Chapter I
Transform Your Workplace: Do Well By Doing Good

Abstract
The need for greater awareness is increasing as we get confronted with appalling and harmful behaviors of major corporations in our times. This chapter presents some powerful thoughts from business leaders and management scholars, presented at a 2007 conference in Los Angeles with the theme “Transform Your Workplace: Do Well By Doing Good.” Statements will be presented from Dr. Christa Metzger, Mr. Bill Herren, Mr. Gary Hickman, Mr. Yoshito Yamaguchi, Dr. Joan Marques, Dr. Satinder Dhiman, and Dr. Richard King. In the final section of this chapter, the findings of a survey held after this conference will be shared.

Introduction
Even before the new millennium started, the speed of change and the degree of unpredictability in the world of work was a topic of major concern. As this era started, we were confronted with shocking events such as 9/11 and increasing examples and evidence of unethical behavior in business. As a result of this behavior, the workforce became more and more dissatisfied and fearful, and it became clear that initiatives needed to be taken to develop solutions. And where else could that happen but within ourselves, by following Gandhi’s wise advice to “be the change we want to see in the world”?

In January 2007, the Business Renaissance Institute, in collaboration with the World Business Academy, organized an awareness conference with the theme “Transform Your Workplace: Do Well By Doing Good.” The participants in this conference varied from corporate employees, academicians, and students to artists, philanthropists, and executives and owners of small, midsize, and large businesses.
The program was arranged in such a way that various aspects of spiritual behavior in work settings would be highlighted. This chapter provides a concise overview of the various presentations in this conference and the post-conference comments from participants.

**Doing Well By Doing Good: Balancing Leadership and Personal Growth**

Dr. Christa Metzger, professor in the Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies at California State University Northridge, reviewed an important issue within the “doing well” perspective: the personal aspect. Dr. Metzger provided interesting results from various studies, which she executed amongst school district superintendents, administrators, and school principals. The findings of these studies could easily be generalized to all workplaces, as they denote familiar problems for working people, and recurring reasons why workers get stressed and burned out.

The main problem that many working people struggle with, according to Dr. Metzger, is finding a balance between one’s personal and professional goals, and therefore, between one’s personal and professional life. Dr. Metzger stressed that personal growth is key to the attainment of gratification and the prevention of enduring stress. She presented the following suggestions in this regard:

1. Taking care of yourself as well as you do others
2. Defining and applying your own themes of personal growth
3. Nourishing your spirit, finding time for solitude and meditation, and cultivating relationships
4. Fulfilling your purpose as a leader and finding meaning as a person

In light of the theme “doing well by doing good,” Dr. Metzger found that, by learning to take care of yourself, you not only enhance your own work and life, but you also enhance the lives of people you encounter on a daily basis.

**The Power of a Changed Life**

Bill Herren, founder and CEO of American Vision Windows, shared a very touching story with the audience. It was the story of his own transformation from an athletic young man to an a homeless alcoholic, and subsequently from a man in search of meaning to a man who found meaning. Bill’s story was moving, because it was filled with hope. It showed the audience that every
transformation starts with the will to transform. Bill told the comical story of a goose pecking on his head during one of his days as a homeless man sleeping in the park. Although being chased by a wild goose was not as funny then to Bill as it is now, he admits that it became the turning point in his life. It forced him to rethink his life, wonder if that was what he wanted until the end of his days, and inspired him to change. He realized that he had been on a steady downslide through halfway houses, 12-step programs, Salvation Army visits, and other such programs, and that he needed to do something radical to clean up his act. Bill's turnaround came through a Bible that someone gave to him. As he started reading this book, he also started attending church. He started meeting different kinds of people: constructive, motivating, well-intending ones. This is also how he met his wife, Kathleen, a nice young lady, who inspired Bill even further to release his gloomy lifestyle and work himself up again on the ladder of life. From then on, life went uphill. Bill and Kathleen got married, and once their little family started expanding, they decided to buy a house. This is when they encountered a frustrating experience with a window delivery company, which led Bill and Kathleen to start their own window company: American Vision Windows. The rest is history. The organization grew into a multimillion dollar venture, but most of all, Bill's company continued to provide chances to those who had endured downfalls in life as he had.

