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SOCIAL & BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES

Business, Management & Labor

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The following review appeared in the April 2014 issue of CHOICE:

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Polak, Paul. **The business solution to poverty: designing products and services for three billion new customers**, by Paul Polak and Mal Warwick. Berrett-Koehler, 2013. 245p index ISBN 9781609940775, \$27.95

Polak and Warwick explain why only business can end poverty, which they define as "encompassing those families who live on the equivalent of \$2 a day or less per person." Much of their book focuses on zero-based design for the poorest people on Earth. This is an extremely affordable and durable design with a plan for getting the technology and products delivered "the last 500 feet" to the users. The book is chock-full of practical examples and step-by-step instructions. The authors propose tapping capital markets to fund global enterprises to address the needs of the poor for water, energy, housing, health care, and education. They indicate that private businesses have the advantages of attracting capital, hiring lots of people when successful, and being capable of reaching the large scale. One notion is to enable poor people to earn more money by using local resources. Among the key pieces of advice offered in the book is this: "Poor people have to invest their own time and money to move out of poverty." *Global Poverty Alleviation: A Case Book* (2013), edited by Pauline Albert, Patricia Werhane, and Tim Rolph, has a wider range of cases for teaching and offers a useful multi-stakeholder perspective. **Summing Up:** Recommended. Lower-division undergraduate through professional collections. -- C. Wankel, St. John's University, New York