

BOOK REVIEWS

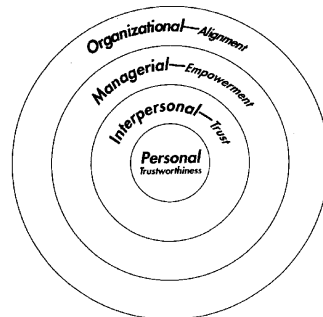
Principle-Centered Leadership by Stephen R. Covey, published by Simon & Schuster, USA, 1992 (332 pages).

This book is an exploration of the natural laws that ultimately govern all of our actions and how you can align yourself with those laws to bring true power, focus, energy, compassion, and integrity into your life. If you want to make minor improvements-work on behavior and attitudes. If you want to make quantum leaps, work on paradigms-ways of thinking-and behavior and attitudes will follow.

Covey presents a new paradigm that will resolve every one of the common dilemmas of life if properly understood and applied. He points out that our lives are governed by unchanging natural laws--as unchanging as the law of gravity. Good family relationships are long-term. A good character is long-term. You have to work on it every day to become a person of great courage, integrity, and compassion. He calls these principles the law of the farm. This is not cramming-trying to get the best, quickest results with the least work (which Covey calls the law of the school.) This does not work on the farm. You cannot neglect to milk the cows for a week and then try to make up for lost time! But even in school, did it work? Did you get a degree but not an education?

The law of the farm governs with regard to our body, our mind, our relationships, and eventually all management and organization alike, because in the last analysis we reap what we sow, and how we tend the crop determines the harvest.

Covey speaks about four levels or departments of natural laws each with its fundamental composite principle:



1. Personal = trustworthiness
2. Interpersonal = trust
3. Managerial = empowerment
4. Organizational = alignment

Trust is the heart of the principle-centered leadership paradigm. The true foundation of families, marriages, and organizations is *trust*. This is an inside-out paradigm, meaning that you have to work at the personal level, on yourself, before you will be truly successful at

the interpersonal level. And if you have high trust in your relationship with others,

you will notice that you can empower people. You can help them become increasingly independent and finally interdependent with you. Your delegations will work. There will be a high sense of accountability, and you can have a very large span of control in the organization. Everything can change because of the empowerment at the managerial level. And that is a function of the trust at the interpersonal level.

So the heart of this principle-centered approach lies in the culture, or the civilization, the character of the organization. And at the core, the very hub of the wheel, at the center, is a set of principles that everybody buys into. Then no matter what happens, what problems arise, changes take place, or internal problems develop, that immune system can adapt. Why? Because principles are universally applicable. Practices are not. Practices are tied to specific situations.

But if you get an immune system, a strong culture that is principle-centered, then you have unleashed the energies, the creativity and talents of all those people inside that culture to do what's necessary to solve those problems, to accommodate the new change that is taking place. And those changes don't threaten them because their own personal security comes from a changeless core based on principles. They don't need to rely on the structures and the systems and the rules to make sure they have all of the armament and the strength necessary to carry out their managerial directives. Why? Because their security lies upon their integrity to those principles. And it feeds them endlessly. It feeds them their security, their wisdom, guidance, power. It gives them tremendous social power. And ironically, it also gives them great compassion. Why? Simply because when you're not worried about yourself, you can leave yourself and listen to others. You can show concern for others and get involved with others. Fundamentally you are not threatened. Your security comes from within, not from without. It comes from your integrity to natural law, to principles.

If you study any truly effective person, or any truly effective organization, or a society that works, you will find it is based on principles. We must have vision, great courage, great compassion, and great integrity. Integrity is the source of courage balanced with compassion.

Although this book does not overtly refer to Biblical principles, the reviewer was impressed with the congruence between the principles presented and the principles of life presented in the writings of Ellen White.

Stephen Covey is well-known for his book, *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*, as well as other books such as *First Things First*, and *Living the Seven Habits*. The reviewer believes it is a "must read" for all Christian workers.

