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Gert van Dijk, Panagiota Sergaki, George Baourakis

The Cooperative Enterprise

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This book presents a study of cooperatives as a two-layer entrepreneurial model, and analyzes cooperative enterprises. Above all, it explores how inducements (from the firm) and contributions (from its members, in their respective roles) are aligned, and seeks to answer the question of what this means for managing each cooperative as a firm as well as a group. The book is divided into three parts, the first of which begins with an analysis of specific aspects of cooperative enterprises, with a focus on the added value of cooperation, the weighing of interests, and a behavioral perspective on the imminent communities and their goals. In a structured approach, the book examines the various facets of relationships in cooperatives on a transactional, financial and control level. Further, a case study on the Dutch cooperative Rabobank illustrates what happens when members fail. In turn, part two concentrates on integrating the lessons learned with the existing economic literature on cooperatives, so as to contribute to a theory of cooperative management. Finally, the book links the theoretical approach to practice: in the third part, it reports on the outcomes of using a computerized simulation game to show members of cooperatives how to manage their business and the cooperative business at the same time, enabling them to understand and actively practice two-level entrepreneurship.

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