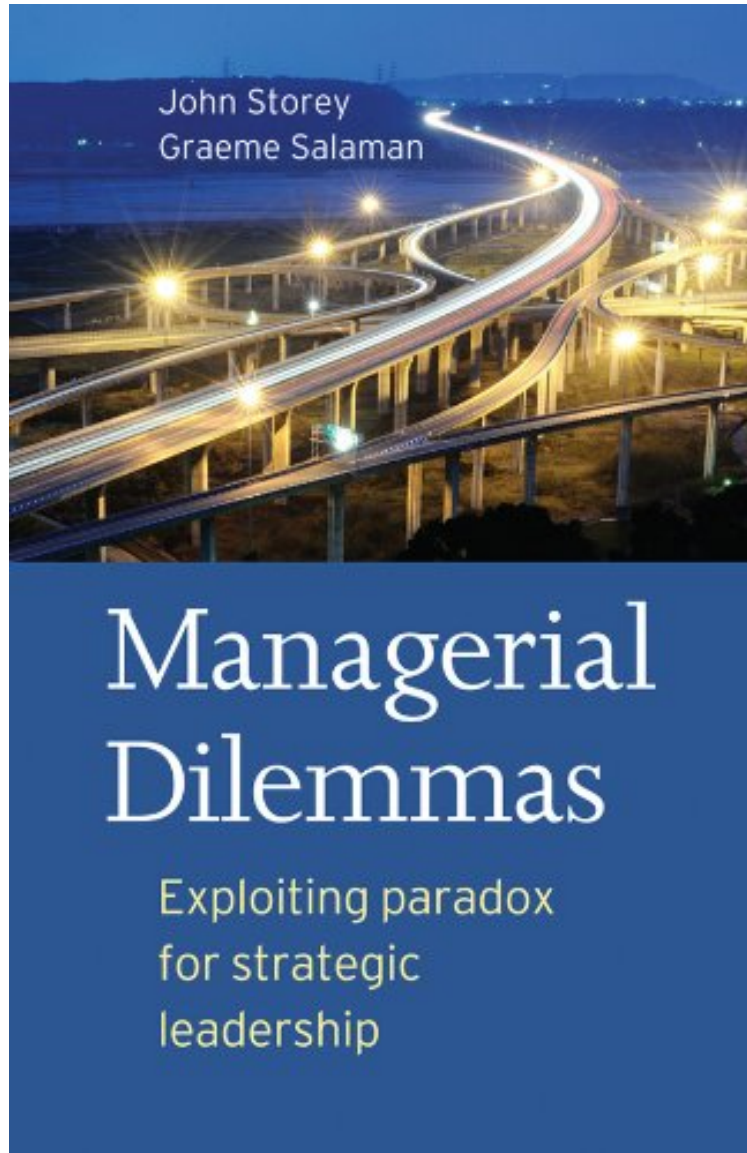


## Managerial Dilemmas: Exploiting paradox for strategic leadership

*John Storey, Graeme Salaman*

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**John Storey, Graeme Salaman : Managerial Dilemmas: Exploiting paradox for strategic leadership** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Managerial Dilemmas: Exploiting paradox for strategic leadership:

In the midst of the most severe recession for 80 years there is little need to argue that organizations are beset by dilemmas and paradoxes. Confidence in prevailing business models and in the underlying assumptions underpinning

business decisions over many decades has now been shaken. But it is not enough to rail against arrogance and greed. Within their own (flawed) assumptions bankers and corporate leaders were acting rationally. A major reason for the failure to anticipate and warn is that observers of organizations usually tend to view organizations in terms similar to those employed by the people who run them: as rational, sensible and objective, whereas, in fact, they are usually confused and confusing, paradoxical and contradictory entities. Paradox is at the heart of how organizations work (or don't work) yet the phenomenon has been strangely unstudied. In an age of crisis and uncertainty, dilemmas and paradoxes are especially evident and prevalent. The fascination and the promise of paradox is that there is also a sense that there is a hidden truth entwined within the opposites. This we contend is a challenge for leaders. The ultimate responsibility of leadership is to make sense of these and to handle them in a competent manner. This demands a new mode of leadership. The management of dilemma and paradox is contended, the essence of leadership today. Paradoxical forces provide a dynamism which, although often experienced as potentially threatening, disconcerting and negative can also be exciting, promising and positive. "The assumption that organizations are rational entities is challenged every day in the work environment by a rich reality of asymmetries between conflicting forces, complexity, hidden intentions and paradoxes. Anyone wanting to understand the real forces that govern organizations should read this book. A must read for modern leaders who have the intellectual honesty to lead organisations with open eyes and not with the over simplifications and clichés of the past"--Giovanni Ghisetti, Director Business Transformation, Coca Cola Enterprises Europe "Storey and Salaman's description of the paradoxes which characterise leadership today is hauntingly accurate. Their intelligent optimism that those dilemmas can be met is as encouraging as it is challenging for those of us who have to do just that. Having read the insights in this book I now understand how their business advice was always so pertinent".--Andy Street, Managing Director of John Lewis

From the Back Cover More than ever, today's managers are beset by successive, fashionable, prescriptions concerning the structure, dynamics, processes and direction of the modern corporation. Unlike their earlier counterparts, the current areas of interest are less clearly associated with Human Resource issues (HR policies, processes, cultures and so on) and far more closely linked with issues more explicitly central to business activity and business performance. Managers need to develop an understanding of innovation, off-shoring, outsourcing, inter-organizational arrangements and other aspects of supply chain management. This book will assist executives and management students to make better sense of these different spheres of activity by exploring them in relation to each other. By helping them make sense of these ideas in relation to each other the book will also allow them to better assess if, and to see how, where and when, they could be of use. This is an invaluable guide to the most current management issues for advanced management undergraduates, MBAs and executives. About the Author John Storey is Professor of Management at The Open University Business School. He regularly consults for public and private sector organisations and has served on several governmental advisory panels. He is Chairman of the Involvement Participation Association (IPA). He has served as journal editor and sits on several journal editorial boards. He has authored and edited around 20 books and published widely in leading international journals. He has led many large-scale research projects; current work focuses health service organisation, governance and management. Graeme Salaman is Professor of Organisation Studies, Open University Business School. He has written many books and articles. He has worked as a consultant at senior levels in eight countries for clients such as Sun Microsystems, Willis, BAT, Allianz, Ernst Young, the government of Ethiopia, Rolls Royce and Morgan Stanley. Recent projects include work in Ethiopia where he has worked on change issues in the Minister of Foreign Affairs, and the Ministry of Information. .