

BOOK REVIEWS

MANAGEMENT A FAITH-BASED PERSPECTIVE

by Michael E. Cafferky (2012)
New Jersey: Pearson Education Inc.

Reviewed by Margaret Edgell
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This review is of a management textbook, so any evaluation of the book must address whether or not it is appropriate for adoption in a management course. I enthusiastically recommend *Management: A Faith-Based Perspective* for adoption, particularly in Introduction to Management. It lays a sure foundation of Christian perspectives for the rest of the business curriculum.

The text is strong on many counts. The management topics covered are comparable to other management texts, but my enthusiastic endorsement is primarily due to the book's excellent faith-based perspective. Cafferky's text is the first, to my knowledge, to blend faith-based material thoroughly and consistently into each chapter. He explains in his preface how he debated thoughtfully exactly how to blend the faith-based discussions with the secular management material. He ended up with a chapter-by-chapter approach, wherein he first introduces the faith-based material, then the secular management material.

One might argue that this is not full faith integration—that a more complete blending should occur at the chapter level. The author decided that any attempt by him to integrate faith considerations throughout each chapter would be too heavy-handed. Instead, with faith-based material at the beginning and secular management material at the end of a chapter, the reader/student has the mandate, and opportunity, to integrate the material for him or herself.

The organization of the text is another major strength of the book. One of the introductory chapters is a re-

markably thorough history of management that goes back to Biblical times. Most management texts don't pick up the story until the nineteenth century. The historical context is a valuable feature for students' faith integration efforts, because their Biblical interpretation is more appropriate if it is in historical context.

Another bonus is a final chapter on the development of the faith integration movement in business. This chapter provides sufficient information on this important aspect of faith integration without overdoing it. Key topics are work as worship and calling, and sample models of faith integration.

The depth and breadth of the author's research is evident in the volume and quality of the chapter notes. It is refreshing to see Biblical texts cited extensively in the chapter notes.

Discussion questions and debate topics at the end of each chapter include coverage of Christian perspectives where appropriate. Spread throughout the textbook are small gems: sidebars with a Christian perspective. At the back of the text you will find large gems: cases with a Christian perspective. These gems were a collaborative effort by many CBFA members. The text is the stronger for this collaboration.

My only concern regarding this excellent text is its publication design. Page layout is boring compared to the dynamic designs more typical of expensive texts. If the goal was stewardship, it was well met. The print was a challenge for middle-aged eyes, but this need not be a concern for students. The cover design didn't make sense

to me for a management text—a boardwalk through wetlands. If it is alluding to the student finding the path of his or her calling, this is confusing since that is a sub-theme in the book, and not a major theme.

As a first management text from a faith-based approach, this is excellent. I look forward to asking my students to buy just one book, rather than my usual practice of combining a secular text with a Christian book.

As a final note, I suggest that this excellent text be made available in e-book form for the benefit of our students. E-books offer a significant savings—about half the usual price. Search and other features unique to e-books make them a great option. As long as a student has computer access, she has her textbook handy.