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Preface

My desire in writing this text was to provide faculty with a fully developed teaching package that allows them to enhance student learning and introduce students to business in an exciting way. *Exploring Business* is designed to be a *powerful but simple-to-use teaching tool*. I've devised a broad range of features that allow instructors to introduce students to business in an exciting way, but also worked to fashion material that's straightforward, current, relevant, and easy to teach from. The text is purposely brief and covers business essentials without burdening students or faculty with unnecessary detail.

I've tried to build a textbook package that's as *supportive* as possible to both students and faculty. The textbook package supports learning through interactive and multimedia content designed to help students not only master topics but assess their learning. The sixteen chapters are written using a modular format with self-contained sections which can be reorganized, deleted, added to and even edited at the sentence level. Each module ends with a detailed summary to assist students as they learn from the text.

Using our build-a-book platform, you can easily customize your book to suit your needs and those of your students. An extensive author-prepared instructors' manual and excellent set of PowerPoint slides provide teaching support to instructors. A test item file developed using assessment techniques supports faculty in evaluating student performance.

As in other Introduction to Business books, this text uses a wide variety of company-specific examples. However, I improve on the traditional approach by adding an *optional* case study of a dynamic organization that can easily be integrated into the text. The company chosen for this purpose is Nike. In the future, other case-study companies will be added.

I have designed this textbook package to be *flexible* and meet the needs of three groups of instructors—those who want to

- teach the course using the textbook alone
- teach the course using the comprehensive Nike case (or a company of their choice)
- teach the course by incorporating both a company case study and a business plan project

Enhanced Learning

As an epigraph for this book, I've chosen a nugget from the treasure trove of Benjamin Franklin's considerable educational experience:

"Tell me and I forget. Teach me and I remember. Involve me and I learn."

I believe that this quote encapsulates an important goal of this textbook package: *to encourage students to be active learners*. Thus I've designed the textbook to facilitate the attainment of this goal. I strive to enhance student learning through thought-provoking questions, problems, and cases that ask students to do more than merely regurgitate information from the text. Most of these exercises require students to gather information, assess a situation, think about it critically, and reach a conclusion. Many are based on current business situations involving well-known companies of interest to students. Each chapter presents a number of Questions and Problems as well as five cases on areas of skill and knowledge endorsed by AACSB: Learning on the Web, Career Opportunities, The Ethics Angle, Team-Building Skills, and The Global View. The questions are challenging and stimulating, and most are appropriate for in-class discussions. More than 70 percent of our items help students build skills in areas designated as critical by AACSB, including analytical skills, ethical awareness and reasoning abilities, multicultural understanding and globalization, use of information technology, and communications and team-oriented skills. Each AACSB-inspired exercise is identified by an AACSB tag and a note indicating the relevant skill area.

Author-Prepared Instructor's Manual

For the past twelve years, I have been developing, coordinating and teaching an Introduction to Business course in which first-year students are introduced to business through the study of Nike and the preparation of a business plan. During this twelve-year period, more than 3,500 students have taken the course. Over the years, sections of the course have been taught by a mix of permanent faculty, graduate students, adjuncts, and even the dean. Each semester, I oversee the course and guide approximately ten instructors as they teach their sections—a task that's been made possible through the development and continuous improvement of extensive teaching materials.

Because I feel strongly that well-structured and easily understood teaching materials are vital to the success of this course, I have personally written the Instructor's Manual. In doing this, I relied on the experiences that I've gained in developing these materials for my faculty team. The Instructor's Manual includes comprehensive teaching notes that integrate material from the chapter, material

geared toward Nike, and material dedicated to the business plan project. The easy-to-use notes include teaching tips and ample in-class activities. The Instructor's Manual also contains author-prepared solutions to all questions, problems and cases.

Test Item File and PowerPoint Slides

The Test Item File contains approximately 150 questions per chapter. Each question is fully referenced to corresponding learning objectives, AACSB objectives, page references, and difficulty level. There are about 35 to 40 PowerPoint slides per chapter. To provide teaching support to instructors, each of the slides is linked to the teaching notes contained in the Instructor's Manual.

