

Managing for Good Work: Principles and Practices of Humanistic Management Based on Catholic Social Thought



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1 Introduction

What conditions at work would be considered just and good for people? What working conditions would enable people to develop themselves properly as befits their nature as human beings? What is the role of business leaders in designing organizations and instituting management practices which bring such conditions about? What does Catholic social thought (CST) have to say to guide the reflections and practices of humanistic managers?

These are important questions for business leaders, in general, but especially so in today's economic realities where poverty and profound inequalities exist even when substantial amounts of wealth are being generated for a minority of the members of societies. The co-authors, an advocate of CST in management at De La Salle University's Management and Organization Department (Teehankee) and a business owner-manager (Sevilla), partnered to explore these questions in this chapter. They were prompted to write this chapter by a challenge posed by Pope Francis during the World Economic Forum conference in Davos a few years ago. Pope Francis presented this challenge to the assembled business leaders:

...the successes which have been achieved, even if they have reduced poverty for a great number of people, often have led to a widespread social exclusion. Indeed, the majority of the men and women of our time still continue to experience daily insecurity, often with

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dramatic consequences. . . . Those working in these sectors have a precise responsibility towards others, particularly those who are most frail, weak and vulnerable. It is intolerable that thousands of people continue to die every day from hunger, even though substantial quantities of food are available, and often simply wasted. . . . Without ignoring, naturally, the specific scientific and professional requirements of every context, I ask you to ensure that humanity is served by wealth and not ruled by it. (Vatican Radio, 2014)

The challenge of Pope Francis is a core challenge of humanistic management that resonates in CST: How can management practice be oriented toward serving human dignity and flourishing? In light of the Pope's challenge, this paper addresses the questions posed above and aims to:

- Explain the normative basis for good work and humanistic management emerging from CST.
- Present management applications and reflections of one of the authors (Sevilla), a practicing manager and head of Philippine firm, The Leather Collection, on how she endeavors to manage her firm humanistically based on indigenous concepts and CST.

2 Work and Integral Human Development: The Perspective of Catholic Social Thought

In the encyclical *Centesimus Annus*, Saint John Paul II asserted a core argument of humanistic management based on CST with respect to the business organization: “the purpose of a business firm is not simply to make a profit, but is to be found in its very existence as a community of persons who in various ways are endeavoring to satisfy their basic needs, and who form a particular group at the service of the whole of society” (John Paul II, 1991). While the need for a firm to provide some value to society is immediately recognizable as a business goal even in mainstream management literature, the assertion that such firms must also build community and meet the basic needs of its human members is less obvious and comprises a characteristic component of the Catholic vision for the firm (Teehankee, 2008).

With respect to poverty, on the other hand, traditional concern regarding the role of business organizations has revolved around the importance of providing for people's material goods. The vision of CST for the satisfaction of human needs is much broader; however, in the encyclical *Mater et Magistra*, Saint John XXIII argued that:

Justice is to be observed not only in the distribution of wealth, but also in regard to the conditions in which men are engaged in producing this wealth. Every man has, of his very nature, a need to express himself in his work and thereby to perfect his own being. (82)

Thus, those who manage business organizations need to be alert that persons may be impoverished in many ways apart from materially if they are not able to develop to their full potential as human beings. CST argues for the role of organizations in facilitating this multidimensional aspect of human development as a core goal of all

organizational work. It is referred to as the “subjective” dimension of work to distinguish it from the “objective” aspect which refers to the production of output through work. The Vatican document, *The Vocation of the Business Leader*¹ (Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, 2012), further explains the role of the subjective dimension of work as a critical element of not only productive but also *good work*:

The worker, the subject of work, is also greatly affected by his or her own work. Whether we think about the executive, the farmer, the nurse, the janitor, the engineer, or tradespeople, work changes both the world (objective dimension) and the worker (subjective dimension). Because work changes the person, it can enhance or suppress that person’s dignity; it can allow a person to develop or to be damaged.

