

**S W A N S , S W I N E ,  
A N D S W I N D L E R S**

*Coping with the Growing Threat  
of Mega-Crises and Mega-Messes*

Can M. Alpaslan  
and Ian I. Mitroff

STANFORD BUSINESS BOOKS  
An Imprint of Stanford University Press  
Stanford, California

# C O N T E N T S

<i>Preface</i>	xi
----------------	----

## PART I: UNCOVERING ASSUMPTIONS

i	A Crisis Is Not What We Have Been Led to Believe; Every Crisis Is an Existential Crisis of Meaning	3
z	What Is a Mess? The Fundamental Differences Between Exercises, Problems, and Messes	15
3	All Crises Are Messes	37
4	When Good Organizations Do Unwise, Immature, and Bad Things	55
5	It's the Culture	67

## PART II: MANAGING ASSUMPTIONS

6	Overcoming Mega-Denial	81
7	Beyond Fear-Based Crisis Management	99

**PART III: APPLICATIONS**

8	The Art and Science of Messy Inquiry	127
9	Trust, Transparency, and Reliability: What Can the HROs Teach the Financial Sector?	149
	Afterword	169
	<i>Notes</i>	173
	<i>Index</i>	195