

Woodbury University

Course Syllabus

MG 571.4

SPIRITUALITY IN THE WORKPLACE

UNITS - 3

SESSION – Spring 2000

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COURSE DESCRIPTION: Class Objectives and Philosophy

In this course we will explore a new paradigm that is emerging in business – Spirituality in the Workplace. A recent issue of U.S. News & World Report (May 3, 1999) reports, “In the past decade, more than 300 titles on workplace spirituality – from *Jesus CEO* to *The Tao of Leadership* – have flooded the bookstores....Indeed, 30 MBA programs now offer courses on this issue. It is also the focus of the current issue of Harvard School Bulletin.” Signs of this sudden concern for corporate soul are showing up everywhere: from boardrooms to company lunchrooms; from business conferences to management newsletters, from management consulting firms to business schools. Echoing Andre Malraux – who said that the next century’s task will be to rediscover its Gods – some management thinkers are prophesizing that the effective leaders of the next century will be spiritual leaders.

Organizations are increasingly realizing the futility of achieving financial success at the cost of humanistic values. At the end of the millenium, organizations have been reflecting upon discovering ways to help employees balance work and family, and to create conditions wherein each person can realize his/her potential while fulfilling the requirements of the job. One writer has called such enlightened organizations "incubators of the spirit."

Work has ceased to be just the "nine-to-five thing," but is increasingly seen as an important element in fulfilling one's destiny. As James Autry has observed, "Work can provide the opportunity for spiritual and personal, as well as financial, growth. If it doesn't, we are wasting far too much of our lives on it." "Leading others" is being seen

as an extension of "managing ourselves." The implications of these changes are clear. On one hand, it is about how to work collectively, reflectively, and spiritually smarter. On the other hand, it implies how to do such work in organizations that is mind-enriching, heart-fulfilling, soul-satisfying, and financially rewarding.

Social scientists cite the following reasons for this resurgence of interest in spirituality in the workplace:

- Baby-boomers' mid-life soul-searching
- Arrival of the new millenium
- Anxiety caused by corporate downsizing and restructuring
- Search for meaning through work
- Quest for stability in an unstable world
- Movement towards more holistic living
- Greater influx of women in the workplace
- Developed countries' progression from belly needs to brain needs

Spirituality in the Workplace--Related Topics

In addition to exploring practical examples of spirituality in the corporate America, we will discuss the following topics:

- Balancing Work & Family Life
- Time Management
- Stress Management
- Servant Leadership
- Personal Mastery
- Organizational Learning
- A Holistic Approach to Work
- Trust
- Social Responsibility
- Employee Empowerment and Motivation
- Principle-centered Leadership
- Search for Meaning within Workplace
- Corporate Stewardship

The following explanation will foster better understanding of the topic and will help us to get the most out of this course:

Defining Spirituality

The term spirituality means different things to different people. Webster's Dictionary defines spirituality as: of, relating to, consisting of or affecting the spirit; of relating to

sacred matters; concerned with religious values; of, related to, or joint in spirit. The term “spirituality” comes from the Latin word “spiritus” that means vapor, breath, air or wind.

Spirituality vs. Religion

Spirituality is distinct from institutionalized religion. While religion often looks outward depending on rites and rituals; spirituality looks inward – the kingdom within. Spirituality recognizes that there is something sacred at the core of all existence. Whatever its source, this sacred element dwells within every living organism. Spirituality is non-dogmatic, non-exclusive, gender-neutral, and non-patriarchal. Regardless of our surface differences, there is underlying sacred commonality, the Ground of Being, to borrow a phrase from Paul Tillich. One modern writer captures the essence of this difference through the title of a book: *Truth in Religion: Plurality of Religions and Unity of Truth*.

For the purpose of this class, spirituality may be described as the awareness of the Divine Ground/Principle of our Being, as characterized by our effort to live in harmony with the Divine Principle. And spirituality at the workplace is an attempt to get connected to this divine principle in the context of a workplace.

During this course, we will draw upon the unity underlying the wisdom traditions of the world. “This approach of looking for common themes among various spiritual traditions can be very useful in an increasingly diverse workplace,” notes an early writer on the subject.

Required Texts:

Barrett, R. (1998). *Liberating the Corporate Soul: Work, Leadership and Spirituality in the 21st Century*. Alexandria, VA: Fulfilling Books.

Chappell, T. (1993). *The Soul of a Business: Managing for Profit and the Common Good*. New York: Bantam Books.

Fox, M. (1995). *The Reinvention of Work: A New Vision Livelihood for Our Time*. San Francisco: Harper Collins.

Supplementary Texts: *Choose One*

Frankl, V. (1984). *Man’s Search for Meaning: An Introduction to Logotherapy*. Third Edition. New York: A Touchstone Book.

Cleary, T. (1994). *The Human Element: A Course in Resourceful Thinking*. Shambhala.

Aurty, J. (1994). *Love and Profit: A Manager's Search for Meaning*. New York: Avon Books.