The importance of work as a means for dignity was emphasized by Saint John Paul II in the encyclical *Laborem Exercens* (John Paul II, 1981):

While work is not the source of human dignity, it is the means by which persons express and develop both being and dignity. Persons are the subjects of work and are not to be looked upon simply as a means of production or a human form of capital. Work must be organized to serve the workers’ humanity, support their family life, and increase the common good of the human community—the three purposes of work.

Employees are, therefore, not to be construed as merely means in a production process but also as themselves the end of productive work. Sound work must be organized and managed in ways that not only ensures productivity but also the promotion of human flourishing in all its aspects—integral human development. Through the concepts of the objective and subjective dimensions of work, CST effectively challenges managers to think beyond the traditional lens of productivity and efficiency and always consider the many impacts of work on the workers themselves—including the managers (Alford & Naughton, 2001).

Explicit references to good work in the CST sense have been slowly entering management literature. Alford and Naughton (2001) elaborated on the various dimensions of human development at work that managers need to give attention to (Table 1).

Alford and Naughton (2001) show that the promotion of good work by managers does not have to be an abstract affair. In fact, for the most part, the various dimensions of human development are influenced by very concrete managerial actions. Some of these dimensions have been addressed in secular management literature for some time. For example, the field of ergonomics promotes worker’s interactions with others and with the physical environment in support of health and well-being (Wilson, 2000). The fields of organization development and learning organizations (Argyris & Schon, 1978; Schein, 1999; Senge, 2006) have argued for engaging the thinking and emotional commitment of workers through various modes

¹“The Vocation of the Business Leader: A reflection” was released by the Vatican Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace in 2012, and later updated, to synthesize Catholic social teachings for effective communication to practicing business leaders. The document explains practical principles intended to advance human dignity and the common good. It seeks to do this based on the promotion of the good and the sustainable creation of wealth and its just distribution, without forgetting the fundamental value of solidarity, especially for the poor and vulnerable.

Table 1 Human development at work (Alford & Naughton, 2001)

1. Bodily development—The physical structure of the workplace and the design of work processes and equipment are calculated to protect employee’s health and to respect their overall, physical well-being
2. Cognitive development—Employees’ expected contributions to the work process are made intelligible to them; jobs are kept “smart” to exercise and develop employees’ talents and skills; overall, employees’ cognitive abilities are matched to proportionately challenging work
3. Emotional development—Through the freedom to take initiative without fear of reprisal, employees exercise responsibility and accept accountability for their work
4. Aesthetic development—Craftsmanship is encouraged, and within the limits prescribed by their uses, products are designed and manufactured with an eye for beauty, elegance, and harmony with nature; services are conceived and delivered in ways that honor the human dignity of both the provider and the receiver
5. Social development—Internally, the organization encourages appropriate expressions of collegiality; the organization exhibits a “social conscience,” encourages the same in employees, and supports employees’ initiatives in the direction of service to the wider community
6. Moral development—The firm’s managerial practices and work rules recognize that human acts are as such moral acts; working relationships of every kind should demonstrate respect for the human dignity of each party to them
7. Spiritual development—Work is understood as a vocation, and valued as collaboration, in the presence of God, for the good of one’s fellow human beings

Source: Alford and Naughton (2001, p. 75)

of participation and dialogue. What CST brings uniquely to the literature on work is that all the various dimensions of human development constitute an integrated whole which cannot be dealt with piecemeal—a complete vision of the human person which organizations are ethically bound to respect and to nurture. Human beings have inherent worth as such but also because they are, ultimately, spiritual beings created by God.

In the promotion of work that dignifies people and promotes their total development, CST deploys a critical principle for good work—subsidiarity. The *Vocation of the Business Leader* explains, “The principle of subsidiarity is rooted in the conviction that, as images of God, the flourishing of human beings entails the best use of their intelligence and freedom. Human dignity is never respected by unnecessarily constraining or suppressing that intelligence and freedom.”

