

enlightening, inspiring, and thoughtful; his writing is clear, warmly personal, thought provoking, and deeply engaging. I would have liked him to explain more clearly his view of common grace and the common good, both of which he only briefly mentions a few times. The common good is perhaps easier to extrapolate from his text, but common grace may be somewhat less obvious, especially because this book can and should be read by non-Christians as well as Christians. While some of his stories and examples are international, it might also have been helpful to a potentially global audience to include a few more examples of twenty-first-century people around the world who are living out their vocations with common grace for the common good. We have so much to learn from our global friends. While Garber mentions living out one's faith daily in marriages and families, the example of one wife and mother includes her admirably also starting her own home stationery business. However, I wonder if it is his view that being a parent without a second employment-related job or vocational calling is also admirable. Perhaps these will be addressed more fully in an addendum or updated text in the future.

*Visions of Vocation: Common Grace for the Common Good* adds penetrating questions, helpful insights, biblically grounded perspectives, and real-life examples to the existing literature on vocation and calling and the integration of faith in work. This book would be useful for professors and their undergraduate students to broadly inspire and give foundational meaning to the vocations and callings of those students. It would be particularly helpful for college students who are beginning to question and discern their own vocations and who are wondering why, where, and how to give of themselves with common grace in service to the common good.

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## Make Your Job a Calling: How the Psychology of Vocation Can Change Your Life at Work

**Bryan J. Dik and Ryan D. Duffy**

West Conshohocken, Pennsylvania: Templeton Press,  
 2012 (281 pages)

While humankind has always been in search of meaning in their lives and work, the newest generation of workers shows an intensity of interest that has stimulated new research and practical thinking on an age-old topic: calling. In recent years, there have been some illuminating books on this topic (e.g., *Courage and Calling* by Gordon Smith, *The Call* by Os Guinness, and *Fabric of This World* by Lee Hardy). These works are, without a doubt, valuable examinations of this important topic. While there is no shortage of books to address philosophical and theological underpinnings of *calling*, Dik and Duffy provide a fresh look by firmly grounding their presentation in the growing empirical research in psychology, management, and social science more generally. Unlike earlier works that have applied a singular focus, these authors apply a “scientist-practitioner” perspective

to the topic, which is greatly appreciated by this reviewer. This perspective necessitates a foundation in strong theory and empirical research as well as in application and practical prescriptions for productive outcomes.

“Understanding what it means to have a calling can help each of us examine our own lives and identify how we can transform our careers and jobs in deeply meaningful, satisfying, and life-giving ways—ways that, directly or indirectly, make the world a better place.” Dik and Duffy state that the purpose of the book is to help readers “put this understanding to use in the context of your own job, your own career, your own life.” The authors begin by tackling the diverse and sometimes competing ways that calling is defined, which has led to much confusion. The discussion moves on to present the authors’ approach to resolving the confusion by proposing a definition of calling in the context of work. Then they lay out their approach that “stands on the shoulders of centuries of wisdom on calling from theologians and philosophers, but that is built on contemporary theory, a rapidly growing body of scientific research, and their own experiences as vocational psychologists.”

Their approach includes a detailed look at three dimensions of calling they have identified: a transcendent summons, meaning and purpose at work, and other goals and motives. The authors follow this with a chapter on practical guidelines for discerning a calling when it comes to making a career choice as well as transforming an existing career path. The book concludes with a chapter on the boundaries and challenges of a calling by exploring the perils, pitfalls, and opportunities of pursuing a calling, including the role that calling might play in the new world of work as “the norms of the workplace continue to morph into something that our grandparents would hardly recognize.”

A particularly helpful section is the description of Robert Bellah’s typology of people’s three potential orientations toward work: job, career, and calling. These orientations are explored through the use of case studies and assessment questions that help readers assess their orientations. Viewing work as a job involves valuing work for what it provides (e.g., paycheck, benefits, and stability). A career orientation incorporates the sense of self-worth that people derive from what they accomplish on the job. For those with this perspective, work provides a clear set of rules they can follow and a tangible ladder they can climb for achievement. Finally, those with a calling orientation see work as a way to make meaning from nine to five and to somehow make the world a better place.

Dik and Duffy reclaim theory and practical advice from the Job Characteristics Model that has been around for over forty years—yet most management practitioners have failed to leverage its value. The authors do a fine job of highlighting the ways this theory helps us understand how we can make work be more meaningful and motivating. The Job Characteristics Model has received overwhelming interest as of late, as evidenced by over twelve million “views” of Daniel Pink’s TED Talk on the topic. The main idea of this model is that jobs come with different demands and provide different kinds of opportunities for employees. Jobs vary according to purpose (task significance, task identity, and skill variety), autonomy, and feedback. Dik and Duffy adeptly apply this model to the discussion of calling, and they highlight the importance of the context of

the work: the relationships at work and the organizational mission that aligns (or not) with a person's values.

Chapter 7 on job crafting is an excellent review of this new approach to job design and motivation. Job crafting refers to a "technique where employees change their work tasks, branch out into alternative work activities, build stronger relationships with coworkers, supervisors, or customers and basically re-envision the very purpose of what they do all day." The authors provided the compelling science behind the approach as well as several examples of what this looks like in practice.

On a few occasions, the authors rely on Maslow's hierarchy to make their point. I see this as propagating a theory that has limited empirical evidence and does not suit the evidence-based approach they take in the remainder of the book. For me, this detracted from the points the authors were trying to make and could undermine their credibility with some researchers.

In chapter 5, "Serving Others," there is a great opportunity to connect the ideas from this book to Adam Grant's recent work (*Give and Take*) that reports that people who select a "giver" strategy are the most successful. This seems to contradict some of the findings from evolutionary psychology (which would say that people who are "matchers" would be most successful). This linkage makes Dik and Duffy's suggestions even stronger. In addition, the authors' work connects strongly to the Acton Institute's recent video presentation *For the Life of World: Letters to the Exiles*. In particular, episode three (Creative Service) focuses on the interconnected nature of the complex web of occupations and workers in the world. "For those who approach work as a calling, understanding that social impact is very important and has a motivating effect on their efforts," Dik and Duffy note.

Along with the main body of the book, Dik and Duffy provide rich supplemental resources to help readers apply the learning to their own careers and lives. First, the book includes a detailed section, Questions and Answers, that addresses many of the questions the authors have received "about calling from people trying to better understand the concept or exploring how it fits in their lives." In addition, there is a companion website ([www.makeyourjobacalling.com](http://www.makeyourjobacalling.com)) that provides a wealth of additional resources for people who are looking to further study the science and practice of calling. Finally, Templeton Press recently published a resource guide for the book; it is a highly practical, user-friendly manual that discussion leaders in all types of settings can use to help groups of readers work together to derive as much benefit as possible from the book.

In summary, Dik and Duffy provide a timely and thorough examination of this important concept. Their book and associated resources will be equally helpful for students and young adults just starting the journey of calling as well as for workers looking to better understand their unique purpose, to change their life at work, and to discover how they can make the world a better place.

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