Through his company, Bill now pays his blessings forward. American Vision Windows practices workplace spirituality in many ways: not necessarily because of its religious founders, but more because of the opportunities it provides to those with otherwise poor chances in today's high-demanding corporate world. Bill's company employs many ex-convicts, ex-homeless people, and ex-drug abusers. Bill is currently also involved in social projects in Lima, Peru. He vows, “My mission is to revolutionize the home improvement industry while changing the lives of our employees. I am going to make the industry answer the call.”

In her epoch-making book, Leadership and the New Science: Discovering Order in a Chaotic World, Margaret Wheatley asks several profound questions. She wonders why so many organizations feel “dead” and seldom achieve expected results, why so many change efforts do not produce change and prove elusive. She further challenges us to find “elegant,” “simpler” solutions to organizational problems and to create organizations that are “worthy of human habitation.” She will certainly be delighted to read about American Vision Windows!
Passionate Participation

Gary Hickman, president of Junior Achievement (JA) of Southern California, presented a passionate speech, in which he explained the admirable task his organization fulfills toward upcoming generations of U.S. workers. One particularly fascinating story was about a young man who was heavily involved in gang activities, and had no belief in the world of legitimate work. Gary and his team felt compelled to change this young man's perspective, and they arranged several meetings with him. It soon became obvious that this young man, like so many youngsters these days, did not think that engaging in honorable work practices could get him anywhere. Yet, the JA team challenged him to think of something he would like to do, something in which he thought he could be successful. The young man came up with the idea of a maintenance company. The JA team initiated this project, and the young man's life got turned around positively. Today, he still runs his maintenance company, which was set up with the assistance and support of JA, and he serves as a great example to youngsters who are struggling with problems similar to those he had struggled with in his restless days.

Hickman's story underscored that having a purpose can make a great difference in a person's life. This story also reaffirmed Bill Herren's earlier point that transformation starts when the will to transform is ignited.

Are the Japanese Spiritual?

Yoshito Yamaguchi, senior managing director of Mitsubishi Electric Corporation and retired chairman of the board of trustees of Kwassui University in Nagasaki, Japan, brought in the inevitable and highly important international view. Mr. Yamaguchi, nicknamed “Super,” presented an overview of spirituality in Japan from a cultural perspective. He emphasized the distinction between spirituality and religion, explaining that Japanese don't necessarily adhere to a specific religion, yet practice a highly spiritual mindset amongst one another. He discussed the lifelong employment habit within older Japanese corporations, as well as the changes that the Japanese culture has been undergoing in more recent years. He particularly reviewed the emergence of females in education and business participation, and concluded that Japanese are, indeed, very spiritual people.
Spiritual Performance From an Organizational Perspective

In a triangular presentation, the founders of the Business Renaissance Institute, Dr. Joan Marques, Dr. Satinder Dhiman, and Dr. Richard King, critiqued the performance of one or more well-known corporations, and defined what could determine the level of spirituality within these corporations.

Dr. Marques reviewed the Starbucks Corporation, and approached it from three angles:

1. Suppliers and societies
2. Employees
3. Customers

Her choice of Starbucks was based on the company’s stellar ranking on various lists, such as those created by Fortune, Business Ethics, Working Mother, and the Great Places to Work Institute. Due to the fact that there were many MBA students in the audience, Marques also noted that Starbucks was also listed in the November 2006 edition of Jungle, the magazine for MBAs, as the No. 1 company that MBAs want to work for, because they consider it a company with “conscience.” The criteria that the MBAs handled for companies with conscience were:

1. Leadership position
2. Financial health
3. Progressive working environment
4. Commitment to innovation
5. Corporate social responsibility