Canfield, J. et al. (1996). *Chicken Soup for the Soul at Work*. Health Communication Publications.

Klein, E. & Izzo, J.B. (1998). *Awakening Corporate Soul: Four Paths to Unleash the Power of People at Work*. Fairwinds Press.

Hawley, J. (1993). *Reawakening the Spirit in Work: The Power of Dharmic Management*. San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler.

Whyte, D. (1994). *The Heart Aroused: Poetry and Preservation of the Soul in Corporate America*. New York: Currency Doubleday.

Heider, J. (1985). *The Tao of Leadership*. Atlanta, Georgia: Humanics Limited.

Mitchell, S. (1989). *Tao Teh Ching: A New English Version*. New York: Harper & Row.

Walker, B. (1992). *Hua Hu Ching: The Unknown Teachings of Lao Tzu*. NY: Harper-Collins.

Morris, T. (1997). *If Aristotle Ran General Motors: Four Timeless Virtues and the New Soul of Business*. Holt Publishing.

Essential Background Readings: *Class Handouts*

Robert Greenleaf's Essay, *Servant Leadership*.

Excerpts from Mortimer Adler's, *Aristotle for Everybody*. (pp. 70-99)

Rudyard Kipling's Poem, "If"

Excerpts from Kahlil Gibran's, *The Prophet*. (Poems, pp. 19-22, 25-28, 64-68).

Exerpts from Tagore's, *Gitanjali*. (Poems: 1, 4, 13, 14, 35, 36, 49, 103)

Excerpts from Rainer Maria Rilke's, *Letters to a Young Poet*. (Letters #1, 3, 4, 8)

(Trans. Stephen Mitchell)

Selections from Rumi's poetry: *Open Secrets, Unseen Rain* (Versions by Coleman Barks); *The Garden Beyond Paradise* (Trans. by Jonathan Star)

Selections form Thomas Merton's, *The Way of Chuang Tzu*. (pp. 44-47, 60-61, 112-115)

NOTE: The more "meaty" morsels of business books will be garnished with these selections during our discussions on spirituality in the workplace.

Class Requirements

Critical Lecture Summaries. (30 points)

This assignment is based on the cognitive domain of Bloom's Taxonomy, developed in 1956. Bloom identified six levels within the cognitive domain, from the simple recall of facts to the highest levels identified as synthesis and evaluation. In lieu of the mid-term examination, you will be required to prepare a critical lecture summary for each class session. Specifically, you will address the following questions in your summaries:

What did we do?
What did I learn?
How will I apply it?

The first part outlines the key points of the class session. In the second part reflect upon the lessons learned. In the final section, suggest concrete application of the material learned various personal and professional illustrations. The summary serves as a learning log and is a very useful tool to gauge progress in learning over time. Some model summaries from previous classes will be presented during the first class meeting to help you benchmark your efforts.

Class Presentation/Participation. (30 points)

This assignment has two parts: individual presentations and group presentation. The individual presentations will be based on assigned readings from the required texts. This will enable you to participate in every class sessions. In addition to presenting the texts, feel free to incorporate information from your organization that has a bearing on the topic presented. It is called '*adding value to the class.*' This class is modeled on the concept of '*adults teaching other adults.*' Be prepared to read at least 80-100 pages every week. The group presentation will be based on the books listed under *Supplementary Readings*. By the third class session, we will finalize the list of groups and the dates of presentation. We will invite Woodbury faculty and industry experts to critique these presentations. Each group presentation session will be video taped.

Scholarly Paper. (20 points)

Each student is required to write a scholarly paper, in APA style, on a topic related to this course. You may refer to some of the topics in the above list. This paper should be based on at least ten journal articles published during the last 2 years. Please note that for the second class meeting, a library information session has been planned. This session will be given by one of our Information Services Librarians. The objective is to provide you with the state-of-the-art strategies in field of on-line research. The full-text database, Proquest Direct, can be accessed at www.umi.com/proquest. The APA guidelines and a sample APA paper have been placed in our library on reserve for your reference purposes. These guidelines have been updated to include the citations of the on-line sources.

Final Examination. (20 points)

Final examination will consist of essay questions. A list of these questions will be provided during the first class meeting.

An Important Note:

No late work is accepted in this class. All the due dates for your assignments will be assigned during the first class meeting. So plan ahead to meet these deadlines. A class assignment schedule will be posted on my web page during the second week of the semester. It can be reached @ www.woodburyu.edu/faculty/sdhiman. Important messages will be posted at this web site from time to time. So keep checking it on a regular basis. Submit all your paper work via e-mail.

5. Attendance Policy.

Attendance is a part of class participation. An absence from one class meeting may entail losing 5 points unless you take steps to make it up by presenting a current HBR article or some other additional assignment.

Assumptions of this Course:

This course is modeled on the following assumptions:

We are not human beings on a spiritual journey; we are spiritual beings on a human journey.

