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# BOOK AND MEDIA REVIEWS

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## Review of “Handbook of Faith and Spirituality in the Workplace: Emerging Research and Practice”

*Edited by Judi Neal* (Editor)

New York, Springer, 2013

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PART 1: Basic Issues in Faith and Spirituality in the Workplace:

- *Judi Neal*: Faith and Spirituality in the Workplace: Emerging Research and Practice;
- *Pat McHenry Sullivan*: EEOC Best Practices Support Best Practices for Spirit and Religion at Work; and
- *Kelly Phipps and Margaret Benefiel*: Spirituality and Religion: Seeking Juxtaposition That Supports Research in the Field of Faith and Spirituality at Work.

“Handbook of Faith and Spirituality in the Workplace: Emerging Research and Practice” is a large book with 55 contributors. This book is a great source of reference for those who are interested in the field of faith and spirituality in the workplace. As an editor, Neal has made an amazing effort in bringing together researchers and practitioners in the field of faith and spirituality and compiling their works in this handbook.

The book is divided into seven parts with 44 chapters. Part I introduces the readers to basic issues in faith and spirituality in the workplace which is the focus of this review. Part II discusses faith at work in religious perspective. Although not all religious approach presented here, ten chapters presented in this part provides a rich overview of some religious view to faith at work. Part III elaborates on emerging theory and research in the field of faith and spirituality in the workplace which is considered still young. This part comprises six chapters. Part IV is a cross-disciplinary perspective that provides some sampling of the practices related to spirituality in different professions such as law, nursing and higher education. Part V consists of six scholarly chapters that offer several ways of assessing faith and spirituality in the workplace. Readers will find useful information on instruments used to measure faith in the workplace. Part VI integrates scholarship and practice bridges scholarly work and organizational practice. There are seven chapters in this part, and many of them are case studies that provide readers with practical examples in a real workplace. Part VII concludes the book with reflective essays from seven pioneers in the field.

This review focuses on Part 1 of the book that discusses key issues in faith and spirituality in the workplace. This part is chosen because in the field of the learning organization, the aspect of faith and spirituality is becoming important and the growing interest is obvious in recent literature. Often, the confusion arises when the word spirituality or religion comes into picture. The differentiation of spiritual and religions is becoming crucial as the number of people who identify as spiritual but not religious is growing



(Sanders, 2010). Such confusion was further heated with arguments such as “religion is part of spirituality” (Fry, 2003), and “spirituality is part of religion” (Lynn *et al.*, 2009).

Part 1 of this book consists of three chapters and Neal herself begins with the first chapter by providing a brief overview of the book and introduce the topic of faith and spirituality in the workplace. She argues that the spiritual element in management theory was not mentioned until the work of Robert Greenleaf (1977) in his *Servant Leadership*. She stresses the importance of this topic and highlights more by saying “management theory and practice are now expanding to incorporate a more holistic and integral view of the human being at work” (Neal, 2013 page 6).

The following chapter in this part is written by Pat Sullivan who writes about Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) laws and how religion is viewed in this law. The EEOC religious discrimination laws also apply to those who are spiritual, even if they are not religious. This chapter elaborates extensively the religious question related to law.

The last chapter in this part is “Spirituality and Religion: Seeking Juxtaposition That Supports Research in the Field of Faith and Spirituality at Work” by Kelly Phipps and Margaret Benefiel. It is interesting that the authors examine prior works that show juxtaposition between spirituality and religion in the workplace, its relationship and how they are understood. The authors list out six categories that are mutually exclusive, overlapping, synonymous, religion nested within spirituality, spirituality nested within religion and contextually determined. Kelly and Margaret have systematically arranged the categories according to the number of literature referred. Although the last one is supported by only one literature, it is still significant to complete the categories. This chapter provides clarifications, as the authors at the end provide six propositions that can bring lights to future research in the field. This chapter is a must-read for students and researchers who deal with spirituality and workplace. The understanding of these two concepts is essential before any research in conducted in this field.

This book is an excellent reference source for those who study management and spirituality or religion. The first part that is reviewed here is very useful for those who have an interest in relating the concept of learning organization or organizational learning with faith, religion and spirituality. The different understanding of faith and spirituality should be understood first before new research in this field is conducted to ensure that further research in learning organization that relates to faith and spirituality fall under certain identified category.

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