



BUSINESS INSIGHT »

From planned behavior to drafting a business plan: new book balances the theoretical and the practical.

Somewhere between an erudite article, a standard textbook, and a glib “How-To” without research to back up its points, there ought to be a resource that provides easy-to-read, yet well-substantiated information on matters of business importance.

Now there is: the seven-volume *Greenwood Guides to Business and Economics*. **Alan L. Carsrud**, executive director, Eugenio Pino and Family Global Entrepreneurship Center, and clinical professor of management in the College of Business Administration, has co-authored one of them: *Entrepreneurship*, published in March, 2007. He also served on the editorial advisory board, which laid out the general plan for the series. Eight or nine more books are likely to be developed.



*Alan L.
Carsrud*

“Our goal was to produce a book that would extract the nuggets from scholarly research on entrepreneurship and present them in a way that would be helpful to people who want to go through the entrepreneurial process,” he said. “We wanted it to have the weight of quality research behind it, but did not want it to read like a scholarly manuscript.”

Carsrud and **Malin Brännback**, a professor of entrepreneurship at Åbo Akademi University, with whom he frequently collaborates on research and who, like him, has helped the start-up efforts of hundreds of companies, hinged their book on the theory of planned behavior. Planned behavior posits a relationship between what people believe and how they act.

Structure and style of book invite reader participation.

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—**Alan L. Carsrud**, executive director, Pino Center, and clinical professor of management

“The idea is to show potential entrepreneurs the steps they need to take to move from their attitudes about things to action,” he said. “We are using the theory of ‘trying,’ and our objective is to take people from ‘trying’ to actuality.”

Specific examples pepper the volume, as do exercises. To make the theory-based book even more concrete, the authors devote an entire section to how to create a business plan, with step-by-step guidance that presents the practical along with the theoretical.

“A business plan is an example of the theory of planned behavior with specific stages and specific behaviors, or actions, at each stage,” he said. “Describing the creation of a business plan was an effective way to provide both the ‘how to’ and the ‘why.’”

In addition, the section on the business plan gives readers the opportunity to take content from the rest of the book and put it into immediate practice. As a result, they actively engage with the material, reinforcing it while using it to shape an effective plan that can be implemented.

Jargon-free language brings clarity to the subjects of entrepreneurship and economics.

Written without jargon and aimed at high school and college students as well as practitioners, each book in the series also ties its particular subject to the larger issues of business and economics.

“Many people may think of economics as an incomprehensible, academic subject, but economics affects our lives in very concrete ways, and the entire series addresses the relevant issues to make the impact of economics understandable,” Carsrud said.

