Type Indicator and the Self-Directed Search, along with unnamed aptitude tests. This author also suggests some exercises which are aimed at the spiritual side, but which are unaccompanied by evidence of psychometric or practical value. Others of the authors are not inclined to think much of formal measurement devices. Savickas, for example, says that the "subjective 'I' cannot be measured like the objective 'me.' "

Major parts of this book are hard going. Better not try it unless you are willing to cope with sentences like this: "Needs arise from a felt sense of incompleteness" (Savickas); "Meaning is a place in the heart" (Eanes); "The necessity of work forces the self to grasp the nonself and in so doing discovers otherness" (Demkovich). Most of the sentences are less challenging, of course, but the book as a whole is fairly dense with abstractions and replete with unsupported assertions.

Most of the authors contend that a spiritually informed career plan must seek to foster not just the individual's interests but also the common good. Savickas warns against "useless self-aggrandizement rather than useful contribution to others." Eanes asserts that "ultimate meaning through human work is achieved only when people work to dispense both justice and mercy to all." According to Demkovich: "The quest for the self in work is by its nature simultaneously a quest for community." Huntley speaks of "an orientation to others and their needs that is the essence of vocation."

Is all this realistic, or do we have here a case of fine words applicable only to the saintly among us? Is it feasible for all of us to work for the benefit of others? What work exactly is oriented to others and their needs? Is the entrepreneur less virtuous and less useful to other people than the social worker? Is it OK to lie, cheat, and steal on your job if you drive for Meals on Wheels after working hours? Should we advise people to change their jobs or their hobbies if we think they will then contribute more to society?

Few questions of this sort are made explicit in the book, but they lurk between the lines, enticing readers to think seriously about spirit and its connection to work and career development. Therein may lie the major virtue of the book. The specific suggestions of some authors could be helpful to such people as career counselors. But the main reason to confront these authors in all their gloriously convoluted prose is that they might help you contemplate the spiritual and ethical in your own work and life.

Jeffrey Pfeffer. **The Human Equation: Building Profits by Putting People First.** Boston, MA: Harvard Business School, 1998, 369 pages, $24.95.

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This book begins with the startling statement, "Something very strange is occurring in organizational management." The author, Jeffrey Pfeffer, goes on to make the case that what managers are saying about employees and what they are actually doing are many times in direct opposition to each other. For example, managers talk about employees as their most valuable asset and about the importance of empowerment and commitment for a competitive edge and long-term profitability. Indeed, many research studies strongly support this view. At the same time, however, these same managers are laying off experienced employees *en masse* and hiring temporary employees at lower pay rates in increasingly greater numbers. Moreover, they are focusing upon controlling employees rather than developing their potential and encouraging initiative and innovation. Incredibly, it appears that management is going back to turn-of-the-century scientific management and rediscovering Frederick Taylor.

Pfeffer argues that if you look for success in all the wrong places, you will focus on the wrong things, waste resources, and eventually lose the competitive advantage you thought you had. In the author's own direct language, the organization will create "a death spiral" for itself. He develops this theme in 10 chapters divided into two parts. Part I consists of four chapters focusing upon people-centered management. Chapter 1 lays out the conventional (but incorrect) wisdom that organizational success is linked to large size, a unique image, the right market niche, dominant market share, being in the right industry (usually high tech), a global approach, financial controls, cutting costs, downsizing, and use of contingent (part-time) workers.

Chapter 2 describes the business case for managing people correctly. Based upon research into several industries, the author shows that high commitment practices (promoting employee skill enhancement and more control over their work environment) increase productivity and profitability. In Chapter 3 he delineates the seven practices of successful organizations that create high commitment to employees: employment security, selective hiring, self-managed teams, higher compensation based upon organizational performance, extensive training, reduced distinctions based on status, and extensive sharing of information. Pfeffer then, in Chapter 4, argues for aligning business strategy with people management practices.

Part II describes barriers to implementation—or why conventional wisdom is usually wrong. In Chapter 5 the author lays out 10 reasons why smart companies sometimes do dumb things: the desire to follow the crowd, management pressure for short-term results, a belief in leadership over delegation, demands for accountability, rewarding financial rather than employee performance, emphasis upon short-term costs, an obsession with "tough" management, a focus on accounting and financial expertise rather than human resources skills, an overemphasis on analysis rather than managing people, and demands for short-term capital investment rather than long-term investment in employees.

In Chapter 6, Pfeffer describes the new employee contract—focusing on short-termism, downsizing, and contingent workers—that creates a virtual workforce with little commitment to the organization or motivation to perform. Chapter 7 shows how the current compensation practices of pay for performance causes problems, such as an emphasis on individual success at the expense of others and a de-emphasis upon organizational performance. In Chapter 8 the author contrasts the current anti-union mood with the idea that cooperative relationships with the union can be productive.

