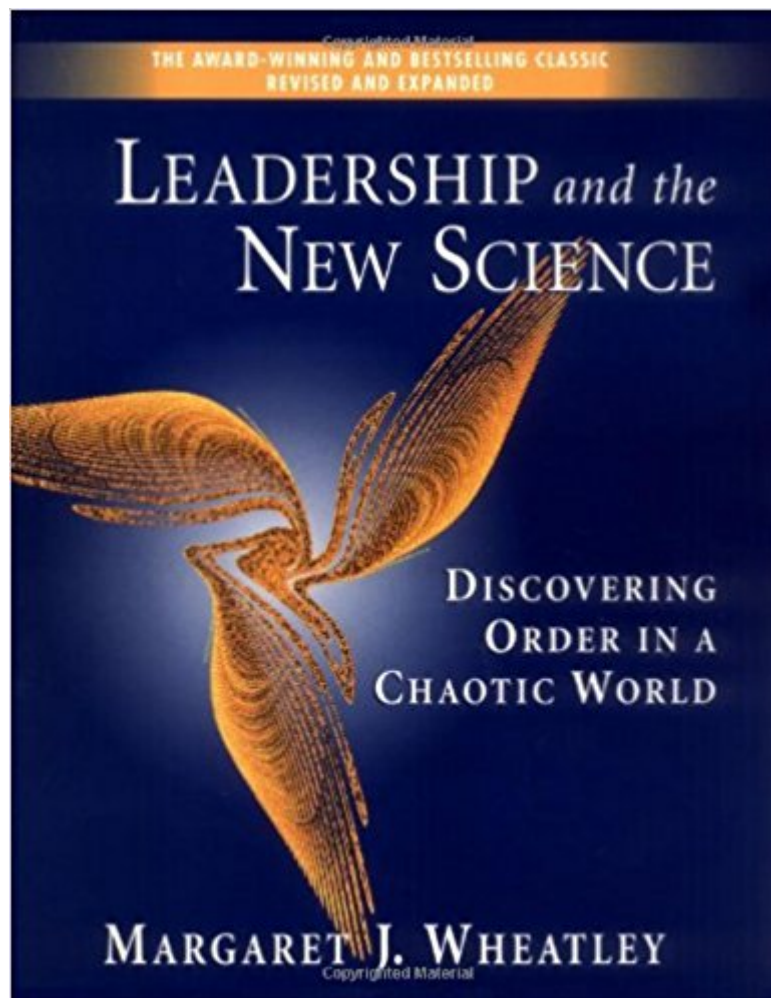




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Leadership And The New Science: Discovering Order In A Chaotic World (Revised And Expanded 2nd Edition)



Synopsis

Leadership and the New Science launched a revolution by demonstrating that ideas drawn from quantum physics, chaos theory, and molecular biology could improve organizational performance. Margaret Wheatley called for free-flowing information, individual empowerment, relationship networks, and organizational change that evolves organically -- ideas that have become commonplace. Now Wheatley's updated classic, based on her experiences with these ideas in a diverse number of organizations on five continents, is available in paperback.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

When Margaret J. Wheatley's *Leadership and the New Science* was initially published in 1992, it outlined an unquestionably unique but extremely challenging view of change, leadership, and the structure of groups. Many readers immediately embraced its cutting-edge perspective, but others just could not understand how the complicated scientific tenets it described could be used to reshape institutions. Now Wheatley, an organizational specialist who has since coauthored *A Simpler Way*, updates the original by including additional material (such as an epilogue addressing her personal experiences during the past decade) and reconstructing some of her more challenging concepts. The result is a much clearer work that first explores the implications of quantum physics on organizational practice, then investigates ways that biology and chemistry affect living systems, and finally focuses on chaos theory, the creation of a new order, and the manner that scientific principles affect leadership. "Our old ways of relating to each other don't support us any longer," she writes. "It is up to us to journey forth in search of new practices and new ideas that will enable us to

create lives and organizations worthy of human habitation." --Howard Rothman --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

