

SOCIETY OF APOSTOLIC EXECUTIVES

MAY 19 BREAKFAST MEETING

BOOK REVIEW and CASE STUDY

A Book Review of Kurt Senske's "Executive Values, A Christian Approach to Organizational Leadership," Augsburg Books, 2003, Minneapolis, MN, and the solution to the May 19 Breakfast Meeting Case Study.

BOOK REVIEW

Dr. Senske's book is a blueprint for decision making that reflects Christian values in the carrying out of day-to-day responsibilities both at work and at home. It was developed over eighteen years and is drawn from his experience as president and CEO of a \$70 million dollar organization with more than twelve hundred employees; as an attorney with various Chicago law firms; as a political consultant at the local, state, and national levels; as a college administrator; and as a member of the boards of a Fortune 300 company, a national, religious nonprofit organization, and a national foundation.

In this one hundred and sixty-six page book, Dr. Senske provides us with a framework incorporating faith and values into everyday business decisions and actions. "Executive Values" demonstrates ". . . how doing well and doing good are inextricably linked."

"Executive Values" goes beyond theory. It provides practical everyday advice on implementing faith in effective leadership. It demonstrates, among other things, how Christian values provide a basis for:

1. Attracting and retaining employees;
2. Creating a Christ-based effective organizational structure;
3. Implementing a successful vision and strategic plan; and
4. Successfully balancing career and family life.

Dr. Senske also proposes a framework for making Christ-based decisions. His framework incorporates the gospel values of love, honesty, respect, and justice in daily decision making and actions. He utilizes examples dealing with real life business issues, such as the following, to demonstrate his framework for making Christ-based decisions:

1. Whether to lay off 5, 50, or 500 employees in order to increase shareholder value?
2. How to deal with ineffective employees?
3. How to make tough decisions now when the business is doing well, even though you know the picture will not be so rosy in the future?
4. How do you choose between going on vacation with your family and handling the emergency that came up at work?
5. Do you accept a job at another company for a \$50,000 pay increase, or stay in your present position where you have been less than a year?

The stated goal of “Executive Values” is to provide us with “. . . practical, concise Christian approaches to living out our values in the workplace . . . by leading us to practice The Golden Rule and accordingly, make a positive difference in the lives of the people we lead, the companies we manage and the people we serve.” The Society of Apostolic Executives believes Dr. Senske accomplishes his goal, and therefore recommends his book, “Executive Values, A Christian Approach to Organizational Leadership.”