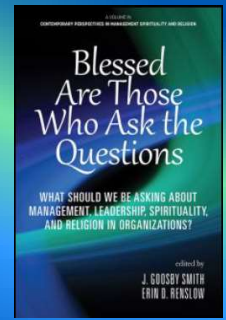


Inspiring Inclusion

What is the evidence for a faith-based approach to leadership development?

Valerie L. Myers Ph.D.

a chapter in



ABOUT THE BOOK Released May 2021: *Blessed are those who ask the questions: what should we be asking about management, leadership, spirituality, and religion in organizations?* (Goosby-Smith editor). *Interdisciplinary in nature and firmly grounded in scholarly literature, this book identifies and maps out bold new trajectories for advancing the study of management spirituality, and religion (including but going far beyond Western, Christian conceptualizations of religion). Sometimes universal, sometimes quite specific, this volume identifies unexplored, underexplored, or unresolved issues in the field and proposes new streams of research. A volume in Contemporary Perspectives in Management, Spirituality and Religion. Information Age Publishing. <https://www.infoagepub.com/products/Blessed-Are-Those-Who-Ask-the-Questions>*

Inspiring Inclusion: What is the evidence for a faith-based approach to leadership development?

Dr. Myers presents evidence from behavioral change research to show how structured, faith-based training can lead to more profound and lasting results than secular training. Achieving such results is urgent to accelerate change relative to diversity, equity, inclusion, and social justice. Diversity efforts typically stall because leaders lack skills to guide change and because training is either: 1) too narrowly focused (e.g., history, conversation, or implicit bias); 2) one-size-fits-all that is irrelevant for people at different stages of readiness to change; or 3) lacks grounding in tested behavioral change frameworks. In this chapter, Dr. Myers draws upon her expertise as an Organizational Psychologist to overcome those limits by using structured, faith-based intervention planning. She describes how the integration of behavioral change frameworks, diversity scholarship, and Christian faith can be applied to the intractable problem of social injustice to inspire inclusion. Insights are relevant for ecumenical leaders, business leaders, and professionals who are committed to personal growth, professional excellence, and social transformation.

In this chapter, you will learn that structured, faith-based interventions:

- Are **culturally relevant and more effective** than secular programs.
- Produce **greater magnitude and more lasting change** than secular programs.
- **Appeal to a broad range of people** (e.g., change champions, the ambivalent, and resisters).
- **Prevent and correct undesirable thoughts and behaviors, while facilitating positive change.**
- **Ignite change at multiple levels**, individual, relationship, and organization.
- Are **catalysts for systemic change**, when diffused throughout an organizational network.
- **Can inspire inclusion!**

To illustrate these points, Dr. Myers describes a faith-based business case that she authored and uses to teach **Inclusive Leadership to MBAs at the University of Michigan's Ross School of Business**. The case explores topics that drive organizational oppression, inertia, change, and innovation including: national culture, policy, organizational culture, leadership, team dynamics, diversity, bias, and myriad psycho-social factors that influence performance. This comprehensive case is central to Dr. Myers' uncommon, interdisciplinary approach to promote learning and skill building that yields more effective and inclusive leaders, better collaboration and problem-solving, more robust innovation, social justice, and a better world. Seminar series for religious and secular audiences are available.



Valerie L. Myers, Ph.D. is an Organizational Psychologist and expert in the psychology of diversity, inclusive leadership, and faith-based interventions. Myers brings 20 years of experience as a scholar, practitioner, and professor of graduate and executive education to help leaders refine their skills to lead positive change. Valerie's thought leadership is published in academic books and journals. A highly engaging speaker, she has addressed national and international conferences, congregations, and facilitated faith-based seminars. Valerie provides a lively, rigorous, and thought-provoking learning experience for leaders who are committed to personal growth and driving systemic change. Valerie L. Myers earned her doctoral degree from the University of Michigan (Ann Arbor), where she teaches at the Ross School of Business.

Learn more at: www.valeriemyers.org

Contact: valeriemyersphd@gmail.com

734.834.8304