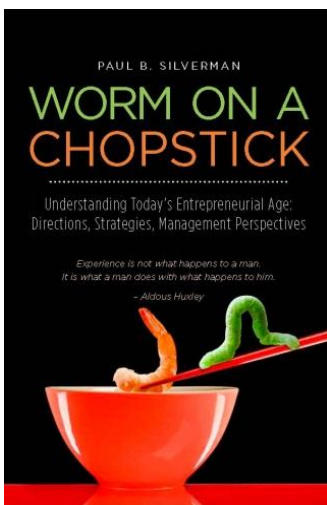


Worm on a Chopstick

Paul B. Silverman



Publication Date: July 15, 2011
 Author: Paul B. Silverman
 Publisher: Gemini Business Press
 ISBN: 978-0983537403
 LCCN: 2011927091
 Number of Pages: 223
 No. of Chapters: 18
 Soft Cover 6"x 9"

- **Worm on a Chopstick ("Chopstick")** is the first of three books by the author sharing perspectives and strategies for addressing today's Entrepreneurial Age challenges and opportunities. Written in an entertaining, anecdotal, highly readable and snappy style, and drawing on Harvard Business School and other case studies, *Worm on a Chopstick* delivers powerful, substantive messages addressing a single question:

How does management respond to today's explosive, rocket-fuel driven Entrepreneurial Age disruptions morphing companies, technologies, markets, government policies and our daily lives?

- Emerging companies creating new businesses; traditional companies holding on to survive; today's business thinking challenged at all levels; and most struggling to understand what is happening and where we are heading.
- Written and researched over a five year period, *Chopstick* draws upon the author's successful four decades' experience serving as a senior corporate executive, global management consultant, educator, entrepreneur and mentor to senior executives.
- *Chopstick's* title relates to the author's experiences at a senior level meeting in a dimly lit Tokyo restaurant many years ago. Confronted with a "what do I do now" situation where the ability to define the animal/food boundary was a real challenge, this vignette provides insight into global business challenges, unpredictability, how to handle global social and cultural issues and survive, and some creative uses for Chivas Regal.

Upcoming Plans

The author is promoting *Chopstick* and the upcoming books in the series to *provide readers with an entertaining, substantive, easy-to-understand perspective on Entrepreneurial Age changes, helping business professionals, students, policy makers and mass market readers to successfully adapt to these changes.* The author will be working with a wide range of partners that share the author's vision and commitment to addressing today's entrepreneurial age issues and opportunities. *Chopstick's* coordinated marketing and promotion plan integrates management seminars, industry presentations, publications, and university programs which are expected to attract a wide range of readers in 2011 and beyond.

A portion of the proceeds from all book sales is being donated to the American Cancer Society.

About the Author

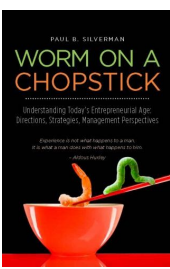


A seasoned entrepreneur, global management executive, educator, management consultant, former founding Director of the Entrepreneurial Step Up Program at George Mason University, well-known in the global information industry, the author has conducted hundreds of presentations worldwide and published numerous articles. *Chopstick* draws upon four decades of global experiences to share perspectives on new directions and strategies to help readers understand today's changing business landscape. The author's insights are further reinforced teaching entrepreneurship, management strategy and global business courses at two leading universities since 2002. The author has positioned *Chopstick* to address today's Entrepreneurial Age needs and complement traditional management texts with a substantive, highly readable, entertaining book.

Author Contact Info

Email
 Author Website
 Blog
 Twitter

paul@paulbsilverman.com
www.paulbsilverman.com
<http://paulbsilverman.com/blog/>
[@globalbizmentor](http://globalbizmentor) <http://twitter.com/globalbizmentor>



Worm on a Chopstick

Book Profile

Paul B. Silverman

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Excerpts

Excerpt from Worm on a Chopstick, Chapter 8 **Strategic Plans and Not-So Strategic Plans**

"You may recall what I said in the preface of Chopstick, and this is a point I will reinforce again: there are no magic bullets for success, no rule that guarantees success and works in all cases. It would be great if there was, but there is not. The only rule is there are no simple rules. You learn, no matter what your level of seniority and experience, by sharing perspectives on best practices, rather than using firm rules. Management science is in some ways a misnomer—science implies a mathematical rigor, repeatability. That is often not reality in the business world.

If you think I am going too far on this point, let's look at what many believe is a simple strategy-planning "rule" for success. Repeated so often this is now urban legend as a winning strategy for companies. It goes something like this:

Leading firms listen to their customers. Securing customer feedback helps firms understand customers' needs, today and future, identify issues and new opportunities. Valuable input here that firms should use to drive their strategy, business, and technology plans and maximize value creation.

Sounds good. But suppose after listening to your customers, you aggressively invest in new technologies that customers want, you invest in those innovation areas that promised the best returns, you meet customer expectations. You have done it all right and minimized risk. But look at others that have also done it right, solidly managed firms such as Xerox, Sears and Digital Equipment Corp (DEC), among others. Research suggests the fact these companies had good management, listened to their customers, and did the right things, and that was the reason they failed to see the train wreck coming in their respective businesses and lost their leadership position. Sounds counterintuitive and it is. The fact is these and many other well-managed, leading companies failed to understand the principles of disruptive innovation, defining how technology will go beyond just changing your business, but radically reshape markets creating both opportunities and challenges for your current business."

Excerpt from Worm on a Chopstick, Chapter 14 **Metaphors and Models: Strawmen Do More Than Chase the Birds Away and Walk With Tin Men and Lions**

"During a senior college level entrepreneurship class I taught at a leading university, I assigned a student to develop a business model and straw man analysis for a new venture. The next day she asked to meet. She was a strong student, high GPA, smart, and well equipped to analyze business models and projections. But she told me she did not understand how to develop these projections; she had never learned these skills. Analyzing business models and developing new venture business models are not the same. This is a critical distinction that we will discuss further here.

We all crave models and metaphors to help reduce the complex to simple, understandable concepts. Models and metaphors help us deal with a rapidly changing world, driven by explosive changes in technology, markets, perspectives, politics, social relationships. Straw man models provide a starting point, a framework, to help us understand and dissect these changes.

Look at some of the "hard" changes—powerful low-cost computers, social networking, mobile applications, GPS, and many others. And the "soft" changes—moving to impersonal communications via computer screens, technical savvy four-year-olds' text messaging, and markets being reshaped so quickly we are hard pressed to understand or even define them.

So how do you develop, define, and secure support for new ventures given this changing market landscape? You need to develop skills to translate the abstract to more concrete concepts; models and metaphors help here. For example, only a few years ago, we talked about downloading and reading books on PCs. As mobile devices proliferated, we initially provided access to books, what we viewed as "traditional" books, via these devices. Now we created a new product class, called "e-books," which is a metaphor for a new class of products created solely to be read using "e-book readers." We can talk about books for specific mobile readers, but the metaphor here is e-book, which is now widely understood as a new product class.

Another example is the ATM. We all know what ATM means, and some are familiar with the complexities of clearinghouse and other systems that support this simple, widely accepted metaphor for electronic banking. Let's look at the thought process in developing a new venture in the mobile ATM arena to understand the issues here."

The greatest danger for most of us is not that our aim is too high and we miss it, but that it is too low and we achieve it.

Michelangelo