

Book Reviews

Lösungsfokus in Organisationen:
Zukunftsorientiert beraten und führen

Susanne Burgstaller (Ed.)

Heidelberg: Carl Auer, 2015, 256pp,
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Review by Kirsten Dierolf

Susanne Burgstaller's German language book "Solution Focus in Organisations: future oriented consulting and leadership" is a wonderful compendium of SF work in organisations. It offers a short but accurate introduction into Solution Focus.

The book also gives a detailed history of the approach, including a contribution by Evan George on the further development of the SF approach at BRIEF in London. This is followed by a very interesting chapter on "the context of SF" offering insights into the connections of Solution Focus with the philosophy of Ludwig Wittgenstein, positive psychology and neuroscience. Elfriede Czerny has contributed an interesting discussion on "mindfulness and the soul of SF" and Paul Z. Jackson writes about "improvisation as inspiration for the solution focused practitioner".

Chapter 3 gives an overview of SF organisational consulting in the landscape of consulting. Here, Susanne differentiates systemic consulting as it is customary in the German speaking world and SF organisational consulting. She offers a careful and thorough yet very respectful analysis of the differences on many levels.

The next chapter offers an overview of SF tools and processes as used in organisational consulting. The reader

learns about basic assumptions, language, consulting attitude, the flow of an SF consulting process, SF consulting designs and the “family of SF tools”.

Chapter 5 is a wonderful collection of SF applications in organisational consulting, with contributions by Harvey Ratner, Chris Iveson, Peter Szabó (who are commenting on each other’s coaching cases), Daniel Meier, Herbert Pelzer, Alan Kay, Jesper Christiansen, Doris and Wolfgang Regele, Stefan Kreil, Marco Ronzani, Dominik Godat, Evan George, Marianne Geurts, Wolfgang Gaiswinkler, Peter Kriegl and Mariann Roessler and, of course, by Susanne herself.

Chapter 6 deals with the practical application of SF in organisations: its limitations, dangers and how to start using SF in an organisation (start small) and how to recognise (SFCT Clues) and learn about SF.

By now – if you don’t already – you will probably wish you read German or that Susanne translates the book quickly for the international community. Not only does the book offer a wide scope and extremely relevant material, it is also very well researched and referenced, thorough and creative at the same time. A really good read both for seasoned practitioners and beginners.