An implication is that managers are not to unduly impose their will or interpretation of situations on their subordinates but instead must allow the latter to study, appreciate, and exercise judgment with respect to realities that they observe at their level of the organization—as long as this always takes into account the common good or, specifically, the need for development of all other affected parties. The appropriate application of subsidiarity in an organization promotes almost all dimensions of human development at once. Employees who are trusted to make decisions within the proper scope of their responsibility and enabled (through proper tools and training) to make such decisions at their own levels are better able to develop confidence (emotional development), prudence (moral development), attend to their health needs (bodily development), think and reason (cognitive

development), pursue their work as a craft (aesthetic development), work with others and for others (social development), and align their work with their own sense of transcendental purpose (spiritual development).

3 Case in Practice: Organizing Good Work at The Leather Collection (TLC)

The Leather Collection (TLC) is a 27-year-old first-generation Filipino-owned small enterprise engaged in the design, manufacture, and distribution of genuine leather accessories to the corporate gifts and private label markets. It is owned and managed by couple Federico Sevilla, Jr. and Maria Yolanda Capistrano (aka Yolanda Sevilla). The company flourished and experienced double-digit growth in its early years, after which it experienced challenges in the wake of the Asian financial crisis, the influx of cheap goods from China, the global recession, the European recession, and the ups and downs of the Philippine economy.

Throughout its history, TLC has reorganized its workforce and reengineered its systems and processes in response to the times, seeking to survive and remain true to its mission and values. Average tenure is in the vicinity of 25 years. The three longest-serving employees have been with the company from its birth; its managing account officer has been with the company for 27 years. Including owner-managers, the current head count is 36 members referred to as “TLCkers” (from “seekers”).

The rest of this section cites passages from *The Vocation of the Business Leader* (VBL) (as they are numbered in the original) and narrates the author’s related management experience and reflections in the first-person voice. Individuals are referred to by initials.

TLC uses a number of indigenous Filipino interpersonal and organizational concepts and principles which are intended to appeal to the workers’ cultural values and which are in line with CST. These are summarized in the table below with approximate English translations:

Filipino concept or principle	English translation
<i>Hanap-buhay</i>	The search for life—life in its fullness
<i>Magkabalikat sa hanap-buhay</i>	Community of workers and teamwork
<i>Hindi pwede ang pwede na</i>	Searching for excellence. Good enough is not good enough

VBL passage 31: “. . .each of us has a duty. . .to promote that flourishing (of others) for we are all really responsible for all.”

Example #1

Since TLC is positioned in our domestic market as corporate gifts specialists, our Chairman (also our product master was invited by a Philippine foundation to partner with a group of marginalized women who were artisanal weavers of mats and market baskets. Their idea was to produce corporate gift items (e.g., meeting folders,

passport wallets) handwoven in indigenous fibers, which TLC would trim with leather. Their objective was to provide these mothers and grandmothers with a sustainable source of income.

Our chairman did not think this a workable idea and instead offered to visit the community to assess its level of weaving mastery and openness to learning how to weave with a different material.

Now on its fifth year, the partnership between the Sibaltan Women Weavers Association (SWWA) and TLC is beginning to flourish. SWWA has become part of TLC's value/supply chain, providing the latter with handwoven leather panels for an assortment of gift items which are now being manufactured for private label brands based in the European Union.

Not only has the income of the artisanal weavers multiplied tenfold so has their self-esteem and mastery of the new medium (leather), mastery of new weaves and weaving techniques (designed by TLC's industrial designer), increased productivity, and consistency of quality (TLC provides them with jigs and molds and continuous training).

Example #2

I (Sevilla) am an active member of the Women's Business Council of the Philippines and an advocate of WEE (women's economic empowerment) and women helping women up the value chain. Through the GREAT Women (Gender-Responsive Economic Action for the Transformation of Women) Initiative, TLC (with over 50% women in its workforce and management) became a member of the GREAT Women collective and was partnered with a group of women tribal weavers of abaca (Manila hemp) fibers. TLC designed a collection of bags and accessories in leather accessorized with their handwoven textile. These products are now being distributed through private label brands based in the European Union.

