



SOUL DANCING

The Dance of Leadership
By: Peter Cammock
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if they could be brought to their work experience, might dramatically enhance their creativity and capacity.”

Managerial leadership, says Cammock, is a “roiling interplay between the light world of conscious rationality and the deeper, darker realms of the soul.” It is only when “issues of the soul are included that the process of leadership comes fully, passionately and powerfully alive”.

We are unquestionably confronted by significant and potentially debilitating leadership issues at global, national, corporate and personal levels. The issues can’t be addressed unless we resort to more than the application of basic leadership frills and skills. Leadership resides within each of us and Cammock’s personal revelation and coverage of the issue has nothing to do with touchy feely, airy fairy, politically correct rhetoric even if he personally finds some of his “references to the soul a little embarrassing”. Reflecting on some of the American literature I have been compelled to read on the subject, he has little to feel embarrassed about. This is stimulating, provocative and simultaneously practical stuff.

The call for leadership is extended “not just to a gifted elite, but to all of us”. If we can “wake up, take responsibility for our lives and respond to the call as it manifests within our own sphere of influence we can enjoy an astonishing revitalisation of our life experience”, he says. “If millions of people were to exercise such leadership responsibility the world would be transformed.”

His hopes for the book are “far less grandiose”. He just wants it to make a “small contribution” to everyone’s personal revitalisation process. I hope he succeeds. **M**



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Want to understand what leadership is really about? I don’t mean the superficial tasks, trappings, tricks and traits of leadership, I mean the deep-rooted emotional, driving identity and character of individual leadership. The stuff that’s embedded in the ‘soul’.

But I’ve read Covey and Bennis, Kotter and a few others who write about leadership with soul, you say. Well yes, but this Kiwi book by University of Canterbury academic and management consultant Peter Cammock, is different. I could ask have you read *The Lord of the Rings* or Joseph Campbell’s *The Power of Myth*? These might be more relevant – certainly Cammock constantly refers to the underlying messages contained in literature like this.

The Dance of Leadership: the call for soul in 21st century leadership is not fairy tale stuff. It is a fascinating and thoughtful analysis of what really underpins our individual potential and the link between skill and soul that underlies the leadership process. But don’t sweat the big stuff, this is as day-to-day relevant as you care to make it. It provides a considered understanding of both the positive, and the darker sides of human character and motivation. Sure it’s academic, but it’s readable, enlightening and if it weren’t for the publisher’s unimaginably boring design and internal presentation, would probably sell more copies.

The author detects, in this 21st century, the emergence of a “widespread and largely unanswered call for leadership”. The call is probably no more, nor less emphatic and shrill than it has ever been, but the point is not worth debate. It is true, however, that “administrative imperatives of management, rather than the vision and inspiration of leadership” are offered up as an answer to the call. What we need is “leadership that is not only highly skilled but brings with it a touch of ‘soul’”.

Cammock suggests that great leadership, at CEO level or in the personal lives of lesser mortals, doesn’t happen unless we integrate the “passion and vitality” of the soul with the “rationality and skill” that comes with life and work experience.

The book began, he says, as a “naïve exposition of the tasks and skills of leadership” particularly management leadership. In the time it took him to write it, his understanding of leadership changed. He once looked at the ideas that are advanced in his book, as “little more than fascinating concepts”. He came to see them as more real and directly relevant to his everyday life experiences.

Be honest with yourself and tell me you don’t relate to this: “I am amazed at the number of managers who have achieved some success in spite of debilitating burdens of low self esteem and fear of failure. Others are burdened with addictive behaviours, compulsions, loneliness, relationship issues and a whole range of personal issues that are continually present in their work. These same people are simultaneously illuminated by dreams, passions and hopes, which,