
PERSONNEL PSYCHOLOGY

THE STUDY OF PEOPLE AT WORK

YEAR 2012 | VOLUME 65 | NUMBER 1

BOOK REVIEWS

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Tammy D. Allen, Lisa M. Finkelstein, and Mark L. Poteet, **Designing Workplace Mentoring Programs: An Evidence-Based Approach**. Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009, 182 pages, \$32.95 paperback.

Reviewed by *Richard J. Chagnon*, Senior Talent Management Consultant, EASI•Consult, LLC, St. Louis, MO.

Based on my 30 years as a consultant to organizations in leadership development, I am very pleased to say that we are blessed with the publication of *Designing Workplace Mentoring Programs: An Evidence-Based Approach* by Allen, Finkelstein, and Poteet. These three authors—accomplished professors and practitioners in the field of leadership development—provide us with a solid and pragmatic approach to creating a fully integrated organization-wide mentoring process. The process they describe addresses the structure of such a program, the recruitment and training of both protégés and mentors, the matching of mentors and protégés, and the very important step of ongoing evaluation and program development. A generous number of *case studies* illustrate the points they make and the easy-to-identify *lessons learned* boxes walk us through the lessons they have drawn from real world experience. Their approach is practical, and as their subtitle indicates, it is based on the evidence of high-functioning companies and the lessons they learned in the implementation of their own mentoring programs.

In this book review, I will summarize the highlights of this book and encourage you to either start a formal mentoring program within your organization or, if you have already done so, then capture from this book the many ideas that can further improve what you already have. I will follow the structure of the book which clearly defines mentoring and then describes a well-thought-through process for designing, implementing, evaluating, and attending to the ongoing development of a successful program.

Mentoring is first defined as the traditional relationship between a senior, more experienced person (the mentor) and a junior or less experienced person (the protégé) for the purpose of teaching the junior employee about his or her job, of introducing the junior employee to contacts, to orient the employee to the industry and the organization, and to address social and personal issues that may arise on the job (p. 2). They then compare mentoring to coaching and to other forms of leadership development as they outline the clear individual and organizational benefits of a formal mentoring relationship.

The authors make an excellent point when they state that mentoring relationships are dynamic. My own experience—both personally and as a consultant to organizations—supports the dynamic, ever-evolving nature of any developmental relationship. When successfully done, mentoring relationships are developmental for both the mentor and the protégé.

After the initial, presenting issues of mentoring are resolved, ever new challenges are then discerned and handled; both protégé and mentor grow as a result. As we already know, the development of a leader is not done as a packaged program of so many points to be learned and implemented, with a well-defined beginning and ending to the program. Leaders are in continuous development as they address the challenges of an exponentially changing world. Rather than being left only to his or her own resources, a protégé is accelerated on an intense development path by the resources and insights of a seasoned leader who is energetically dedicated to the development of a future leader.

Planning and Providing Infrastructure

The authors begin by showing the wisdom of conducting a needs assessment that firmly connects the program to the organization's mission and to the implementation of its key strategies. Mentoring program objectives are then appropriately aligned with the vision, key strategies, and specific business goals that will strengthen the company's evolving position within its chosen industry and marketplace. The case is strongly made for senior leadership to personally support the program by their own participation as mentors and guides to the new or potential leaders eager to grow and move ahead (p. 15). Attention is also given to the need to fully integrate this program with other HR systems and processes. My experience tells me that this is a must; by integrating mentoring with other programs, all programs are valued without the unintended consequence of some programs being devalued by lack of attention. It's also a truism that unintegrated programs that are not personally supported by senior leadership simply don't last.

Recruiting Mentors and Protégés

In order to determine an effective program several key questions are answered: Who should participate? Is participation required or voluntary? Should protégés come from only certain groups of employees? How will managers be persuaded to devote the needed time and energy to the mentoring relationships? What process will be used to select and recruit both managers and protégés? (pp. 23–35). Case studies and insightful tools are provided as part of the answers to these questions.

Matching Mentors and Protégés

The authors recognize that personality differences and the uniqueness of each mentor and protégé can spell the difference between getting it right

and setting up forced relationships that just don't work. Getting clarity on identifying the appropriate matching characteristics that fit the industry, the company's culture, and the real-world-leadership requirements for each particular company is critically important. Getting input from the participants themselves, both mentors and protégés, dramatically increases the overall success of the initiative. The authors identify the research that has already taken place to support the recommendations they make.

Mentoring Structure and Processes

A simple process for outlining training objectives of mentors and their protégés is followed by addressing the structural requirements of a successful program. Here as well, case studies and lessons learned are graphically displayed to show real world successes of innovative companies. One such example is the Weyerhaeuser Company's approach (p. 77). In this section, the authors address issues of confidentiality, meeting frequency, mode of contact, relationship duration, and planned activities.

