

Business Unusual

Business Unusual

*Values, uncertainty and the psychology
of brand resilience*

Nathalie Nahai



Publisher's note

Every possible effort has been made to ensure that the information contained in this book is accurate at the time of going to press, and the publishers and authors cannot accept responsibility for any errors or omissions, however caused. No responsibility for loss or damage occasioned to any person acting, or refraining from action, as a result of the material in this publication can be accepted by the editor, the publisher or the author.

First published in Great Britain and the United States in 2021 by Kogan Page Limited

Apart from any fair dealing for the purposes of research or private study, or criticism or review, as permitted under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988, this publication may only be reproduced, stored or transmitted, in any form or by any means, with the prior permission in writing of the publishers, or in the case of reprographic reproduction in accordance with the terms and licences issued by the CLA. Enquiries concerning reproduction outside these terms should be sent to the publishers at the undermentioned addresses:

2nd Floor, 45 Gee Street
London
EC1V 3RS
United Kingdom

122 W 27th St, 10th Floor
New York, NY 10001
USA

4737/23 Ansari Road
Daryaganj
New Delhi 110002
India

www.koganpage.com

Kogan Page books are printed on paper from sustainable forests.

© Nathalie Nahai, 2021

The right of Nathalie Nahai to be identified as the author of this work has been asserted by her in accordance with the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988.

ISBNs

Hardback	978 1 3986 0223 6
Paperback	978 1 3986 0221 2
Ebook	978 1 3986 0222 9

British Library Cataloguing-in-Publication Data

A CIP record for this book is available from the British Library.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

[to follow]

Typeset by Integra Software Services Pondicherry

Print production managed by Jellyfish

Printed and bound by CPI Group (UK) Ltd, Croydon CR0 4YY

Contents

Acknowledgements viii

Introduction 1

- 1 Times they are a-changin' 3
 - A shift in priorities 3
 - Talking 'bout my generation 10
 - Online behaviours 13
 - A digital transformation 16
 - Key takeaways 18
- 2 We demand more 21
 - And who, are you? 21
 - On good behaviour 24
 - The real thing 28
 - A word on authenticity 33
 - Key takeaways 37
- 3 Living the good life 39
 - From pleasure to purpose 39
 - In pursuit of happiness 44
 - Designing a eudaimonic culture 50
 - Key takeaways 54
- 4 Up close and personal: deepening the people–business relationship 57
 - A little thought goes a long way 57
 - Getting attached 63

- The ties that bind 67
- A new kind of leadership 72
- For the greater good 79
- Integrity and the four Cs 82
- Key takeaways 85

- 5 The lure of woke-washing: values and virtue signalling 87
 - Walking the talk 87
 - The personality problem 94
 - Taking a stand 96
 - It's all about values 99
 - Putting it into practice 107
 - The Values Map 109
 - Key takeaways 111

- 6 Emotionally intelligent communication: what not to do 113
 - Holding up a mirror 113
 - Mind the empathy gap 120
 - The power of contagion 124
 - A word to the wise 128
 - Clear communication 134
 - Key takeaways 136

- 7 How to recover when it hits the fan 139
 - Dealing with the inevitable 139
 - Revenge and reconciliation 141
 - The hidden power of compassion 146
 - A question of identity 150
 - Key takeaways 157

- 8 Adapting to virtual-first relationships without losing touch 159
 - The ghost in the machine 159
 - Let's get physical 165

Discomfort, danger and psychological safety 170
Making the most of it 175
Key takeaways 182

9 Business, unusual 185
The great reset 185
Place and purpose 186
The war for talent 190
To boldly go... 193

Endnotes 199

Index 241

Acknowledgements

Writing a book is rarely a solitary endeavour, and this one would not have been possible without the extraordinary contributions of all the researchers, scientists, thinkers and business leaders whose work and case studies I have drawn upon in these pages. I am especially grateful for the generosity, candour and thoughtfulness of the many people who kindly agreed to be interviewed: Aaron Balick, Amy C Edmondson, Barbara Kellerman, Brian Solis, César Christoforidis, Chris Kane, Cindy Gallop, David Rowan, Gillian Isaacs Russell, Jeremy Dalton, John Featherby, Lewis Garrad, Nell Watson, Octavius Black, Perry Timms, Rita Clifton, Scott Barry Kaufman, Stephanie Moore and Toby Daniels. A special thank you to Tomas Chamorro-Premuzic whose insights and introductions were invaluable, and to Reece Akhtar, Tara Lemmé and Yessi Bello Perez whose ideas informed my thinking. This project would not have been nearly as joyful nor possible without the brilliance, kindness and competence of Kiki Leutner and Aled Evans, and the attentive editing and support of my editor, Géraldine Collard. My thanks to Kogan Page for believing in this project, to Sven Buechel and Udo Hahn for the use of your VAD model, and to Caro C, my producer at The Hive Podcast, for your skill and suggestions. Finally, a heartfelt thank you to Freddy Sánchez Guzmán, for your unwavering patience, insight and support. This project would not have been as rich without you.