Chapter 2

# Reinventing Management Training:
## How Spiritual Values Change the Practice of Modern Management and of Managerial Education

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## ABSTRACT

*This chapter argues that today's society renders traditional management practice incomplete. To better position managers in their organizations, they need to embrace and apply a spiritual connotation to the work they do. The task set forth in this chapter is to explore how management education and training needs to change to include a managerial mindset that accepts both the call to control and the need to be responsive to the spiritual side of both manager and employees. The chapter first describes traditional management theory and then applies a spiritual application to the traditional work of management. It describes new skills and activities needed to engage in spiritual management. With this new understanding, managers can prepare themselves to help workers be productive and useful while also helping them find meaning and personal fulfillment in the work.*

## INTRODUCTION

Traditional management can be summarized by the idea that the job is to make every person, system, activity, program, and policy countable, measurable, and predictable. This perspective may have been useful and sufficient in past managerial positions, but it is no longer the case. Given the dramatic changes in the nature of the work we do today – including technological advances and the multicultural characteristics which impact managers, workers, and all other stakeholders – managing in the "same way" is a formula for failure. Neither management theory nor the educational and training programs now in place to prepare operational managers for their tasks are adequate to meet existing and future demands. They are simply not sufficient to do the work of contemporary society.

The real functions of managers include things not previously acknowledged in typical training; those functions are more personal and intimate in nature. Simple observation supports the contention that managers do not merely plan, direct, budget, etc. In studies of general managers, Kotter (1990) found that they spend much of their time interacting personally with workers. The manager's activities were often unplanned and the result of diversions such as unscheduled meetings and telephone calls. These conversations tended to be short, disjointed, and touch on a number of issues (Mintzberg, 1975). These observational data suggest that acting in their role places managers in positions to influence the actions of others in more than just functional, routine, systemic, or procedural ways. Indeed, they are also in the business of influencing, even changing, the values and standards of workers and their corresponding outward behavior.

Research suggests management is more than it has been made out to be and that it involves the intimate and personal as much as or more than the technical and routine (see for example, Fairholm, 2009; Gibbons, 1999; Herzberg, 1984; Hofstede, 1993; Korac-Kakabadse, et. al., 2002; Quinn & McGrath, 1985; Schein, 1996; Vaill, 1989). We each bring with us to work a mind-set or point of view, a personal perspective that may or may not reflect an objective reality. We understand our work and our managers only in terms of our unique set of values that form the parameters of our point of view. Unless something extraordinary happens, we cannot accept other points of view as credible (Graves, 1970). Thus, not only is *doing* the work of managers an intimate and intensely personal activity, *defining* the work of managers is too (not to mention how workers respond to that managerial work). It engages us in incorporating our whole self, even our spiritual self, into our managerial thoughts and actions.

The effort in this chapter is to explore how management education and training needs to change to include a managerial mindset that accepts both the call to control *and* the need to be responsive to the core values – the spiritual side – of both manager and employees because the good managers among us are doing just that (and probably always have). Our goal is to introduce the reader to theoretical and practical ideas already present in the workplace, but largely ignored in professional writings. Our task here is to articulate the spiritual elements of the managerial functions and competencies needed to fit the realities of today.

## THE EVOLUTION OF MODERN MANAGEMENT THOUGHT

While management theory and practice encompass certain discrete elements, the individual manager's ability to understand or apply those elements may be limited by the mental perspectives he or she (and their followers) bring to organizational life. Thus, the goal is to rethink management research and training to encompass a more holistic approach to doing management. But first, we must consider past managerial definitions, mindsets, and training.

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