Monitoring and Program Evaluation

This critical step is well outlined and described in this book. As the authors note, "in order to determine whether or not a mentoring program is achieving the business goals and objectives it was designed to achieve, it is imperative that companies create and implement a monitoring and evaluation process as part of their programs" (p. 85). The 15th appendix to the book provides a detailed sample evaluation plan. This supports my own experience that a well-constructed mentoring program is in continuous improvement; as a company's goals and markets evolve, so must its leaders.

Finally, I must underscore the practical insights presented by the authors in their well-chosen case studies called out in well-designed boxes that support the printed text. One example is the story of the mentoring program developed over many years by Limited Brands (pp. 79–80). The time and attention placed by the firm's Talent and Organizational Effectiveness group provided flexibility and a number of opportunities for promotions and growth, with almost all participants feeling valued and supported. Throughout the book companion boxes similarly provide well-crafted summaries of lessons learned for that stage of implementing the mentoring program. In addition in the appendix section (pp. 107–159) there are no fewer than 15 excellent tools described step-by-step to assist in the design and implementation of a professional mentoring program. Each of the 15 appendices is a well-crafted tool to support the full implementation of a mentoring program.

If you have not yet done so, this book will guide you in designing and implementing an effective mentoring program for your organization. And if you already have one, I am sure that you will pick up many gems to improve what you already have.

There is nothing more important for leaders than to develop the people around them; it is essential for the employee, it's necessary for the mentor's own growth, and it's mission critical for the company as it seeks to develop a steady supply of new leaders to tackle an ever evolving and ever more demanding future. Excellent companies do no less!

Arnold B. Bakker and Michael P. Leiter, Editors. **Work Engagement: A Handbook of Essential Theory and Research**. New York, NY: Psychology Press, 2010, 209 pages, \$62.50 hardcover.

Reviewed by *Seymour Adler*, Senior Vice President, Aon Hewitt, New York, NY.

Engagement has become a major focus for both research and practice around the world. In many organizations, employee engagement scores are a central element of how managerial performance is appraised. In other organizations, the effectiveness of human resources programs—training, compensation, benefits—is gauged against engagement results. Yet there is still a great deal of confusion about whether engagement is a new construct, with a clear definition and rigorous measures, or “old wine in a new bottle.” Indeed, as a sign of both the popularity and the confusion, the inaugural article for SIOP's new journal, *Industrial-Organizational Psychology Perspectives*, focused on precisely the question of what engagement means and seemed to come to the conclusion that engagement is a broad notion covering a range of approaches and definitions (Macey & Schneider, 2008).

The editors of this book, Bakker and Leiter, have a clear point of view on both the importance and clarity of the engagement construct. They distinguish *work* engagement—the focus of this collection—from *employee* engagement, putting the emphasis on the way the work itself is experienced by employees. As such, work engagement is more personal and has less to do with broad organizational policies and practices. There is hardly a word in this book about compensation and benefits, training and career development, or corporate social responsibility or vision, and their impact on engagement. Indeed there is very little about leadership and its impact on work engagement even though engagement practice is centered on the leader's role.

The book has a very international flavor, with the editors and more than half the authors based outside the United States. Much of the research on work engagement described here is being conducted in the Netherlands,

Greece, Finland, Germany, and Israel. If you have not been following the developments in this literature over the past decade, you will find much of interest in this emerging body of research. For one, the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale has emerged as the standard around which a good deal of this research is being conducted. The scale, available in 9- and 17-item versions that are included in the book, captures three aspects of work engagement: vigor (sample item: "When I get up in the morning, I feel like going to work"), dedication ("I am proud of the work that I do"), and absorption ("Time flies when I am working"). These three components, and particularly dedication and absorption, are highly intercorrelated, and more recent conceptualizations of work engagement concentrate on just two facets, energy (vigor) and involvement (identification), and most research just uses the total score on the scale.

In addition to background and findings on the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale, the book also provides other interesting ideas and findings that have emerged from this literature:

- Gain spiraling—or how engagement breeds engagement as the positive emotions, energy, self-efficacy, and other outcomes associated with engaging work in turn provide resources that increase future levels of engagement.
- Cross-over—best described as emotional contagion through which engaged workers who are also outgoing take advantage of opportunities to socialize to spread their engagement to coworkers, creating in the process whole teams that are highly engaged.
- Pathways to health—showing that engagement is related to how healthy and physically fit people feel and to enhanced immune system function, though the evidence for its impact on people's actual health is still limited.
- Job crafting—which describes how people proactively change their work and work environment, including the social environment, in ways that lead to enhanced engagement.