Just like the women in Example #1, the women of the Tribal Women Weavers Association (TWWA) now enjoy increased income and self-esteem (they were both awed and delighted to see the finished products of our collaboration). In addition, we are part of an effort to preserve our cultural heritage, and the initial success of these aboriginal women is inspiring younger women to take up the art and craft of backstrap weaving.

VBL passage 44: "The way human work is designed and managed has a significant impact. . . on whether people will flourish through their work."

Hanap-buhay (trans. TLC Guiding Principle: The search for life—life in its fullness)

We in The Leather Collection (TLC) perceive work as more than what one does to earn a living and as a vehicle for experiencing life in its fullness, for actualizing one's full potential, and for developing the whole human being—mind, heart, body, and spirit.

My husband and I started our first enterprise (grandmother to The Leather Collection) when we wed, in response to the need to provide for our growing family and our need to find meaningful and fulfilling work where we could employ and develop our talents and skills.

In the course of time, we came to realize that we were in a position to provide the same opportunity to those who worked with us.

“...today the decisive factor (for production) is increasingly man himself, that is, his knowledge... his capacity for interrelated and compact organization...”—*Saint John Paul II*

Magkabalikat sa hanap-buhay (trans. TLC Guiding Principle: Community of Workers)

We see ourselves as a community of co-workers with a common purpose—to build a Filipino company that is a showcase of excellence in product quality and customer service.

We emerged from a company-wide visioning workshop held in our second year of existence with the battle cry: “World class, *gawang Pinoy!*” (trans. made by Filipinos!). We also came up with our objectives, the first one of which was to foster mutually nurturing relationships with all our stakeholders.

This was first advocated in the relationship between and among employers and employees. Attendance is a core value. Attendance means not just physical presence in the workplace, but each employee is expected to be attending to his work (his role and function) during work hours. Tardiness and habitual absences are sanctioned.

The rationale behind this is the concept of being *magkabalikata* (*community of workers*). We work in teams, and each team’s output is computed based on total man-hours per workday. This being the case, each member of the team must be attending to his work and generating the expected output for the team to meet its daily target.

3.1 Values Reformation

This requires not just values formation but values reformation. In most workers’ perspective, one fulfills the attendance requirement simply by clocking in the required number of work hours per day. Through general assemblies, meetings with team leaders, and one-on-one counseling sessions, we explain that this does not fulfill the employment contract. One must be working or at work during work hours, not timing in at the start of work hours and timing out at its end. The same rule applies for break times. Habitual tardiness and absenteeism are sanctioned and can be cause for termination.

Example #3

Worker JJA, while a competent worker with output that met both quality and quantity standards, was habitually tardy and/or absent. Over a period of 3 months, he was either late or absent for work 50% of the time during the peak season when it was critical that all team members be present to fulfill orders on time. Furthermore, he did not seek approval for “vacation” leaves but simply informed his supervisor by text in the morning that he was not coming in that day for activities that could have been pre-planned (e.g., transferring the cremains of his mother from one town to

another). His other absences were for “sick” leaves when he reports “*masama ang pakiramdam ko*” (I’m not feeling well).

He was served a first notice asking him to explain why he should not be terminated for habitual absenteeism and tardiness. In conference he admitted that he had neglected his duty due to family problems (he was “not feeling well” because he felt rejected and ostracized by his family). He also claimed he was “not fit to work” hence his frequent absences (he was previously diagnosed with pulmonary tuberculosis for which he had received treatment and was given a “fit to work” certificate).

After reviewing the case, our managers and team leaders agreed that there was cause to terminate JJA.

In the course of making a final decision, our chairman assessed JJA’s performance over the length of his tenure with TLC. JJA’s disposition was also examined—was he contrite, did he seek to make amends and change his ways? The answer to this was yes. My husband and I (Chairman and CEO) decided, in consultation with team leaders to give JJA another chance—he would be put on probation for 3 months with very clear expectations regarding changes in behavior, particularly in his attendance.

I called a general assembly of all TLCKers to discuss the case and how it was handled and how management proposed to resolve it. It was made clear that this decision implied that all TLCKers were expected not only to respect and accept management’s decision, but were duty bound, as *kabalikat*, a community of workers, to enable JJA to reform and meet the conditions of his probation. The entire work community felt it was a good decision and congruent with our corporate values.

