

A Classic in Christian Management Literature now in its 2nd edition

Thomas Schirrmacher: Leadership and Ethical Responsibility



Reviewd by Norman Rentrop

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Norman Rentrop is owner and shareholder of one of the largest publishing houses in Germany, the VNR Verlag für die Deutsche Wirtschaft (publishing house for the German economy), the publishing house Verlag Rentrop & Straton in Romania, and the publishing house Wiedza i Praktyka in Poland. He also holds a 51% majority in the nonprofit foundation Bibel TV Stiftung GmbH (the Christian TV of Germany), to which he donated € 6.9 million.

Our economic system is based upon trust. When a distributor delivers goods on account, he trusts that at a later time he will be paid for his services. If a customer did not pay, the system of trust would be disturbed. Mistrust makes economic life difficult and complicated. A distributor would rather deliver to customers he trusts and whom he knows from experience to be reliable. Companies which are managed in a scrupulous and ethically responsible manner are preferred in our economic system.

Ethical responsibility not only strengthens relationships with customers and business partners. It also creates a productive work atmosphere for employees. On the one hand, it heightens existing employees' motivation and, on the other hand, makes the company attractive for new top talent.

Human ideals and practical constraints appear to contradict each other in the interpersonal realm. On this point, the book explains how the Bible makes clear guidelines available so that optimal solutions can be found in the case of conflicts between economic, personal, and impersonal interests. These spiritual principles not only give the decision maker himself a form of support. They also result in a situation where his leadership decisions inspire confidence, are reliable, and are transparent.

Christian leadership is often equated with a type of “starry-eyed idealism” that cannot be squared with the economic interests of a company. This book demonstrates the opposite by showing how Christian-ethical responsibility not only exists in relation to the individual employee but also in relation to the entire company and the goals the company has.

At those points where companies are becoming increasingly similar to each other, the quality of the employees and leadership are becominbg increasingly important. Ethically responsible leadership has become a critical success factor. The Bible is first-rate management literature. What one finds with Thomas Schirrmacher is that he develops a comprehensive and generally valid foundation from the Bible in order to wisely reach correct leadership decisions. In the

process, as far as ethical responsibility is concerned, he not only goes into economic leadership. He also creates a sound basis for all areas of decision making: regardless of whether it is a matter of decisions in one's profession, at a personal level, in one's family, or decisions in the church.

Futurologists have seen the value of ethics rise in society even more. In a world full of material offerings and promises, interpersonal ethical values will become increasingly important for people who appear to have everything. Responsible Christian ethics is such a value. And for that reason, this book is so important. It provides a sound footing by providing the best guide, the Biblical point of view thought through and desired by the Creator with respect to decision making and behavior.