There is no shortage of constructs that are similar to work engagement and although several of the authors struggle mightily to argue for the conceptual distinctiveness and practical advantages of work engagement over these other, often older constructs, I for one was not entirely convinced. Among the related constructs discussed that are conceptually and often empirically related to work engagement: organizational citizenship behavior, job satisfaction, affective and continuance organizational commitment, job involvement, low burnout, vigor, vitality, positive affectivity, optimism, flow, personal initiative, thriving, and learning orientation. Similarly, across the chapters, a number of different theories are used to describe the causes and consequences of work engagement,

including broaden and build, conservation of resources, PsyCap (psychological capital), the demands–control model, and social cognitive theory. These theories do not necessarily make different predictions about the causes or consequences of work engagement. So although, on the one hand, it is comforting to see so much of the work on engagement guided by well-founded theories, there is a sense from reading this book that “any theory will do.”

For me, the theory presented in the book that best organizes the findings and would be most useful to practitioners trying to enhance engagement in organizations is the job demands–resources model. The model describes the job resources (e.g., autonomy, performance feedback, supervisory coaching, social support, work tools) and the personal resources (e.g., resilience, self-efficacy, optimism) that most impact on work engagement, especially when job demands are high and require considerable resources. The model also specifies the linkages through which and the circumstances under which work engagement will affect performance, retention, innovation, and other criteria of organizational interest. In fact, for those with insufficient interest in the topic of work engagement to go through this book-length treatment, a good 5-page alternative is Bakker’s recent article of the key ideas and findings around this work engagement model. (Bakker, 2011)

The book suffers from many of the redundancies typical of edited volumes, perhaps exacerbated by the defined and limited body of recent research that is the focus of many of the chapters. Some of the studies are not merely cited but described in fairly good detail four or five times across the chapters. Some of the theories are likewise described in similar ways in four or five different chapters. Most, but not all, of the chapters, have a section titled “Practical Implications,” although some of the authors used that unit more as an opportunity to summarize their chapters. Practitioners will find that they will have to draw their own practical implications in incorporating some of the most interesting findings into their engagement measurement and consulting work. Also there does not seem to be a strong logic in how the chapters are ordered in the book; for example, I would have expected the chapter presenting the meta-analysis of work engagement (Chapter 8) to have followed the chapter on defining and measuring the construct (Chapter 2).

Students of work engagement will find this book to be a useful source of new research directions. As an example, the research on engagement is moving closer to trying to appreciate the experience of work from the employee’s perspective, as recently advocated by Weiss and Rupp (2011). Some of the most interesting research reported in the book involves using experience sampling and diaries to look at how a worker’s engagement levels fluctuate on a day-to-day and even hour-to-hour basis. It turns out that

these swings are a significant component of the engagement experience and that the factors that affect these short-term fluctuations are different from those that affect aggregate levels of engagement measured, say, in an annual survey. The book also emphasizes in several chapters how measures of engagement need to more carefully distinguish between the engagement experience and the antecedents and consequences of engagement. Finally, the chapter on interventions to build engagement makes it abundantly clear that there is much work to be done in designing, implementing, and evaluating such interventions; there is almost nothing out there to draw on. The good news coming out of Bakker and Leiter's book is that the topic has strong theory and some useful tools on which to base research and practice.

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William H. Macey, Benjamin Schneider, Karen M. Barbera, and Scott A. Young. **Employee Engagement: Tools for Analysis, Practice, and Competitive Advantage**. West Sussex, UK: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009, 203 pages, \$19.38 softcover.

Reviewed by *Tom Walk*, Director of Human Capital Analytics, MetLife, New York, NY.

As I was reading *Employee Engagement*, I found myself conflicted regarding my opinion. There are a lot of good ideas in this book, but I also have a number of concerns. Before I go into the content, however, I do want to address style—a modest concern. The content presented here is dry at times, and the authors pack a lot of information into each page. *Employee Engagement* is relatively short but not a quick read.

With regard to the content itself, I would reiterate what I said above—I was conflicted. Macey and his colleagues have been consulting on surveys for over 30 years and that experience shows in some sections of this book. When the authors discuss how to plan, execute, debrief, and action plan around surveys, it is clear that they've gathered a lot of insight on how to run a successful survey program. Although both chapters devoted to this topic (4 and 5) are well constructed and informative, I found two sections to be particular highlights.

In “Pre-Survey Diagnostic Activities” (p. 80), the authors make it clear that organizations often try to shortcut preparation to get the project rolling, but, as with so many things, good preparation is the key to a good outcome. Specifically, this section drives home that building senior leadership involvement in the survey process is a critical investment that must be made early in the project. Although recruiting senior leadership champions can be a timeline risk, it pays off in better supported and more enthusiastic action planning once data collection is over.

In addition, in the section, “Actual Changes That Build and Maintain Engagement” (p. 122), the reader will find a number of different interventions aligned against survey themes. These interventions are described in just enough detail to inform without getting into minutia. For a practitioner who needs concrete, easy-to-understand talking points about how survey results could be used, this section is a great resource.