First focusing on suppliers and societies, Dr. Marques mentioned the term “enlightened self-interest,” which Starbucks’ previous president and CEO, Orin Smith, used when describing the corporation’s relationships with stakeholders worldwide. Enlightened self-interest entails that, while the company is aware of its purpose of making profits, it strives to do so in such a way that the other party wins too, and preferably even more stakeholders than just the other party. Marques reviewed various sources in which Starbucks’ approach of mutuality was displayed, starting with the story of Estuardo Porras, a Guatemalan coffee grower who managed to elevate the quality of life of all the plantation’s employees and their families, and ending with an overview of the company’s involvement in social and charitable practices in other parts of the world as well as in the United States.
Subsequently highlighting the corporation's approach toward employees, Marques referred to a wide variety of arrangements such as tuition reimbursement, partner benefits, wellness programs, and granting all employees who work more than 20 hours a week stock options and health-care benefits. She zoomed in on the touching story of a 1997 robbery at a Washington, DC, Starbucks store, during which three employees were murdered. Howard Schultz, at that time still president and CEO of the company, immediately chartered a plane and took charge: he visited the families, attended the funerals, decided that all future profits of this Starbucks would be allotted to organizations working for victims' rights and violence prevention, and later dedicated his book to these three fallen employees. With this and other stories, Marques illuminated the behavior of a leader who may not necessarily be labeled as spiritual, but who undoubtedly executes spiritual behavior.

Regarding Starbucks' dealings with customers, Marques highlighted the corporation's partnership with Magic Johnson's Los Angeles-based real estate development firm, Johnson Development Corp., through which 42 Starbucks stores were opened in ethnically diverse and underserved urban areas. Starbucks' care for customers is, according to Marques, also demonstrated in its recent decision to secure customers' health by eliminating from its menu milk that contains growth hormones.

Marques emphasized that the Starbucks Corporation clearly engages in spiritual performance, although it is not often referred to as such. This performance was ignited and encouraged by Howard Schultz, the man who purchased the company in the eighties and made it what it is today. Schultz's early life confrontations with insecurity and poor employment coverage (of his father) increased his compassion toward the positions of workers, and encouraged him to implement very humane arrangements for his employees today.

Marques' presentation could be captured in the following essential points:

• Organizations can make great profits while still behaving spiritually. “Enlightened self-interest” is an interesting principle of doing well while ensuring betterment for all stakeholders.
• Treating employees well and granting them more than the minimal provisions translates to enhancement of the corporation's own position in its industry.
• Serving underserved, oftentimes underestimated, markets pays off, not only in gratitude, but also in financial well-being and organizational expansion. Management strategist Gary Hamel refers to this phenomenon as “looking where no one else looks,” and Tom Peters
calls it “doing the job no one else wants to do, and doing it well.” Both of these gurus express the same message with their statements, though: value lies in areas that others undervalue.

- Spiritual behavior in organizations is rewarded most when exerted at macro as well as micro levels: globally and locally, externally and internally.

Dr. Satinder Dhiman explored the mega question:

*Can humans run successful organizations humanely?*

From an individual’s point of view, this question boils down to the following: Is it possible to do work that is mind-enriching, heart-fulfilling, soul-satisfying, and financially rewarding? From an organizational standpoint, this question signifies running successful organizations humanely, with a high sense of service and social responsibility. Too often organizations get blindsided by their quest for profit maximization without paying any attention to human values and social costs. Dhiman’s presentation explored some examples that provided an initial glimpse into the possibility of creating humane organizations. He began with Wal-Mart and Costco comparison to underscore the fact that it is possible to run two similar companies on different operating principles. Later on, he shared some interesting insights comparing IKEA with Home Depot.

