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REVIEWS

SIX CAPITALS

Jane Gleeson-White
(£16.99 hardback)



Can accountants save the planet? That's the provocative question posed by Jane Gleeson-White in this book. In it, she examines how corporate reporting could put a value on things that we all know are important, but that traditional accounting cannot capture.

This new thinking in accountancy sets out to tackle the problem of “externalities”, the costs corporations impose on the natural environment that do not appear in their accounts.

As Gleeson-White explains, integrated reporting and the concept of “six capitals” – financial, manufactured, intellectual, human, social and natural capital – are now being used to explore ways in which we can measure externalities.

This change in accounting can lead to a change in thinking, and in turn to action. So maybe accountants can (help) save the planet after all. Certainly, for a clear explanation of the new thinking in corporate reporting this book is highly recommended. See also Briefing Update, page 36.



WHERE I AM TODAY

Q&A

ELAINE HALLIGAN CA

DIRECTOR, THE PARENT PRACTICE

WHEN DID YOU QUALIFY AS A CA AND WHO DID YOU TRAIN WITH?

I trained with Deloitte Haskins and Sells in Edinburgh, then transferred to London in 1992 to what was then Coopers Deloitte.



act for themselves, helped them develop emotional intelligence and understand their strengths and accept their areas of weakness. I helped my son develop a strong sense of self-worth despite his lack of confidence in literacy due to his severe dyslexia.

BRIEF CAREER HISTORY

Post qualification, I spent my 60-hour weeks in the corporate finance department on the 8th floor and then left to work for Accountancy Tuition Centres teaching management accounting to prospective ACAs, before retraining as a parenting specialist.

WHAT DOES YOUR JOB INVOLVE?

I am co-owner of The Parent Practice and my role involves coaching parents privately and delivering seminars and webinars in the workplace and in schools. We help parents have happier and easier family lives and bring out the best in their children, which is so much more rewarding than anything I had done before.

WHO DO YOU REPORT TO?

The business is owner managed, but I liaise closely with my business partner Melissa Hood who runs our operation in Sydney. We are a small team of eight people but with a branch in New York as well and licensees across the globe.

WHAT INSPIRED YOU TO SET UP THIS BUSINESS?

I came into parenting thinking I should instinctively know how to parent. How difficult can it be to raise two children? I thought all I needed was to love and nurture them. However, I soon came unstuck when our little boy struggled at school. He was diagnosed with Pathological Demand Avoidance, Oppositional Defiance Disorder and Autistic Spectrum Disorder. Our son believed he was a bad person and experienced failure first hand at a very young age.

As parents we were at our wits' end, but we didn't give up on him. I retrained as a parenting coach and taught our children how to think and

“It's not all about wealth or attainment. Follow your values and trust your gut”

WHAT'S THE BEST THING ABOUT YOUR ROLE?

Hearing of the transformational results and receiving the email that says we have changed family life beyond recognition and helped improve the couple's relationship in the process.

...AND THE WORST?

Delivering evening school workshops in North London and negotiating London traffic.

PROUDEST MOMENT SO FAR?

My 19-year-old son transforming his own life and finishing up as head boy of his school and then completing the Mongol Rally challenge this summer driving 15,000km from London to Mongolia. Proudest moment but also the most anxiety-inducing.

WHAT'S YOUR NEXT CHALLENGE?

Helping my business partner publicise the next best-selling parenting book called *Real Parenting for Real Kids* (published April 2016).

HOW HAS YOUR TRAINING AS A CA HELPED PREPARE YOU FOR THIS ROLE – IF IT HAS?

My CA training has been invaluable for the logical, rational brain needed to run any small business, but I have had to develop the emotional intelligence quotient which is essential for communication and connection with everyone.

WHAT SINGLE PIECE OF ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE FOR A CA LOOKING TO PURSUE THIS CAREER ROUTE?

It's not all about positions, qualifications, jobs, wealth or attainment. You can have all that and still not be happy. Follow your values and trust your gut.