Although much of the advice that Macey and his colleagues provide is excellent, I was occasionally reminded that the authors are survey consultants. For example, their two-page discussion of industry benchmarks for survey results paints a very rosy picture of this service. My personal experience and that of colleagues who have experience with these benchmarks indicates that perhaps this characterization is somewhat exaggerated.

Having largely praised *Employee Engagement* up to this point, I do need to explain why I was conflicted about this book. Although the book’s summary of how to manage the end-to-end process of survey administration and action planning is excellent, that isn’t the primary purpose of the book. As the title indicates, this book is about managing employee engagement—the survey is just a tool to facilitate that management. And here’s where I found the book disappointing.

By way of full disclosure, before I picked up this book I was skeptical about the concept of employee engagement. I’ve become suspicious of the volume of concepts that have proliferated in the employee attitude space, all branded differently but all appearing very similar to one another; the phrase “a distinction without a difference” comes to mind. The authors’ arguments, if anything, only enhanced my skepticism. Of course, the authors do attempt to distinguish engagement from other employee attitudes, particularly job satisfaction, commenting that “the notion of energy is key to engagement whereas satiation is key to understanding satisfaction” (p. 5). The authors then propose the following working definition of engagement: “Engagement is an individual’s sense of purpose and focused energy, evident to others in the display of personal initiative, adaptability, effort, and persistence directed toward organizational goals” (p. 7).

My initial reaction to these passages was that the authors were making a lot of a largely semantic distinction. As the argument progressed

through the first two chapters, I became even more convinced that these two concepts were virtually indistinguishable. For example, the authors cited Hackman and Oldham's (1976 and 1980, respectively) books on job redesign on three occasions as examples how one could enhance employee engagement by creating more engaging jobs. Hackman and Oldham had, however, focused on how job design would enhance job satisfaction.

As I did a bit more research on these two constructs, it became even more apparent that the difference between engagement and satisfaction may well be minimal. In response to a journal article published by the authors of this book (Macey and Schneider, 2008), Newman and Harrison (2008) reviewed the items in a common measure of engagement and matched them to scales of Organizational Commitment, Job Satisfaction, Job Involvement, and Positive Affect—a set of constructs known to be highly correlated. A review of this matching exercise verifies that engagement items were very similar to items on the more established scales.

Finally, the authors provide some data from Valtera's research that compares firm-level engagement scores to financial success measures. The authors provide this analysis to establish the business case for engagement, but I was not convinced on a number of levels. First, the authors started with a sample of 90 companies but presented results on only the top and bottom 25%. Although I have a number of problems with the analysis itself, I do want to focus on how this relates to job satisfaction. Given how the data are presented, one can only provide an educated guess as to what the effect size associated with engagement might be. However, I would estimate a small to moderate effect size. A meta-analysis conducted by Judge and colleagues (Judge, Thoresen, Bono, & Patton, 2001) estimates the correlation between job satisfaction and performance to be .30—a small to moderate effect size.

In summary, despite a number of efforts on the part of the authors to distinguish engagement from the constructs that survey professionals have been measuring for years, the evidence still seems to lead back to satisfaction. Of course, most organizations who have survey initiatives are already measuring this.

This leads to another concern that I have with this book. There is a definite effort to make it appear that an "engagement survey" and "engagement initiatives" are qualitatively different than the surveys and initiatives that companies might be implementing today. The authors are explicit in detailing what should be in an engagement survey, implying that many surveys aren't capturing the right things to drive engagement. I do not see this characterization as necessarily accurate. Survey professionals have been advocating for the same design process as described here for quite some time (i.e., Kraut, 1996). In fact, although many a laundry list of

names exist for these kinds of surveys, most fall into the broad category of “organizational survey”—a survey meant to evaluate several facets of the employee experience, including those identified as most relevant to employee engagement. In short, a practitioner should carefully review his or her survey design process before investing time and consulting dollars on building an engagement focus into his or her organizational survey—it might already be there.

In closing, if you want a short but excellent primer on how to conduct an employee survey, debrief results, and build high quality action plans that get good traction, this book is an excellent resource. By contrast, if you hope to uncover a new way to drive results or want to invigorate an unsuccessful change process in your organization, I’m not sure that the engagement concept or this book will get you to that place.

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Elaine D. Pulakos. **Performance Management: A New Approach for Driving Business Results**. West Sussex, UK: John Wiley & Sons, Ltd. 2009, 201 pages, \$25.78 softcover.

Reviewed by Amy Bladen Shatto, President/Owner, Leadership Variations, Secaucus, NJ.