There is no question that Wal-Mart’s drive to offer “everyday low prices” has saved consumers billions of dollars. “But at what cost?” you may ask. As one analyst has observed: “You can find great bargains at Wal-Mart, but if you are a Wal-Mart employee, you may not be able to afford them.” But there is a company challenging the Wal-Mart supremacy: Costco Wholesale Corp. Costco is breaking the Wal-Mart mold by treating its employees like human beings, without indulging into the empty rhetoric of calling its employees “associates.” The formula, as it turns out, is very simple: treat your employees well, and they will treat your customers well. In a recent *New York Times* article, one marketing analyst complained that at Costco, “It’s better to be an employee or a customer than a shareholder.” Consequently, the Costco phenomenon represents a shift from treating your shareholders well to treating all of your stakeholders well.

How has Costco been able to avert most of the sins of modern capitalism? One does not need a PhD in labor economics to figure that out. Costco CEO Jim Senegal explains: “We pay much better than Wal-Mart. That’s not altruism. It’s good business.” Good wages and benefits are why Costco has extremely low rates of turnover and theft by employees, he said.
And happier, well-compensated workers are more productive and loyal. Consequently, Costco enjoys one of the lowest turnover rates in the retail industry. Imagine the plight of Wal-Mart, which has one of the highest rates of employee turnover, in terms of recruiting, testing, and training new hires.

When you take a good care of your employees, so goes the logic, they are willing to get the job done and to do whatever it takes to make the company look good. Here is a story recounted by James O’Toole that underscores the point:

In Southern California, a crazed motorist recently attempted to commit suicide by driving his car onto railroad tracks. At the last moment, he thought the better of it, abandoned the car, and ran home. Unfortunately, seconds later a full commuter train crashed into the car, leading to terrible loss of life and to severe injuries to hundreds of people. The accident occurred directly in the back of a Costco Warehouse store. Almost immediately, the blue-collar Costco employees organized themselves into an emergency brigade, and, armed with forklift trucks and fire extinguishers, set out to rescue trapped passengers, and to deliver first-aid to the wounded.

The corporate scandals perpetuated by companies such as Enron, WorldCom, and Tyco have heightened the public awareness regarding an organization’s ultimate obligation to community. The civic elections of March 2002 in the Bay Area, CA, illustrate this point very well. Focusing on the residential impact of the proposed opening of IKEA in Palo Alto and Home Depot in Mountain View, the voters voted down Home Depot measure by two to one for being a poor neighbor. IKEA won with a narrow margin.

Dhiman concluded his part of the presentation by summarizing the following principles of running successful organizations humanely:

1. You can run a successful company based on the principles of servanthood.
2. Servanthood here refers to serving your customers and changing the lives of your employees.
3. When you take good care of your employees, they will take good care of your customers.
4. Satisfied, well engaged, and passionate employees are productive employees.
5. The passion level of employees runs very high when they believe that they are serving a higher purpose.
6. At the end of the day, ask what it is that we are not doing for our employees and what it is that we are not doing for our customers.

7. You can build a company on Godly principles and achieve success in the secular world. You can do well by doing good.

Dr. Richard King emphasized the “bottom line” impact of spirituality in the workplace and emphasized that workers at all levels want to feel that they represent more than a mere tool of organizational profit. People want meaning in their work, people want to contribute and be more productive and want to work in an environment where they don’t have to check their values at the workplace door. They want a sense of “oneness.”

Something is stirring in people’s souls for a more humane work environment, increased simplicity, more meaning, and a connection to something higher. Too many people feel unappreciated, insecure, unhappy, and unfulfilled in their jobs.

King shared with the audience the research that he and his colleagues conducted by asking employees to answer the question, “How can I establish a more satisfying workplace for me and my colleagues?” The responses include:

• By continuing to think of the positive and good things about all of the people in my environment and of the environment itself.
• By starting each day with an optimistic attitude and leaving room for human error, disappointment, and change; keeping in mind that in order to grow and improve we must continue to learn each day.
• By listening to suggestions given by colleagues, because they might know something that we do not, and can possibly fix a problem our company might be having.
• By maintaining a positive attitude toward others, as well as ourselves, because we should realize that our attitude affects those around us.
• By treating others with respect and leaving as much negativity as possible out of the workplace (including negative aspects of our personal life).