3.2 Advocating Mutually Nurturing Relationships with Other Stakeholders

Putting this value into practice is most challenging in the relationship with our customers, many of which are large and/or multinational corporations with purchasing and payment standard operating procedures (SOPs) that are designed to optimize their profit and increase their internal efficiencies at the expense (hopefully not deliberate) of their suppliers and/or service providers.

Example #4

Customers dictate terms of payment (30/60/90/120 days from “goods receipt” of deliveries) yet negotiate prices down to exclude cost of money. There are designated check release days, and should that day be a holiday, checks are released the following week.

How have we addressed this? We make the effort to include terms of payment in the negotiation process, with prices calculated based not just on order quantity but also on terms of payment.

Some customers are sneaky. They request a quote for 12,000 units, say at 15-day payment term, then issue a purchase order for 3000 units at the price of 12,000 units reasoning that they will order a total of 12,000 units within the year and that this is just the first of several purchase orders. We make the effort to explain that the price at 12,000 units assumes the efficiencies of scale gained when one has a “long-run” vs. a “short-run” job, to no avail.

We recently did not accept such an order and held our ground—either they ordered 12,000 units in one lot at the price quoted, or 3000 units at the recalculated price for the lower quantity. Our reason? We need to have win-win contracts for our relationship to be sustainable.

Their response, after several phone calls and threats of losing the business, was to issue a new purchase order for 3000 units at the recalculated price.

This time around they adhered to the 15-day payment term. In the past they have calculated the 15 days (workdays, not calendar days) based on the date the “Goods Receipt” is received by purchasing from their warehouse (which has taken as long as a week). In the price negotiations with the buyer, we categorically stated that this kind of “abuse” was no longer acceptable to us since it was costing us and had gone on long enough.

We hope that in advocating mutually nurturing relationships with our other stakeholders, particularly our customers, we are also promoting “good work” in their companies.

VBL passage 45: *Foster dignified work*: “. . . the grandeur of one’s work not only leads to improved products and services but develops the worker [as a person] himself. . . work changes both the world and the worker. . . Because work changes the person, it can enhance or suppress the person’s dignity. It can allow the person to develop or to be damaged.”

VBL passage 46: “Work is for [the person] man and not [the person] man for work. . . Good work. . .’s context promotes social relationships and real collaboration. . . This requires from leaders the ability to develop the right person in the right job and the freedom and responsibility to do just that. . . Moreover, reward structures should make sure that those workers who do engage their labor in a sincere way also receive the necessary esteem and compensation from their companies.”

Our recruitment, hiring, and assessment process includes a fourfold assessment of the applicant’s profile to ensure a job and organizational fit: skills, personality, inclination, and character (SPIC). Skills are based on previous training, experience, and previous job descriptions. Personality identifies the applicant’s presenting persona. Inclination surfaces her interests, dreams, plans, preferred work, and learning style. Character reveals the person’s value set.

While the job description for similar functions would be the same, each worker would be assigned to a task that would best fit his unique “SPIC” profile and would be given special assignments that would allow him to employ his other talents.

Together with the employee, we also assess whether he/she is assigned to a function where he/she is rendering his/her “highest value added” to the work community. When this level is reached, and he/she has found his/her niche, he/she is allowed to flourish there.

Example #5

GFJ started out as our security guard. His skill set was appropriate for his function. However, when drawing up his SPIC profile, we found that he was technically inclined, that he had a pleasant personality, was a good team player, and had analytical skills and leadership potential. We started training him on-the-job to do minor repairs and maintenance until he reached mastery level. He rose to the challenge and is now head of repairs and maintenance.

3.3 Skills Training

One becomes a member of Team TLC with a set of skills needed for the enterprise to fulfill its objective. In the course of his work, the TLCker's (from "seeker for excellence," another core value) skills are developed and enhanced. She starts off usually with a single skill at the acceptable level of mastery and graduates to become a master at that particular task. She is also cross-trained and becomes multiskilled.