Upon reading the title of this book, I must confess, I had some initial concerns—particularly the part about a *new* approach. The field of performance management has evolved through countless trends in how to improve appraisal accuracy, make the process more efficient and less labor intensive, create better performance-related communications, and ultimately link work performance to important outcomes including pay and rewards. Unfortunately, experience suggests, regardless of the available tools and trends, that it’s uncomfortable for managers to hold employees accountable, conversations can be tough (for managers and employees),

and the process can be time consuming. In short—what has not changed is that many (perhaps most) managers *don't like* implementing performance management, and no new, improved process or tool is going to change that.

Because so many practitioners are still searching for the “silver bullet” or something that will somehow (miraculously) make performance management more popular, much of the advice in this field still hopelessly obsesses on modifying (supposedly improving) individual elements of the appraisal process—the forms, the rating scales, the automation, the steps in the overall process. Interestingly, although the title of this book seems to indicate that it will go down just such a path, this time focusing on the holy grail of “results-based” performance management (which is not really a new concept, e.g., performance management gurus such as Dick Grote (2002) and Ed Lawler (2000, 2003) were counseling their clients to leverage cascading goals more than a decade ago), it offers no such gimmick. In fact, it packs a surprising punch in its thoroughness and its ability to capture decades of best practices in a no-nonsense, user-friendly manual. That is, Pulakos' preface promises, “an end-to-end practical, proven, and effective performance management solution that focuses on achieving important results that lead to organizational effectiveness and also on driving effective employee behavior” (p. xi) and in short, it *more than* delivers! In fact, this is one of the few practical primers I have ever read on the topic that presents research-based best practices in a step-by-step, clearly-written format that can truly be used by managers as a “how to” guide to design and implement a performance management process.

The book is organized into three parts. Part I contains introductory information including a brief history of how the best practices evolved and overall data that puts the recommendations in perspective and can help to make a business case for *why* an organization might choose to implement the author's recommendations. Part II outlines a detailed, step-by-step process for designing and implementing performance management; whereas, Part III provides what the author refers to as “nuts and bolts guidance” on how to develop effective performance measures (p. 8).

Chapter 1 begins with an overview of the challenges and realities behind performance management and introduces the topic with recent statistics by Wyatt indicating that most performance management systems *are not* achieving their goals (e.g., developing performance, providing clear goals and communication) (p. 3). Chapter 2 succinctly reviews the history of performance management, popular scales leading to today's focus on results-based systems and competency-based behavioral standards. Together, these chapters lay the foundation for the research-based “*model performance management process*” laid out in Chapters 3, 4, and 5.

Chapter 3 sets the stage for the model process by covering details, tips, and case scenarios around three well-researched “first steps” including (p. 20):

- Ensure support for the new system
- Realistically assess the organization’s appetite for performance management
- Plan the communication strategy

This segment also describes the decisions that should be made around how the performance ratings will be used (e.g., decision making vs. development) and what types of ratings should be employed (numeric vs. narrative or hybrid) prior to design of the system.

Chapters 4 and 5 provide an extremely well-organized, step-by-step process for designing and implementing “a model performance management process” with detailed tips, graphics, and descriptions that are easy to follow. Wherever possible, the author highlights her recommendations with actual case scenarios illustrating real-life implementations. The model process details the design and implementation of the following best-practice steps:

- Step 1: Leaders set organization, division and department goals
- Step 2: Managers and employees set objectives and discuss behaviors and expectations
- Step 3: Managers and employees hold ongoing performance discussions
- Step 4: Employees provide input on own perceptions of performance
- Step 5: Knowledgeable rating sources provide input on employee performance
- Step 6: Managers rate performance
- Step 7: Managers and employees hold formal review sessions
- Step 8: HR decisions are made—pay, promotions, training etc.

Chapters 6, 7, and 8 address additional issues that managers wrestle with when implementing performance management, including the legal ramifications that must be considered, how to design effective performance objectives that link to company goals, and most important, how to establish meaningful performance measures that include both results and behaviors (competencies).

Particularly outstanding is the way in which the author presents best practices as she moves through her presentation of information. Not only does Pulakos provide clearly delineated “Tips” such as her guidelines for providing effective feedback (p. 47), but she goes a step further in offering a variety of “Best Practices and Realities” in which she discusses the practices but also warns practitioners about common caveats that can

occur upon implementation. For example, in her chapter on designing a performance management process, Pulakos lists as a **best-practice**, “Provide regular, on-going feedback” but also lists as a **reality** “Need to evaluate the organization’s culture for feedback, many do not support on-going feedback and may require culture changes in this area” (p. 46). This contrasting perspective of best practices with what they look like when implemented provides the reader with a clearer picture of where certain practices may or may not be appropriate in his or her particular organization. Beyond the lists of best practices and caveats, the primer offers many case examples of the practices in action to help readers more clearly visualize the implementation. Finally, Pulakos concludes each chapter with a series of highly detailed training exercises designed to help managers design and implement the processes she describes throughout the book.