John Marter

International Forum

*PhD student in Educational Administration
AIIAS School of Graduate Studies*

Networked Learning: The Pedagogy of the Internet by Margaret Haughey and Terry Anderson , Published by Cheneliere/McGraw-Hill, Montreal, Canada, 1998 (155 pages)

The following two paragraphs provide a description of the experience and qualifications of the book's authors.

Margaret Haughey, PhD, is a long-time proponent of the use of open learning technologies. From her first designs for independent inquiry materials for school students to her present involvement with graduate students on-line, she enjoys sharing her enthusiasm for teaching and learning. Over the last 30 years, Margaret has been a course designer, instructor media producer, administrator and evaluator of print, audio and video conferencing, and Networked Learning technologies. A professor in Education at the University of Alberta, she is involved in researching, developing and teaching Networked Learning courses.

This book is co-authored with Terry Anderson, PhD, (who) has over 15 years= experience in various forms of learning, all of which have involved some aspect of Networked Learning. He frequently speaks, offers workshops, and writes about how to enhance education and training through the use of networked learning tools.

As director of Academic Technologies for Learning at the University of Alberta, he organizes professional development workshops for colleagues throughout the institution and assists them in designing courses for delivery by networked learning.

A pioneer in this field, he developed the first "virtual conference" run on the internet for the International Council for Distance Education in 1992 and has since offered the same service to other national and international organizations (quoted from the back cover).

What is meant by "networked learning"? Networked learning refers to a process or means of communication rather than to any specific curriculum or content to be mastered. "Networked learning happens when learners and instructors use computers to exchange information and access resources as part of a learning endeavor" (p. 3). This networking uses various media to create knowledge and learning resources for students to learn together from their homes, at work, and in schools. The internet is a large global collection of information that is not well organized. Educators are developing computer networks to serve the needs of learners in many different contexts. Most network-based educational courses use a combination of three applications-email, computer conferencing, and resource

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acquisition-often in combination with print or other media, to create quality learning experiences.

Networked Learning: the Pedagogy of the Internet provides the basic information needed when making decisions about how to use technology in organizing internet-based resources in courses and training events.

The book is divided into three parts. The first part-"What is Networked Learning?"-identifies and explains the advantages of networked learning and how it works with the three basic forms used: email, computer conferencing and internet-based resourcing. The second part-"Who is Using Networked Learning Successfully?"-provides synopsis of case-studies and derived tips from various instructors who are actually using Networked Learning. In the third part –"How Can I use Networked Learning Successfully?"-various issues that need to be considered are discussed. Issues in this section include the learning principles that are used in networked learning and how to make good decisions in course design. Also provided are advice on moderating a computer conference, examples of internet "friendly" learning activities to choose from, and suggestions for evaluating learning and the format of the course itself.

This book gives fundamental step-by-step information and definitions for the beginner to follow. It provides graphics of the actual computer screens, descriptions of different software program capabilities together with Internet service providers. There is a floppy three and a half inch disk in each book. When this disk is installed on a computer with browser capabilities, it provides a large number of hot-links to an ever-enlarging ocean of information and data on the World Wide Web.

As with most educational innovations, there are some drawbacks which at least partially offset the advantages. So the question is, how can networked learning be used successfully? How should an instructor structure his course to get the most effective learning and participation? In networked learning, the instructor is often only a facilitator. The assessment of students is more difficult to conduct when it is not possible to observe them face-to-face. For example, those activities stressing critical thinking, analysis, and evaluation, where emotions and emphasis can be observed by facial expression are encumbered. To partially compensate, there is developing a standard group of emotional icons such as :-) (view sideways to see the happy face), but these are only partially successful.

In spite of some recognizable limitations to networked learning, it has definitely become a popular and growing medium for the communicating of knowledge and the delivery of educational programs. Today, nearly every educational institution is looking for ways to access, implement, and to some degree, capitalize on this "information highway." Therefore this book, detailing in easy to understand language the basic steps needed, will prove an indispensable tool

in the hand of those educators and trainers not wanting to be left behind in the internet revolution that is reshaping the face of education .

*M. Jean Streifling
is a PhD student in the Department of Educational Studies
Adventist International Institute of Advanced Studies*