Nike: An Integrated Case Study

A Nike case study is available for those instructors who decide to introduce their students to business using an exciting case—one which is in fact updated yearly. Through an in-depth study of a real company, students can learn not only about the functional areas of business, but how these functional areas fit together. Studying a dynamic organization on a real-time basis allows students to discover the challenges that it faces and exposes them to critical issues affecting the business, such as globalization, ethics and social responsibility, product innovation, diversity, supply chain management, and e-business.

Students learn about Nike by reading a case study based on extensive research and executive interviews. The case is broken down into 26 individual case notes, which are linked to the appropriate sections of the text. Each provides a real-world example to help students master a particular business topic. For example, after reading about the ways companies promote their products, students are directed to a Nike case note that traces the evolution of the company's promotional strategies, including its well-known sports-marketing efforts. After reading chapter materials on the pros and cons of doing business in a global environment, students can read a Nike case note that examines both the benefits that Nike derives from its international operations and the responsibilities that it has to the countries in which it operates.

We help students expand their understanding of Nike by providing four award-winning videos featuring key company executives discussing specifically chosen topics: the company's history, its corporate-responsibility challenges and initiatives, its commitment to product innovation, and its carefully orchestrated entrance into the soccer-shoe market. We structured interview questions to elicit information that will be valuable to students in mastering particular topics, and

we've selected and organized footage to capture students' attention. Instructors can show the 15-minute videos in class or ask students to watch them online. Discussion questions, written by the author, aid classroom discussions on the topics covered in the videos. Each chapter also contains a multi-part question on one of the Nike case notes covered in the chapter. These questions require students to think about the case and present their opinions on the issues covered. In addition to these questions, the test item file contains multiple-choice questions keyed to the Nike cases.

Current (and sometimes controversial) topics can be woven into the class through Nike-related memo-writing (or debating) assignments accompanying each chapter. These assignments, which are updated frequently, provide students with an opportunity to strengthen their writing skills and form opinions on current issues affecting Nike. One assignment, for example, asks students to deliver an opinion on Nike's failure (until recently) to connect with female consumers. Another asks students to discuss Nike's use of celebrity athletes in light of recent scandals involving several of its athletes. Once the memos themselves have been composed, they underpin excellent in-class discussions or debates. In fact, as an alternative to having students write memos, instructors might ask students to research the topic and come to class prepared to debate the pertinent issues.

I've found that, by studying Nike, students willingly participate in classroom discussions. Why? Because Nike is on just about everybody's radar screen. Students enjoy discussing the opportunities and challenges faced by Nike and speculating on what the company intends to do about them, now and in the future.

Business Plan Project

I'm convinced that having students develop a business plan as a component of an Introduction to Business course has considerable academic value. A business plan project introduces students to the excitement and challenges of starting a business and helps them discover how the functional areas of business interact. Thus this textbook package includes an **optional** business plan project that's *fully integrated* into the book. The business plan project is modeled after one used and refined by me and my teaching team over the past twelve years. During this time period, more than 800 student teams have prepared and presented business plans using this approach.

If their instructor elects to assign the business plan project, students begin the project early in the course by reviewing a document describing the business plan project. In chapters that follow, students are asked to complete another section of the 10-part business plan project. By the time they've reached the end of the course

they're shown how to integrate each of these individual sections into a final version of the plan. Because the project is carefully coordinated with the presentation of course materials, students are able to apply what they're learning, as they're learning it, to the practical process of preparing a business plan.

Because I understand that preparing the financial section of the business plan can be difficult for students, we furnish students with an Excel template that simplifies the process of preparing financial reports for their proposed businesses. They don't even need to be competent in Excel to use it; it's designed to be simple to use, and we provide detailed instructions.

Introduction to Business Community

Those teaching Introduction to Business come from varied backgrounds but share common goals of exciting students about business and sparking their interest in future business courses. I wrote this text to provide members of this community with a fully developed teaching package that enhances the learning environment and helps them introduce students to business in an exciting way. My hope is that by sharing my materials, experiences and approach to teaching with others, they will enjoy the course as much as I do.

Karen Collins