

Books That Are Noteworthy

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Force for Good: The Catholic Guide to Business Integrity by Brian Engelland, Sophia Press, pp228, 2017

One of my great pleasures while joining the CUA faculty several years ago was to have been interviewed for the marketing position by then the Acting Dean Professor Brian Engelland. His friendly and very personable style made a lasting impression in me. He even encouraged me to attend the courses he taught to get better acquainted with the university. Brian has been a “force for good” in his own right. Prolific author and great educator he has been respected and admired by students and faculty for many years.

His latest book titled Force for Good: The Catholic Guide to Business Integrity, was published by Sophia Institute Press in the Fall of 2017. Dr. Engelland has been a professor of marketing and the Edward J. Pryzbyla Chair in the Busch School of Business and Economics. His research concentrates on the questions of how marketing managers process inputs in creating new goods, products and services. He has published six books plus more than 70 articles. He has won several teaching awards, including the prestigious one of a fellow of the Marketing Management Association. Prior to joining the CUA, he worked as a product development executive and held leadership positions for Fortune 500 corporations for number of years. Professor Engelland obtained his degrees from Purdue, Cincinnati and Southern Illinois. At Catholic University, he has served as department chair, associate dean and interim dean.

Author contends that the creation of integrity-based business organization is the essential key for long term success. Both personally

and professionally - in the market economy – personal virtues antecede pecuniary values. Through his wealth of personal experiences, learning from his father, family and friends, with many specific examples, and classical, Christian ethics Brian shows how to apply virtues in practice, in daily life. The basic four spiritual qualities, where integrity causes and contributes to business success in organizations constitute fundamental principles of Catholic Social Doctrine. These principles comprise subsidiarity, dignity, solidarity and common good. Subsidiarity might seem a complicated virtue, but is it quite easy to understand and implement, when employing just a common sense. It states, that matters should be handled by the lowest, or least centralized, competent level of authority. So, both managerial and political decisions ought to be taken at a lowest level whenever possible, rather than by a higher (or central) authority. Put it differently: micromanaging is not advisable nor desirable. Human dignity recognizes that people are the most valuable and important entity and asset in the overall business equation.

Solidarity implies and calls for a team work. We need to team up, back up team mates. Work gets done best and fastest when everyone knows own job responsibilities. It becomes much easier to serve, to help, to innovate and cooperate. Common good is another quality frequently misunderstood. The author gives an interesting example of his own father and his high moral principles, which can be summed up: be always honest with your customers. As individuals, employees and business executives we all share certain qualities and characteristics that can be traced to

the natural law and the basic ten commandments. They are ingrained in us as a part of our DNA, and these are the desire for truth, goodness and beauty. It seems as a trite, common sense view, but as Benjamin Franklin long ago observed: “common sense to uncommon degree is what we consider true wisdom”.

One of the key, common sense, messages of Brian’s book is that though profit corresponds to a very important mission of business: “no (profit) margin - no (business) mission”. The ultimate goal of business actually cannot and should not be exclusively profit maximization. Rather, it ought to be working and aiming toward profiting by serving others in spirit of virtues as well as recognizing ethos of overall Christian, and specific Catholic Social Teaching. That ethos begins with the respectful, ethical treatment of employees and customers. The author lays out how it is incumbent upon business leaders to embrace and possess solid moral character, with virtues, to conduct their business relations with integrity and apply ethical principles in their decisions.

Throughout the pages the author shows

how to infuse integrity into business and why integrity is so essential. We learn not only the responsibilities toward employees, customers, and overall society. We learn from the book why we must fulfill these responsibilities to stay competitive. *Force for Good* is a very practical book. It teaches a lot of practical skills, among others:

- That ethics is and should always be key concern of business
- That specific, cardinal virtues are indispensable to run a good business
- That natural law helps us best perform and benefit in business
- The 4 core principles of catholic social doctrine render competitive businesses humane
- The 6 things you must consider when making ethical decisions
- The 10 steps you must take now to develop integrity in your business.

This excellent, small volume is rich in content regarding business vision, values and virtues. Highly recommended to anyone seeking a right balance between profits and principles.