"A book like Leadership and the New Science only comes along once in a decade. Margaret Wheatley pushes our thinking about people and organizations to a new dimension. You will never think about organizational life in the same way again."-Ken Blanchard, author of The One Minute Manager, Raving Fans, and Empowerment Takes More than a Minute "If there's a single book that sets the stage for the future of organizations, this is it.... Wheatley makes complex ideas simple, and then shows how those simple ideas can be used as powerful tools." -Stephen E. Ewing, President and CEO, Michigan Consolidated Gas Company "An extraordinary book. The new physics is opening frontiers of knowledge that are among the most significant of this century. Applying these discoveries to management and leadership is extraordinarily eye-opening." -Marjorie Kelly, Founder and Publisher, Business Ethics magazine -- Marjorie Kelly, Founder and Publisher Business Ethics magazine --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Fascinating book that challenges the notion that organizations and people are best managed rather than provided meaning and independence to solve the changing reality. The author uses nature as its model and relationships that have the most impact. Never a fan of organizational charts I found this reinforcing. Using the terrorists organizations and the helpers in the Katrina disaster as examples drives it home. Occasionally the science comparisons can be a bit slow for those of us who want a quick silver bullet answer which is never forth coming. Recommended for those already in leadership positions which is everyone in some way or another. Marshall Steele MD

I have had this book on my shelf since its original publication; recommended reading from numerous and varied teachers working to help me answer my questions about.....everything.....but whose guidance I was unable to comprehend and make my own at that time. In the intervening 20+ years, life has provided me with numerous.....opportunities.....to cultivate a personal readiness to both hear the message of Ms. Wheatley's book and embrace the "chaos" wherever it takes me. This is an important book and should be central to any discussion on the evolving role of leadership in a world defined by self-organizing networks versus highly structured command and control organizations.

This book explores the connectivity between science and human behaviour. Presenting complex

scientific discoveries in simple terms, Margaret then goes on to establish their application in human behaviour. The book is extremely thought provoking and many of the examples resonate; I find myself sitting in meetings reflecting on Margaret's writing and applying new meaning to what I am seeing based on what I read in this book. The follow up must surely address application.

Wheatley makes a great case here for how the new science (quantum science and chaos theory) turns our old linear way of thinking on its head. She presents leadership from the perspective of relationship building and systems thinking and emphasizes the strength leaders and systems draw from multiple connections. The imagery that comes to my mind is that of a two ton weight being dropped and caught by a single strand of rope vs. being caught by a net. The latter is inherently stronger because of its network. She insists that people cannot live or work in isolation and that they will only support what they create. This is a very powerful read for anyone who is trying to change the conversation and/or the dance in which they are engaged.

This is a very interesting book--a little challenging for the newcomer to quantum physics to digest but am slowly proceeding through it. Will probably require another reading. I heard Margaret Wheatley speak at a conference some years ago and was intrigued by her talk.

This is a book to be savored slowly. Fundamentally, the book is about organizations, and why all our modern organizations aren't working so well these days. Wheatley connects our struggling modern organizations with the scientific worldview that was reigning dominant in western civilization when these organizations were created. Modern organizations were birthed in an era that was steeped in Newtonian and Cartesian understandings -- understandings that sought to make sense of reality by isolating things down into their smallest component parts (examples: protons, neutrons, and electrons; reading, writing, and arithmetic) and seeing these component parts as essential parts of a larger machine. Those kinds of understandings were appropriate . . . then. Wheatley suggests that just as Newtonian and Cartesian understandings of reality are giving way to new discoveries in biology, chaos theory, and quantum physics, so too do the structures of the organizations we have created need to give way to new, emerging realities. In the "new science," we now understand that the relational dynamics in a system are at least as important as the individual component parts. Rather than an atomistic view, we now need a systemic view. Wheatley writes this book for people who work in organizations that function like machines. If one part of the machine breaks down, the whole machine stops. Her basic advice: stop trying to fix the machine! Take a step back, ask

yourself: "What, exactly, is this machine trying to do?", and then consider: "Are there simpler ways to do that?" Near the beginning of chapter 1, she gives an analogy of a stream on a mission. The only thing the water wants to do (to the extent that the water has a "will," of course) is go downhill, and eventually get to the ocean. It doesn't care how it gets there. It will always take the simplest route. But we, in our industry, have created machines that are based on structures -- as if the only way for the water to reach the ocean is through this particular channel that we have dug. Our modern organizations, therefore, tend to focus more on structure than on mission. (Difficult words for me to hear, as someone who calls himself "Presbyterian," the very name of which has to do with structure and not with mission!) The implications of this little analogy kept me thinking for days. That's just the beginning. The whole book is like that . . . savor this, enjoy this. Take it slowly. Let the ideas and concepts in this book permeate into you. I routinely found that Wheatley's discussion was leading me into very interesting conceptual thinking about the way we do things. What happens when our structures actually get in the way of our mission? Are there better ways to self-organize to promote the mission of the organization? Be warned: this book will open your eyes to a whole new way of conceptualizing the universe and the systems that inhabit this universe. You won't be the same person by the time you are done. And you won't regret it, either.

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