

CHAPTER 19: REFRAMING ETHICS AND SPIRIT

CHAPTER 19 OVERVIEW

Chapter 19 Summary

Chapter 19 presents a four-frame view of the ethics of leadership (summarized in Table 19.1 in the text). The authors make two key points:

1. Ethics ultimately must rest in faith and “soul” (which they define as a bedrock sense of identity, values, and purpose).
2. Organizations with core beliefs and ideology are more successful over the long run than those without.

For each of the frames, the authors describe an ethic and a leadership gift. Structurally, the ethic is excellence (doing the work as well as possible), and the gift is authorship (helping others to feel a sense of pride in creating or crafting their own unique product or service). In the human resource frame, the ethic is caring, and the leadership is love (freely offering caring and compassion). Politically, the ethic is justice (allocating resources fairly across different groups and constituents) and the leadership gift is power (enabling others to feel that they can have an impact and make a difference). Symbolically, the ethic is faith (centered in a shared belief that the work is a calling and adds something of value to the human community) and the leadership gift is significance (helping others to feel important and to find meaning in work and in life).

Chapter 19 Key Terms

Ethics: A set of moral principles or values; the principles of conduct governing an individual or an organization.

Soul: A sense of identity that defines an individual’s or an organization’s core beliefs and values.

Spirit: A transcendent sense of joy and oneness with others.

Chapter 19 Major Case Examples

- Enron
- Herb Kelleher and Southwest Airlines

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- Ben Cohen of Ben and Jerry's Homemade
- Aaron Feuerstein of Malden Mills
- Merck & Company
- Motorola
- Saturn revisited
- Levi Strauss
- Harry Quadrocchi of Quadgraphics

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING CHAPTER 19

There are at least four different emphases for teaching Chapter 19:

1. A focus on ethical dilemmas in organizational decision making.
2. An exploration of ethical issues surrounding organizational justice and diversity.
3. A debate about Bolman and Deal's core proposition that ethics and faith are central to organizational leadership.
4. A personal exploration that encourages students to focus on their own beliefs, values, and purposes.

Teaching methods appropriate for each approach, along with a list of general readings, are described in the sections that follow. Student exercises keyed to the approaches appear in "Student Exercises for Chapter 19," beginning on page 6.

Chapter 19: General Readings on Ethics and Spirit _____

A number of readings might be assigned along with this chapter to explore various facets of ethics and spirit in organizations. Possibilities include:

- Autry, J. A. *Love and Profit*. New York: Avon, 1991.
- Bloch, Peter. *Stewardship*. San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler, 1993.
- Bolman, L., and Deal, T. *Leading with Soul*, 2nd ed. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2001.
- Covey, S. *Principle-Centered Leadership*. New York: Summit, 1991.
- DePree, M. *Leadership is an Art*. New York: Dell, 1989
- Hawley, J. *Reawakening the Spirit in Work: the Power of Dharmic Management*. San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler, 1993.

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- Needleman, Jacob. *Money and the Meaning of Life*. New York: Currency Doubleday, 1991.
- Spears, L. C. *Reflections on Leadership*. New York: Wiley, 1995.
- Terry, R. W. *Authentic Leadership*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1993.

Chapter 19: A Focus on Ethical Dilemmas

Most of the ethical challenges managers encounter involve dilemmas: situations where important values or interests are in conflict. These include conflicts between different values (loyalty to a friend versus telling the truth), between self-interest and a moral principle (Should I pad the expense account if no one will notice?), or between personal and organizational values (Should we disclose information about our product's health risks when management wants us not to?). Cases or films in which protagonists struggle with such decisions provide an excellent entry point to these issues. Some useful cases and films are suggested below; in addition, see the teaching notes for Chapter 2, "Chapter 2: A Focus on Ethical Dilemmas in Organizational Choices."

Chapter 19: Cases Focusing on Ethical Dilemmas

There are good cases about business ethics, and the HBS Case Catalogue devotes a section to the topic.