King then gave an in-depth analysis of Southwest Airlines as a company that equates spirituality with productivity and profitability in the following manner:

• They seem to have a genuine sense of spirit and affection in both employees and customers.
• They have a strong emphasis in community, teamwork, serving others, employee connectedness, and customer care.
• They are consistently named to the list of 100 best companies to work for in the United States, as well as one of the top companies in corporate and social responsibility.
• They have high employee satisfaction and have one of the lowest turnover rates in the airline industry (6%).
• Even though SWA puts a strong emphasis on customers, it points out that its employees always come first. SWA seems to function like a big family.

Dr. King concluded the conference by sharing this Native American prayer:

Do all the good you can,
In all the ways you can,
With all the means you can,
To all the people you can,
As long as you can

Survey Findings: Participants’ Reviews

As a result of a post-conference survey among participants, it became clear that there is a need for this type of gathering on a regular basis. Members of today’s workforce are searching for examples and impulses that can aid them in determining their own work-life balance. It was the general opinion of participants that the conference provided an excellent learning experience, was well organized, and presented thoughtful topics. Several attendees responded that they felt encouraged by the idea that, through the speeches, it had become more clear to them that it is really possible to do well while doing good in workplaces. Participants also complimented the strong time management maintained, which kept the interest level high throughout the conference. The feedback suggested creating room for even more participation from attendees, which will be incorporated in future conferences. Participants further seemed to agree that many spiritual corporations are not very tall, but for that matter more closely connected with their workforce and other stakeholders. In line with the above, participants encouraged the conference organizers to consider more targeted information on how to implement some of the spirituality-based ideas on a practical basis.
Dr. Joan Marques has more than 20 years’ experience in advertising, radio and television production, show-hosting, and dynamic entrepreneurship, in both Suriname, South America, and Burbank, CA. She founded and managed a business and a non-profit organization prior to her immigration to the United States. Dr. Marques holds a BS in business economics from MOC (Suriname), an MBA from Woodbury University, and a doctorate in organizational leadership from Pepperdine University. She has done significant research on the topic of “spirituality in the workplace,” and has authored multiple chapters and eight books, pertaining to workplace contentment, emotional intelligence, and leadership, for audiences in different continents on the globe. Her current research interests include workplace spirituality and awakened leadership.

Dr. Satinder Dhiman has guided business leaders for the last 25 years, and served for 10 years as a senior lecturer in commerce at DAV College in North India. He has co-authored various textbooks in the area of accounting and management, and currently serves as professor and chair of management as well as associate dean of business in Woodbury University’s graduate program. Dr. Dhiman is the recipient of the 2004 ACBSP International Teacher of the Year Award and 2006 Steve Allen Excellence in Education Award. His research interests include transformational leadership, spirituality in the workplace, and mindfulness in life and leadership. Dr. Dhiman is the co-editor of *Spirituality in the Workplace: What it Means; Why it Matters; How to Make it Work for You* (Personhood Press, 2008) and the co-author of *The Workplace and Spirituality: New Perspectives in Research and Practice* (Skylight Paths, 2009). He holds a doctorate in organizational leadership from Pepperdine University and has completed advanced executive leadership programs at Harvard, Wharton, and Stanford.

Dr. Richard King is a recognized authority on United States-Pacific Rim business relations, and founded his company, King International Group, to carry out his personal commitment to strengthening these relations. He has held top management positions at major organizations and currently serves on the boards of various Pacific Rim-oriented organizations. He is a longtime member of the Noetic Institute and the World Business Academy. Dr. King is a frequent writer and speaker on Pacific Rim business issues, and is the initiator of the Business Renaissance consulting project, which focuses on “adding humanity to the bottom line.” He holds a BS from Syracuse University, an MA from Occidental College, and an honorary doctorate of business administration from Woodbury University.