

The Purpose Effect: Building Meaning in Yourself, Your Role and Your Organization

Dan Pontefract

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Advocating corporate social responsibility, *The Purpose Effect: Building Meaning in Yourself, Your Role, and Your Organization*, by Dan Pontefract, is an inspiring how-to guide that proposes a plan to move away from the all too common us-versus-them mentality toward building more collaborative and productive relationships between organizations and employees.

Positing a three-way relationship—between an individual's purpose, an organization's purpose, and an individual's function within an organization—employees are advised to first deliberately and clearly define each, and then find a good match between the three elements. An introduction provides an overview that lays out a clear road map for applying this three-pronged Purpose Effect philosophy. Subsequent chapters further define and elaborate on these principles.

Case-study examples help to illustrate each concept and also lend credibility to the technique by detailing how individuals and organizations have benefited from the approach, both in greater personal fulfillment and a stronger bottom line. Advising that organizations who take a lead role in expressing a clear purpose will in turn encourage employees to follow, the consulting firm Deloitte is among those presented as a model for creating a “culture of purpose” by seeking to instill confidence in employees and identifying “top drivers of employee confidence.”

Suggestions are easy to follow, with bulleted lists and figures highlighting most key points. Probing questions encourage an individualized definition of purpose, asking not only “Who am I in life *and* at work?” but also whether organizations exist solely to make a profit, and whether one's goal is to become the boss.

The enlightening guide is aimed at organizational leaders, primarily those who share the view that corporations should work to benefit society. Suggestions complement the current corporate trends toward strategic communication and a greater focus on professional branding. However, the advice is also useful to any employees who are striving to be more mindful about work-related decisions, from job hunting to carrying out daily responsibilities, all in a purposeful way.

MARIA SIANO (Summer 2016)

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