- Enron 1986–2001 (Darden, <https://www2.darden.edu/case/collection/detail.cfm?key=UVA-G-0563M> UVA-G-0563M; teaching note UVA-G-0563TN-M) is an extensive CD-ROM-based multimedia case that chronicles the rise (mostly) and the fall (a little) of Enron. It includes fascinating video clips of interviews with the major players (such as Ken Lay and Jeff Skilling) sounding supremely confident only a year or so before the company's famous collapse.
- An accessible and provocative case is Peter Green's First Day (HBS 9-380-186). A young salesman discovers on his first day in a new job that his largest account has always been given a discount based on false information: his client and his boss both expect him to continue the practice.
- In Analyst's Dilemma ([A] [HBS 9-394-056], [B] [HBS 9-394-057], and teaching note HBS 5-394-148), a young manager receives information in confidence from her roommate. She realizes that the information could save her own company from suffering significant harm. How should she balance the promise of confidentiality against her organization's interests?

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- Brush with AIDS ([A] [HBS 9-394-058], [B] [HBS 9-394-059], and teaching note HBS 5-394-180) is the story of a product manager who learns that her product poses a risk of infection to health-care workers but expects that fixing the problem would significantly jeopardize her profit performance for the year.

Chapter 19: Films Focusing on Ethical Dilemmas

Many films deal with ethical issues in management. One recurrent theme is how business balances concern for people and profits.

- The documentary *An American Dream* depicts an aggressive effort by a profitable company to reduce wages and defeat a union in one of its plants.
- *Matewan* presents labor-management conflicts in the context of a 1920s dispute set in West Virginia coal mines; *Germinal* involves a similar situation involving coal miners in 19th-century France.
- *Norma Rae*, *Roger and Me*, and *Silkwood* raise similar issues.

In addition, *Network*, *Wall Street*, and *Working Girl* all raise issues about organizational ethics. The classic *Bridge on the River Kwai* presents the fascinating case of a British commander in World War II whose concern for his men leads him to assist in building a bridge for the Japanese.

Chapter 19: A Focus on Organizational Justice and Workforce Diversity

A powerful and ongoing struggle for organizations is the issue of organizational justice and the effective utilization of workforce diversity. Instructors may choose to focus on these salient and interconnected issues.

In addition to the suggestions that follow, *Understanding and Managing Diversity: Readings, Cases, and Exercises*, 2nd ed. (New York: Pearson Education, 2002), edited by Carol Harvey and M. June Allard, and the accompanying instructor's manual provide teaching activities, experiential exercises, student materials and worksheets, cases, and additional readings on the topic.

Chapter 19: Reading Focusing on Organizational Justice and Workforce Diversity

Instructors choosing to focus on organizational justice and workforce diversity may want to see these two books:

- Gallos, Ramsey, and Associates, *Teaching Diversity: Listening to the Soul, Speaking from the Heart* (Jossey-Bass, 1997; out of print but available in many libraries)

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provides support to instructors who struggle to understand and teach better about diversity in organizations. It contains powerful and deeply personal stories and vignettes from educators involved in organizational diversity work, insights about the paradoxes and dilemmas implicit in learning about human differences, and a rich listing of diversity-related readings and sources.

- Adams, Bell, and Griffin, *Teaching for Diversity and Social Justice: A Sourcebook for Teachers and Trainers* (Routledge, 1997) develops a conceptual framework for understanding oppression and injustice and discusses teaching approaches for addressing a variety of forms of injustice.

Chapter 19: Films or Videos Focusing on Organizational Justice and Workforce Diversity

Many films and videos listed elsewhere in this instructor's guide can be viewed through a diversity lens to explore a range of differences, such as the following:

- Race—*Amistad*, *Malcolm X*, *Do the Right Thing*, *Remember the Titans*, *Glory*, *Driving Miss Daisy*.
- Gender—*Norma Rae*, *Nine to Five*, *Patton*, *Working Girl*.
- Ethnicity—*Gandhi*, *Rashomon*, *Cry Freedom*, *Schindler's List*.
- Physical ability—*My Left Foot*.
- Class—*Stand and Deliver*.

Chapter 19: A Focus on the Role of Ethics and Faith _____

Because the chapter uses terms like *soul*, *faith*, and *spirit* that rarely appear in the classroom, it is likely to evoke a range of reactions. Some may applaud the authors' decision to discuss central issues that are too often ignored. Others may deplore the use of nebulous, nonempirical, quasi-religious terms in a management classroom. The issue can be framed as a debate; see Exercise 19.1.

Chapter 19: A Focus on Personal Exploration _____

The chapter can be used as an entry point to students' exploration of their own values and beliefs. Such a path is potentially very powerful, but it is risky as well. Students are likely to want to deal with these issues only when they feel sufficient levels of psychological safety and when they feel they can trust the instructor and one another.