Although there is *very little* to criticize, I did feel that the author’s treatment of competency development was somewhat beyond the scope of this book and could be the subject of many disparate opinions (mine included). I would have preferred the detailed discussion of competency-based, behavioral standards be substituted with the inclusion of a few critical topics that continue to be the subject of much debate but were missing from the book such as choosing the appropriate performance rating scale (3 vs. 5 point; language etc.; for a recent excellent discussion of the topic, see Hunt, 2011) and the use of forced distributions, a hot button in many organizations that Pulakos treats only superfluously (p. 71). No book can cover everything, however, and even without these topics, this book boast one of the most complete on the subject I have yet to read.

In sum, as long as you are not expecting a “new” approach or gimmick that will suddenly make your organization find appraisals appealing for the first time, *Performance Management: A New Approach for Driving Business Results* is an exceptionally thorough, well-written and engaging “how-to” primer in designing and implementing a results-oriented performance management process. Kudos to Elaine Pulakos for making a much needed contribution to our field.

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Stephen Palmer and Almuth McDowall, Editors. **The Coaching Relationship: Putting People First.** New York, NY: Routledge, 2010, 240 pages, \$30.95 softcover. (Part of Routledge's *Essential Coaching Skills and Knowledge Series*, edited by Gladeana McMahon, Stephen Palmer, and Averil Leimon.)

Reviewed by *Linda B. Greensfelder, PhD*, Director, Individual Assessments, EASI•Consult, LLC, St. Louis, MO.

My first reaction when picking up this volume was one of puzzlement at the title. Why the tag line "Putting People First?" Shouldn't we, as psychologists and coaches, *always* be "Putting People First?" It only took a few pages to decide that coeditors Palmer and McDowall were trying to convey with the title their perspective that the relationship between people is the most important aspect of the coaching process. It's more important than the coaching model and more important than the specific techniques utilized in a coaching engagement. In Palmer and McDowall's world of coaching, it seems that the most important thing is to understand, nurture, and optimize the coaching relationship.

Palmer and McDowall assert that the coach-coachee relationship is the most often overlooked aspect of the coaching process, and offer this volume as both a comprehensive review of coaching relationship issues and relevant literature and a potential stimulus for additional reflection and research. Given the nature of this volume, it is my view that it is probably most effectively utilized in an academic or training setting. With its heavy emphasis on theory and research, particularly in the early chapters (more than 125 citations in Chapter 2 and 3 alone), *The Coaching Relationship* provides a very thorough, survey type review of relevant thinking in many of the facets of coaching relationships it explores. The "References and Recommended Books" sections that appear at the end of each chapter offer valuable resources for additional research and study. The Reflective Questions appearing at the end of each chapter are well suited to group discussion in a teaching setting. Experienced practitioners need not shy away from this book but may find value in selecting specific chapters for consideration rather than aspiring to a cover-to-cover read.

Before commenting on the specific offerings contained in this book, two additional general points should be made. First, this is *not* a book about executive or leadership coaching. In fact, it isn't a book about any one specific type of coaching but rather about coaching relationships in general. Life coaches, athletic coaches, business and leadership coaches will all find allusions and examples that pertain to their specific professional focus as well as ones that do not. Second, although case studies appear in most chapters, they are used with varying degrees of

effectiveness. Some case studies beautifully illustrate the points being made and others are of questionable utility.

The Coaching Relationship contains 11 chapters, each addressing specific aspects of the coaching relationship. The introductory chapter is written by the coeditors and sets the stage for what is to follow. O'Broin and Palmer coauthor Chapters 2 and 3, which focus on the coaching relationship from an interpersonal perspective. These are the most citation-ridden chapters of the book and the most ponderous sections to digest. Although helpful in establishing the richness of contributions to the matters being discussed, the barrage of citations can at times be distracting and contribute to the creation of a rather dry read. Because many of the concepts in these chapters have their origins in psychotherapy literature, readers with a clinical or counseling psychology background may tend to view these sections as offering little that is new. Such issues as the establishment and maintenance of trust; the importance of demonstrating listening, understanding and encouragement; the coach's use of self and exercising self-awareness and self-management; the establishment of the psychological contract; the formation and ongoing status of the coaching alliance—all are basic to an understanding of coaching relationships, but I was eager to move on, and I suspect others will be as well.

In Chapter 4, McDowall and Millward present an interesting discussion of the role of feedback in coaching. By looking at the dimensions of process and content along with “feeding back” (providing information) and “feeding forward” (visioning and goal setting), the authors provide a thought provoking examination of how to most effectively “hold up the mirror” for coachees.

In Chapter 5, Smewing and McDowall provide a discussion of assessment in coaching. This is a valuable review of currently available assessment tools and the rationale and timing of their use in the coaching process.

