, moral compass tied to altruism, social support, and spiritual faith, ability to take challenge, genetic makeup and early life experiences. Author ends the chapter with the understanding to learn one's suffering well.

Last chapter is "Cultures of Meaning". Author was focusing on the individuals search for meaning towards life till last chapter. In this process "Work and Spend" mentality was found, lots of distractions are there and it makes introspection almost impossible. It is more about post-

materialist values that emphasizes on self-expression and a sense of meaning and purpose. The cultures of meaning highlighted in this book are a way to unlock "the limitless potential of every young person" It can boost the productivity among employees also as a study reveals that 70 per cent of all employees are not engaged in their work. Author ended this chapter by narrating the significance of legacy that one should leave for future generations.

Finally reaching to conclusion, apt question is raised, that in the absence of a definitive belief in an afterlife, how to search a meaning in life that cannot be annulled by

death. Meaning and death are two sides of the same coin dealing with the two fundamental problems of human existence. William Breitbart chairman of the department of Psychiatry and behavioral science developed deathbed test. This test is to make one aware about the essential stage of life is death and one must think in terms of life satisfaction. Author narrates few excerpts from a book titled "Man's search of meaning" by Holocaust survivor Viktor Frankl. Frankl had written the importance of finding meaning in suffering in the concentration camp. Thus, author concluded that Love is the center of the meaningful life. Love begins by stepping outside

of the self to connect with and contribute to something bigger. Being human, Frankl wrote, "always points and is directed to something, or someone, other than oneself be it a meaning to fulfill or other human being to encounter. The more one forgets him- by giving himself to a cause to serve or another person to love- the more human he is. Author ended the book with the meaning derived from human poetry and human thought and belief is "The salvation of man is through love and in love".

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