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Chapter 19: Reading Focusing on Personal Exploration

Excerpts from biographies or short personal stories, such as those discussed above in Gallos, Ramsey, and Associates, *Teaching Diversity: Listening to the Soul, Speaking from the Heart* (Jossey-Bass, 1997), can trigger personal reflection. Symbolic media (such poetry, music, stories, and art) are also particularly effective for this purpose.

Poetry

Instructors can assign students a book of poetry and tell them to start reading the poems and continue until they find a poem that speaks to them, then come to class prepared to read the poem and talk about what it says. Though metaphor and poetic language are challenging for many students, the activity often generates a powerful dialogue around central values and meanings. Possibilities for books include:

- *The Soul Is Here for Its Own Joy: Sacred Poems from Many Cultures* (Hopewell, N.J.: Ecco Press, 1995), edited by Robert Bly.
- *New and Selected Poems* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1992) by Pulitzer Prize–winning poet Mary Oliver.
- *Open Secret: Versions of Rumi* (Putney, Vt.: Threshold Books, 1984), a book of poetry by a Sufi religious leader and mystic, Rumi, translated by John Moyne.

David Whyte’s *The Heart Aroused: Poetry and the Preservation of Soul in Corporate America* (New York: Doubleday Currency, 1994) uses poetry from many sources to explore soul in management, and works well as background reading for this assignment.

Storytelling

Our approaches to life, leadership, and faith are all rooted in the stories we tell ourselves about our lives. The power of storytelling can be explored in the activity presented as Exercise 19.2.

STUDENT EXERCISES FOR CHAPTER 19

EXERCISE 19.1

Focus: The Role of Ethics and Faith

Stage a debate concerning the authors’ core proposition that ethics and faith are central to organizational leadership. Pro and con teams will debate a proposition like: “Resolved that soul, spirit, and faith are central to organizational leadership.” Split the class in half,

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and have small groups or teams prepare a representative to appear in a debate before the full class. If you don't want to judge the results yourself, have each team designate one person to be a judge and have the judges meet separately to work out criteria. (If there is a debate team on your campus, you could enlist the debate coach and/or members of the debate team as judges.)

One way to prepare for the debate is to assign Jensen and Meckling's classic "The Nature of Man" (available for download from the SSRN electronic paper collection at http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=5471). Jensen and Meckling argue the case for REMM (resourceful, evaluative, maximizing man) and argue strongly against what they see as seriously defective psychological, sociological, and political models. (Many users of *Reframing* will find much to disagree with in Jensen and Meckling's paper.) The paper's argument supports a proposition that what happened at Enron had little or nothing to do with the values and ethics of the key actors and everything to do with the environmental incentives that they faced. Thus, in the debate, the pro side can argue from Chapter 19, while the opponents can use Jensen and Meckling.

There are a variety of debate formats (and many Web sites that discuss alternatives), but one possibility is:

I. Constructive speeches (each sides argues for its position)

Affirmative, 10 minutes

Negative, 10 minutes

II. Rebuttal speeches (each side rebuts the other's arguments)

Affirmative, 5 minutes

Negative, 5 minutes

Affirmative, 5 minutes

Negative, 5 minutes

III. Cross-examination (teams alternate in posing and answering queries from the other team. Limit questions to 1 minute and answers to 2–3 minutes), 20 minutes

The debate could be done as a whole-class activity, or teams could be paired in a series of mini-debates. If done as a whole-class activity, the rules could specify that a different individual has to represent the team in each phase, to maximize the number of individuals who are active.

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EXERCISE 19.2

Focus: Personal Exploration—Storytelling

Have students prepare a short “leadership autobiography” to be shared in class or within a team. The autobiography is defined as a story of one’s life that emphasizes the people, places, and events that have had the greatest influence on one’s understanding of leadership and of self as leader. Ask students to come to class prepared to tell their “story.”

You will want to think about the setting that best facilitates the story sharing. Students, for example, might sit in a circle around lighted candles, reminiscent of a campfire, or share food at an elegantly decorated table to evoke memories of special family meals. This activity is a dramatic illustration of the power of stories. It builds strong bonds within a group and causes students to wonder how they could know so little about other people’s lives.