

Textbook Has Found Its Niche

By *Janet Lathrop*
UNH News Bureau

March 5, 2001

DURHAM, N.H. -- Stephen Fink, associate dean at the University of New Hampshire's Whittemore School of Business and Economics, announced recently that a textbook he co-authored, "Effective Behavior in Organizations" was recently published in a seventh edition. "It's sold well over the years and has been well accepted," says Fink of the textbook he launched with three others in 1976. "We like people using it and we get a great response from it."

This introductory textbook is different -- it sports up-to-date sidebars called "Managerial Bulletins" which are mostly gleaned from news clippings. These snippets can be pithy sayings or longer narratives, but they all offer examples of things going on in the organizational world that keep the book current and alive, Fink says.

For example, from a Fortune 500 company senior vice president: "We get rid of anyone who starts in with office politics, plotting or backstabbing. If you have to keep looking over your shoulder, you can't play the game well." And from Jeff Dodge, a dot-com start-up manager who spoke last year about the importance of communication skills in a technology-based business: "I'm housebroken. I can go into a room crowded with customers, translate engineering terms into English, and put those customers at ease."

Fink said that another reason that the textbook has been successful -- against the odds in publishing -- is that he and his co-authors place high value on an easy, accessible writing style. They want readers to call examples freely to mind from their own lives. "We find that makes an enormous difference in student involvement," Fink notes, and student involvement is a key to any teacher's success. By the end of the course, students recognize good leaders from their own

experience and have a clear analysis of successful management techniques at work.

Fink's co-author on the current edition is a former Whittemore School colleague, Allan R. Cohen, now at Babson College, Babson Park, Mass. With two other co-authors of earlier editions, Herman Gadon, University of California-San Diego, and Robin D. Willits, UNH professor emeritus of administration and organization, Fink and Cohen also helped to organize the Organizational Behavior Teaching Society in 1973, which now has nearly 1,000 members worldwide.

[Back to UNH News Bureau](#)