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Management by Missions

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Review

Cardona, Pablo & Rey, Carlos. (2008). *Management by Missions*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan. ISBN: 978-0-230-55152-7

Mission and values are core topics in modern practice of management. It is therefore not surprising that a flood of books and articles have been published where these concepts are viewed from a variety of perspectives. However, there are very few publications that successfully indicate the crucial importance of mission and values to an organization's success, but which also offer concrete ideas and some basic tools for their implementation into real business practice. Cardona and Ray succeeded in that aim and the result is this very actual, interesting, and, above all, useful book.

The model of "Management by Missions" (MBM), presented in this book, is based on three pillars: theoretical research (literature study), practical research (field study), and implementation consulting (practical application in companies). Accordingly, the book consists of three main parts which are different in approach, but still very connected to each other. The first part, entitled *Myths and Realities of Management*, examines some basic assumptions about what a company is and the purpose of its existence. In this part of the book authors systematically guide readers through the different ways of understanding an organization through last 100 years. Special emphasis has been given to the integral model of the company

whose understanding is crucially important for deeper understanding of the following two parts.

Main topics in the second part of the book, entitled *In Search of Corporate Culture*, are organizational culture, mission and values. Key concepts of the book here are explained in a very clear, but also in a fresh way, which will be useful even for those who are already intensely dealing with these issues. This part is based mainly on author's practical research and offers some very interesting and indicative findings. For example, authors present analysis results of organizational values conducted in companies of different nationalities, which enables creation of new organizational values classification. However, the results also indicate that culturally healthy company must cultivate and develop values from different values categories. This finding, like many others from this part of the book, has great scientific potential for further research and application, and can be an inspiration and a source of ideas for new scientific researches in this area.

After having read the first two parts of the book readers could hardly wait for the next, perhaps the most interesting part of the book, entitled *Toward a New Management Model*. Here, the authors present the results of their consultancy projects on strategy and cultural change based on MBM. Although the aim of the book is not to provide definitive solutions to management problems, this final part of the book is enough concrete. For example, authors present an important tool in the implementation of MBM – *The Mission Scorecard*. However, apart from the interpretation of that tool, authors give a concrete example of its usage in concrete business practice. Considering that there are a lot of such examples, a careful reader can get a complete picture about possibilities of changes in today's management models.

It also should be noted that the book successfully integrate some other concepts from this field, such as strategy and intrategy, unity as the bottom line of corporate culture, competency management, and leadership types with special emphasis on transcendental leadership. Connecting all these, as well as some other contemporary management concepts, enable observation of the main book topics in a broader context, which gives added value to the book.

To conclude – besides providing an actual topic, the book is an excellent combination of both theory and practice. This is logical considering that both

book authors build their careers in academic as well as in the business sector. This allows them to understand the problem of MBM not just in a way that it sounds nice, but also that it is very applicable in real business practice. The evidence of this is more than 100 companies that already have practical experience of MBM (one such case is presented in the last chapter of the book). Seen as a whole, the book will be useful not just for theoreticians and practitioners in the field of management, but also for practitioners in the field of educational management, in order to improve the quality of practice and education management.

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