The key questions for today's managers and leaders are no longer issues of task and structure but are questions of spirit. Jack Hawley, in *Reawakening the Spirit in Work*, 1993, p. 1.

We all share a deep need to live, to love, to learn, and to leave a legacy. Stephen Covey

Work is not just a means to pay our bills; it is an abiding source to fulfill our destiny.

Work consciously-chosen, done with full awareness and care can lead to deepest self-fulfillment.

You are a thread in the web of life. What ever you do to it, you do to yourself.

An organization is the sum total of spiritual selves of individuals who work in that organization.

To be completely honest with one self is the best effort a human being can make. Freud.

When we change the way we see the world, we change the world.

In the world of spiritual realities, knowledge is always a function of being; the nature of what we experience is determined by what we ourselves are. Aldous Huxley

“God grant that I may not seek so much to be understood as to understand.” Prayer of St. Francis

All things you can get from the outside are temporary. They can be taken away. Your permanent, real treasure is inside.

Successful corporate leaders of the 21st century will be spiritual leaders.

During our discussions, we will use these aphorisms as points of departure.

Practical Exercises:

Writing a Personal Mission Statement

Making your organization more soul-friendly

Increasing your spirituality quotient at work

Designing an organization based on spiritual values

Preparing a directory of organizations practicing spirituality at workplace

Preparing an inventory of practices used by corporate America on this topic

Preparing a list of all the online resources available such as conferences, symposia, consultants

Your final essay questions will be based on these practical exercises. The following may serve as a guide:

Writing a Personal Mission Statement

Writing a personal mission statement is a very unique process. No two mission statements are quite alike because they reflect our different beliefs, motives, and values.

A good personal mission:

evokes your deepest beliefs

reflects your core values

celebrates your unique gifts

inspires you to action

guides your day-to-day activities

provides meaning and significance to your life

enables you to realize your total potential

A search for one's mission is inherently existential, being rooted in the questions, such as:

What is the meaning of life in general?

What is the meaning of my life in particular? Why am I here?

What am I?

Write your own personal mission statement reflecting upon the information presented above. You may refer to such books as, *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*, by Steven Covey and *What Color is Your Parachute?* by Richard Bolles. As the course progresses, we will explore these exercises in greater detail. Consider the following information to enrich your understanding about this topic. These values, concepts, and meditations may provide new categories to think about spirituality in the workplace.

Fundamental Values venerated by all Wisdom Traditions:

Reverence for all life

Oneness with nature

Interconnectedness of all life

Love and respect for all

Personal integrity

Authenticity

Self-knowledge & discipline

Celebration of cycles

Self-less service

An abiding faith in the goodness of humanity

A sense of sacred in every day life

An enduring spiritual practice

A caring concern for others

Mutual trust & understanding

Spirituality Concepts

Balance, trust, values, integrity, intuition, contribution, co-operation, creativity, compassion, modesty, moderation, wholeness, stewardship, humility, awareness, gratitude, responsibility, meaning, growth, adaptability, a sense of humor.

On Realizing the Divine Ground of Our Being

After a life-time study of the wisdom traditions of the world, Aldous Huxley, an eminent English author, formulated the following affirmations:

That there is a Divine Ground which is the unmanifested principle of all manifestations.

That the Divine Ground is at once transcendent and immanent.

That it is possible for human beings to know, love, and actually become identical with the Divine Ground.

That to achieve oneness with the Divine Ground is the final end and purpose of human life.

That there is Law or Dharma that must be obeyed and a Tao or Way that must be followed, if we are to achieve our final purpose.

That the Way is a way of love, kindness, service, and humility. (Source: *Vedanta and the West*)

These meditations can help us deepen our spiritual understanding of the way things are. Life being an undivided whole, this understanding can help transform every aspect of our life, including work life. As we go forth in our life, let us bear in mind the wise words of Aldous Huxley, who observed the following at the end of his life: "It is rather embarrassing to have been concerned with the human problem all one's life and to find that one has little more to offer by way of advice than, Try to be a little kinder."

WEBLINKS: Spirituality in the Workplace

1. The premier website on spirituality in the workplace: www.spiritatwork.com
2. The Robert K. Greenleaf Center for Servant-Leadership: www.greenleaf.org
3. The New Academy of Business on socially and environmentally responsible business management: www.new-academy.ac.uk
4. Organizational transformation through individual transformation: www.wholenet1.com/regen
5. Center for Spirit at Work: www.spiritwork.org
6. International Symposium on Spirituality and Business: www.ants.edu/spirit&bus
7. To access a newsletter on this topic, edited by Judy Neal: www.spiritatwork.com/newsletr
8. To obtain a detailed Bibliography on Spirit at Work compiled by Judy Neal: www.spiritatwork.com/newsletr/biblio.htm
9. A list of schools/researchers in this field prepared by Martin Rutte: www.martinrutte.com/schools.html

10. For a recent article in Harvard Business Bulletin on this topic:
www.alumni.hbs.edu/bulletin/1999/april/spirit.html