Chapter 9 covers the controversial area of the role of government in the labor market. The conventional wisdom is that government should stay out and allow market forces to prevail. The author argues that government policies on worker security (e.g., social security and workers' compensation) are beneficial and that government can encourage and perhaps should even mandate employee participation in businesses. Government can also play a vital role as the central source for disseminating information about best management practices. Finally in Chapter 10, Pfeffer summarizes his ideas using the vehicle of people-centered strategy. The point he makes is that the seven people-oriented management practices described in Chapter 3 lead to increased profitability because the workforce is innovative, flexible, highly skilled, and customer-oriented.

Throughout, the author draws numerous examples of his points from individual firms representing a variety of industries. In addition, he describes a number of studies that have made interesting comparisons of successful organizations both within and across industries to support his ideas. In short, he provides fairly solid evidence for his emphasis on the effectiveness of people-oriented management practices across the board, regardless of firm or industry.

It goes without saying that Pfeffer believes whole-heartedly in high commitment management: training workers in multiple skills, worker teams, worker involvement in decision making, worker suggestions for improvement, customer-orientation. That sounds an awful lot like total quality management (TQM) to me. Unfortunately, now that Deming is dead, Juran is retired, and Crosby is off on other ventures, TQM has lost its leadership and thus a lot of its glitter. I guess high commitment management will now be the new concept replacing TQM. Without being too sarcastic, on one level it looks like the same content, only a different label.

More seriously, the author presents a convincing argument about how so-called current "common-sense" ideas of management are neither logical nor supported by the evidence and, if followed, will eventually lead to organizational decline. But what about the "common-sense" ideas that are the knowledge base of academia? To illustrate, there is the concept of contingency, which permeates so much of management theory (i.e., motivation, leadership, and organizational design). We posit, for example, that the management style of an organization should be contingent upon the strategy the organization is following. Firms focusing on quality and product differentiation should follow a high employee involvement style, while firms trying to contain costs in order to survive should use Tayloresque control techniques. Yet Pfeffer responds that the high involvement style is appropriate regardless of strategy or industry type or economic environment. Are we moving back to absolutes in management theory and abandoning a situational approach?

Then, there is the area of rewards. The author takes the view of some, such as Alfie Kohn (1993), that rewards (e.g., merit pay) are problematic and may even stifle intrinsic motivation. Yet at the same time the author extols group rewards, such as gain sharing and profit sharing, and the importance of rewards in the organizational culture. This is perhaps his weakest point among many fine contributions. Obviously, rewards do work. Sometimes, unfortunately, they are not used correctly and reinforce the wrong behaviors. In their extensive review of the reward literature, Eisenberger and Cameron (1996)—to answer Kohn and others—conclude that rewards in general are effective and do not decrease intrinsic motivation, if they are contingent upon performance. Therefore, the author should be arguing for the effectively delivery of rewards (whether pay or social reward or symbolic reward) that reinforce performance in a high commitment culture, and against reward systems that debilitate because they pit individuals against their coworkers (e.g., merit pay, commissions, and narrow pay band widths).

Pfeffer's role for government is more controversial. He presents a number of data-driven arguments for government employment security policies, government support for training, enforcing employee rights, and toning down labor laws that contribute to adversarial relations between management and labor. The author also believes that the government may serve as a clearinghouse for information about best practices in management. This would seem to be an effective function for government. We already have evidence from the Baldrige National Quality

Award, supported by the National Institute of Standards and Technology, that the Federal Government can back a centralized vehicle, like the quality award, which can successfully disseminate information nationwide about the best practices of the award winners.

On the other hand, Pfeffer suggests that government might also mandate employee participation in organizations (e.g., works councils as used in European codetermination). The purpose of such a mandate would be (in essence) to force a high-commitment management style on U.S. businesses. Given the track record of a huge bureaucracy like the federal government, even the author grants that government mandated participation is not likely to occur in the U.S. any time soon.

All things considered, this book makes a valuable contribution. The author's ideas about high-commitment, people-oriented management practices are not startlingly new. We have seen this before in participative management, empowerment, TQM, self-managed work teams, and other management emphases. The importance of his approach, however, is that he juxtaposes these "common sense" people ideas in relation to so-called common-sense ideas on downsizing, cost cutting, reengineering, and technology as the saviors of us all. He successfully shows how both sets of ideas cannot logically coexist. Managers cannot logically say that they value people as they pay them poorly, disregard their growth in the job, and eventually push them out the door. Moreover, he shows the long-term dangers of focusing only on financial and technical fixes for organizations. In essence, he makes a compelling case that people are the primary cause of good organizational performance.

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In recent years, there appears to have been an increase in the proportion of behavioral science books that are the product of multiple contributors. These edited volumes come in two basic varieties. The first type consists of ongoing publications (e.g., the *Annual Review of Psychology*)