

The Camino Way: Lessons in Leadership from a Walk Across Spain

Victor Prince

AMACOM (Jul 13, 2017)

Hardcover \$21.95 (208pp)

978-0-8144-3824-4

Prince's is both a highly engaging story and a remarkably effective way to communicate business lessons.

When senior business executive Victor Prince set out to hike the Camino de Santiago across Spain, he expected to follow in the footsteps of thousands of other *peregrinos* (pilgrims) who went before him. Little did he know the journey would also teach him a lot about leadership.

In this first-person narrative, Prince recounts his adventure, but unlike the typical travel diary, *The Camino Way* brilliantly draws continuous connections between the Camino, which started as a religious pilgrimage hundreds of years ago, and contemporary business leadership.

On the back of the passport every pilgrim receives are seven simple statements, such as “Welcome Each Day, Its Pleasures and Its Challenges,” and “Make Others Feel Welcome.” At first, Prince thought that these were merely commonsense reminders, but they turned out to be guideposts for his journey.

The author uses these “Camino Lessons” to impart his own insights. For each, Prince suggests numerous tactics, inspired by his walk, that can be applied to modern-day business management and leadership. He realizes, for example, that he has always run efficient meetings, but that “somewhere along the way, [he'd] lost sight of the human part of the meetings [he] chaired.” The associated lesson, “Greet people in a meaningful way,” offers ideas for humanizing one's leadership style.

Several chapters at the end of the book encourage readers to view the Camino experience through a personal lens. The author references certain occurrences on the trail and demonstrates “how to do this at work.” This presents managers with the opportunity to follow specific strategies that will help refresh their attitudes toward themselves and others.

Prince closes the book with six key benefits he took from the Camino. In a creative twist, he characterizes the Camino as being on par with some of the world's most successful organizations because of “its ability to meet a customer demand that has endured for centuries.”

The Camino Way is both a highly engaging story and a remarkably effective way to communicate and dramatize many important business leadership lessons.

BARRY SILVERSTEIN (July/August 2017)

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