Oliver (Chapter 6) offers a systemic perspective on the coaching relationship. Although the author's presentation of her model of inquiry, reflection, formulation, and decision is a bit challenging to follow, her goal of encouraging the creation of a reflective stance on the part of the coachee is one worth noting and emphasizing.

I found Chapters 7 through 11 to be the most interesting of the entire book, both in terms of the subjects covered and the nature of the discussions presented. I believe these will be of the most value to coaches who already possess significant background in the interpersonal aspects of coaching.

In Chapter 7, Daouk-Oyry and Rosinski focus on coaching across cultures. By presenting a broad definition of culture, the authors effectively

demonstrate the complexity of the interaction of the many dimensions of culture and how they affect all parties (coach, coachee, and organization) involved in a coaching relationship. Chapter 8, authored by Welman and Bachkirova, offers a thought-provoking discussion of the issue of power in coaching relationships.

In Chapter 9, Cox discusses an often overlooked part of the coaching process—the process of “ending well.” Although “termination” has long been an important focus of psychotherapy training, the ending of the coaching process has perhaps historically suffered the same neglect in the coaching field as the coaching relationship itself.

In Chapter 10, Law presents a vital discussion of ethical practice in coaching. This is a must read for anyone practicing in the field. Chapter 11, written by Hawkins and Schwenk, logically follows the Chapter 10 discussion of ethics and provides a fitting conclusion to this book by addressing issues related to the importance of the training and supervision of coaches. The emphasis on using the supervisory relationship, not just the content of the feedback that occurs in a supervisory setting, to provide a model and an experience from which coaches can grow is a perfect way to end any collection of reflections on the coaching relationship. This chapter reminded me that the philosophy of “Putting People First” applies not only to the primary importance of the relationship between the coach and coachee but also to the primary importance of the relationship between the coach and supervisor.

In their Final Reflections section, the editors offered the following additional perspective as to their intention in utilizing “putting people first” in the book’s title. “We are aware that this book has not provided easy answers to relationships in coaching. However, we hope that it has helped to raise our readers’ understanding of their complexity and to raise their self-awareness. This, we purport, is the key to ‘putting people first’” (p. 224).

Edward S. Greenberg, Leon Grunberg, Sarah Moore, and Patricia B. Sikora. **Turbulence: Boeing and the State of American Workers and Managers.** New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2010, 238 pages, \$27.50 softcover.

Reviewed by *Wendy S. Becker*, Associate Professor of Management, John L. Grove College of Business, Shippensburg University, Shippensburg, PA.

The good, the bad and the ugly is portrayed in *Turbulence: Boeing and the State of American Workers and Managers*, a longitudinal case study of Boeing Commercial Airlines and its employees during a decade of chaos and turmoil.

Why Boeing? As the United States' largest exporter and as half of a duopoly with European rival Airbus, Boeing wields enormous economic clout and political advantage. Although Boeing has survived broad structural and transformative forces in manufacturing, the picture that emerges in *Turbulence* is one of caution and concern. "The very innovations and changes Boeing introduced to remain a leading producer of airplanes . . . produced stress and turbulence in the lives of workers and managers alike . . . brought unnecessary pain . . . and raised serious questions about Boeing's continued success in the marketplace" (pp. 1–2).

Turbulence summarizes four waves of employee surveys, interviews, and focus groups conducted between 1996 and 2006. The period spans Boeing's implementation of total quality, the acquisition of McDonnell Douglas, several strikes, global competitive threats, and a transition from an engineering focus to that of short-term, shareholder value. The voices of the employees—production workers, engineers, middle- and senior-level managers alike—are the heart of this research. Funded by the National Institute of Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA) of the National Institute of Health (NIH) and with approval from Boeing unions, the project highlights how change impacts employee well-being. The authors' backgrounds in political science, sociology, social psychology, and industrial-organizational psychology strengthen the analysis; the writing is accessible and interesting.

Nine chapters, 36 illustrations and tables (mostly comparison bar graphs), an appendix, chapter notes, an index and a bibliography make up this text. Each chapter centers on a specific theme. The introduction sets the stage by outlining how airline deregulation led Boeing to a new focus on cost and shareholder value just as Airbus emerged as a competitive threat—a fascinating behind-the-scenes account of strategic decision making. The tension mounts as Boeing looks to lean production, parts management, offsets, "make-buy," "snap-fit," and other initiatives to radically overhaul the company, leading up to a critical decision to design—not a super-jumbo—but the smaller 787 Dreamliner model. Retrospective accounts by key informants such as former Boeing president, Ron Woodard, add to the analysis.

