

Excellent Solutions: Nonprofit Edition: How to Apply God's Wisdom for Greater Fruitfulness

Donald Mitchell

Derrick Z. Jackson, Photographer

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In *Excellent Solutions: Nonprofit Edition*, Donald Mitchell proposes to prove “that there is more than sufficient time, effort, physical resources, and money available to greatly improve the spiritual, moral, health, emotional, and physical circumstances of almost everyone on Earth.” That is a significant challenge for an author to take on, but Mitchell’s thorough and optimistic presentation provides a commendable and thoughtful plan for nonprofit organizations to follow as they strive to make important and lasting impacts on individuals and society.

Mitchell breaks his process into four stages, each with its own section: “Set Goals for Excellent Solutions,” “Eliminate ‘Stalled’ Thinking,” “Create and Implement an Excellent Solution,” and “Create and Implement an Excellent Solution By Using a Second Method.” “Excellent solutions” are those that reach beyond simplistic answers and blossom exponentially into far-reaching, positive actions without significantly increasing the initial effort. He begins with the essential element of goal-setting, but as is the case with all thirty-one of his lessons, Mitchell stresses the need to think in terms of goals that are not limited by negativity or narrow focus.

Mitchell excels at turning potentially complex ideas into easily understood steps that he reinforces with biblical passages, personal examples, and engaging explanations that communicate his points clearly without coming across as condescendingly simplistic. Rather, his style conveys the feeling of a favorite uncle teaching a child about important life lessons while giving constant encouragement. For example, near the end of one teaching segment, he writes, “When you have finished the five tasks, please accept my congratulations for having done so much valuable thinking.”

Biblical references and scripture passages abound, and Mitchell craftily uses them to support his concepts and to emphasize that his plan is biblically sound. His passion for his Christian principles and his belief in their ability to change the world, particularly through the effectiveness and excellent solutions of nonprofits, resonates throughout his writing. He does not simply want nonprofits to be successful in secular terms, but also in spiritual matters.

Excellent Solutions is packed with useful and clearly explained information, but Mitchell adds a creative twist that gives the 450-plus page book some visually inspiring moments. Before each lesson, he inserts an incredibly beautiful full-color nature photo by Derrick Z. Jackson. Whether intentional or not, these brilliant pictures inspire reflection on creation’s beauty around the world, subtly reinforcing Mitchell’s global concepts.

Mitchell practices what he teaches. He avoids narrow ideas, encourages positive thinking, and sets large goals to make the biggest possible spiritual and social impact—precisely what *Excellent Solutions* is all about.

JEFF FRIEND (July 21, 2014)

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