The next six chapters focus on employee perceptions, attitudes, and behaviors. "Boeing's changing culture" describes how employees reacted to the new business culture of efficiency and short-term profit, as well as several high profile ethics scandals. "Living through layoffs" describes the collateral damage created when 30,000 jobs are lost. Finding low ratings of team participation, the authors deconstruct the typically positive portrayal of work teams in "Working in new ways," concluding that "a poor team experience may be worse than no team experience at all." "Managing through change" highlights the increasingly demanding role

of boundary-spanning managers, who receive fewer and fewer rewards for their efforts. "Changing roles of women" documents a multitude of gender issues in a male-dominated workplace. "Well-being consequences of workplace change" describes the impact that increased uncertainty in the workplace has on physical and emotional health of workers. Simple statistical comparisons across study phases are provided throughout. *Turbulence* could be used with MBAs and business executives.

The final chapter draws lessons learned. Boeing was "stunningly insensitive" to its employees but the authors conclude that tough decisions were necessary and appropriate. Interestingly, rival Airbus imitated Boeing's cost-cutting actions despite operating in a very different political and regulatory environment, although the authors admit that "it is hard to tell who is copying whom" (p. 176).

Boeing's leaders took a gamble transforming its business strategy from technical design expertise to one driven by finance. The merger with McDonnell-Douglas and the difficult aftermath are seen through the eyes of employees. One observer hints that Boeing could have financed the 787 itself had it not spent so much repurchasing its own stock to drive up share prices (p. 218). Sadly the company over outsourced, leaving it short of critical skills needed not only for production but for oversight of sub-contractors and second-tier suppliers. Boeing has since reversed course to exert more control over partnerships with customers and contractors in its global supply chain. Recently, Boeing CEO Jim McNerney admitted that, "In retrospect, our 787 game plan may have been overly ambitious" (Peterson, 2011). As of this writing the Dreamliner launch has been delayed seven times, with delivery 3 years behind the original schedule and a budget escalated by several billion dollars.

Given the amount and depth of data gleaned over 10 years, the authors missed an opportunity for thick description, as the focus of a case study is to expand and generalize theory rather than enumerate frequencies (Bachiochi & Weiner, 2002). The final implications section could yield greater creativity and insight. Yes, the emergent employer-employee relationship is uncertain and risky for globally competitive companies and their employees, but we need to go beyond descriptions of the welfare capitalist model (p. 177). Especially valuable would be a discussion of how to improve employee morale and commitment in these treacherous times, even beyond the strategies for sharing information, profits, and even pain offered (pp. 181-183). The upswing in employee pride with the announcement of the cutting-edge Dreamliner during the last wave of data collection deserves even more exploration. Here existing research in employee engagement could be linked to emergent work in socially responsible and sustainable systems. Stating that outsourcing, downsizing, and layoffs are inevitable (p. 184) is not very helpful. The authors

could expand on concepts discussed such as allowing teams to bid on work targeted for outsourcing as well as the family-to-team idea. But calling on the U.S. government to subsidize a safety net based on pooled-risk insurance principles seems naïve in an era in which the government role in private business is shrinking, although control over the location of Boeing's assembly operations remains a controversial political topic.

Methodology for developing survey questions and interviews is described in a technical section (pp. 195–206), but it lacks needed detail. Interesting concepts such as *stereotyped threat* emerged from the descriptions of how managerial women perceive themselves by others (p. 200). The authors could elaborate here. It is the qualitative data in this report that could lead to greater clarity and understanding of the workplace issues. Beyond this shortcoming, *Turbulence: Boeing and the State of American Workers and Managers* is a fascinating portrait of what is right—and wrong—with the state of manufacturing today.

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BOOKS AND MATERIALS RECEIVED*

- Lewis, Sarah. *Positive Psychology at Work: How Positive Leadership and Appreciative Inquiry Create Inspiring Organizations*. West Sussex, UK: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011, 246 pages, \$39.95 hard cover.
- Zofi, Yael. *A Manager's Guide to Virtual Teams*. New York, NY: AMACOM, 2011, 264 pages, \$27.95 hard cover.
- Fiore, Stephen M., Letsky, Micheal P., Salas, Eduardo. *Theories of Team Cognition: Cross-Disciplinary Perspectives*. New York, NY: Routledge, 2011, 638 pages, \$70.00 hard cover.
- DeChurch, Leslie A., Marks, Michelle A., Zaccaro, Stephen J. *Multiteam System: An Organization Form for Dynamic and Complex Environments*. New York, NY: Routledge, 2011, 583 pages, \$69.95 hard cover.
- Agnew, Tom, Royal, Mark. *The Enemy of Engagement: Put an End to Workplace Frustration – and Get the Most from Your Employees*. New York, NY: AMACOM, 2012, 230 pages, \$25.95 hard cover.

*The publications listed are either already scheduled for review and/or are included as a new listing. Readers interested in reviewing for *Personnel Psychology* are invited to write our Book Review Editors Dr. Lee Konczak at konczak@wustl.edu or Dr. David E. Smith at david.smith@easiconsult.com—providing information about background and areas of interest.

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