3.4 Continuous Learning and Improvement

Core values—fostering mutually nurturing relationships, team work (*magkabalikat sa hanap-buhay*), searching for excellence (*hindi puede ang puede na*, trans. "Good enough is not good enough"), responsibility and accountability, transparency, and integrity—were promoted, advocated, and ingrained initially in general assemblies and team building activities and in "walking our talk."

Example #6

Sometime in 2000, a multinational corporate customer rejected our delivery (the first time this had happened) claiming that the material used was substandard. We immediately pulled out the delivery to their claim. To our chagrin, we found out that he was right! Despite our quality assurance online and sign-off/sign-on protocols, the substandard material went unnoticed by the entire production line from materials preparation to assembly, finishing, and packaging! What did we do? We replaced the customer's order, tightened protocols, and—most important of all—invited all our craftsmen and women to destroy the substandard products with stripping knives. This is a lesson no one has forgotten and was the first and last time an order has been rejected.

3.5 Justice with Mercy

While we have rules and regulations, policies and practices, workers who violate such at the expense of the company (understood as Team TLC) are treated with justice tempered by mercy.

Example #7

Manager MTM went on sudden and emergency leave in the middle of the peak season after an altercation with her husband. It was found that she had been having an affair with the company driver and that the entire organization, except for my husband and myself, were aware of this. All were scandalized but did not know how to address their concern about the appropriateness of the relationship and its impact on company operations. No one thought to bring it up to the owners and general managers.

This threw company operations into disarray. MTM was a key person—she was in charge of manufacturing operations. However, she could not discharge her duties due to her psycho-emotional state. She filed an emergency leave. The knee jerk reaction was to ask her to resign for causing “moral scandal.”

My husband, our chairman and manufacturing director, her direct supervisor, met her regularly, counseling her and accompanying her through her crisis. She was thrown out of her home, and her husband threatened to keep her children away from her.

We both prayed over her case and discerned what might be the right response to the situation. Consultations with key personnel were held. All the employees filed a request for clemency. After several counseling sessions with MTM and in the interest of giving her a chance to pick up the pieces of her life (her work was very important to her; in the midst of a troubled marriage, it was one area of her life that gave her fulfillment), she was reintegrated with very clear objectives: to help her start over, to accompany her, and to help her fulfill her resolve to move forward.

MTM is back at work and is more effective and efficient than she was in the past. She has found inner peace and calm. She lives apart from her family but talks to her children (a boy and a girl, aged 5 and 7 years) daily, monitors their activities, attends their school functions, and has them sleep over on weekends (whenever their father allows them to). She has turned to God, goes to mass, and spends time in the Adoration Chapel as often as she can. She offers all her trials and tribulations to God and thanks him for what consolations she now enjoys—the embrace of her *kabalikat sa hanap-buhay* (work community), the support of her family of origin, and the love of her children. She also values her role and function as their mother more now than she did before. They are now her top priority, not work nor her personal “happiness.”

VBL passages 47 and 48: “The principle of subsidiarity recognizes that in human societies, smaller communities exist within larger ones.”

“The principle of subsidiarity applies to the structure of...business organizations... We develop in our work best when we use our intelligence and freedom to achieve shared goals and to create and sustain right relationships with one another and with those served by the organization... This fosters initiative, innovation, creativity and a sense of shared responsibility.”

Example #8

The Leather Collection’s organization is made up of work units or cells. The Manufacturing Department is made up of the following work units: Product

Research and Development, Materials Preparation, Assembly (composed of several lines or cells whose size and composition varies according to work-in-process), Finishing, Packaging and Packing, and Dispatching. Each work unit acts as a team and is responsible for contributing their share to meeting the department's targets.

Production planning is done by the operations manager together with the work unit and line leaders to determine output per man hour for each step in the production process of a particular product model and plan work schedules and work unit composition to optimize productivity and efficiency.

Quality assurance is every craftsman's responsibility. Following the *kanban* principle of "sign off, sign on," worker A passes on his "finished product" to worker B after ensuring that it is of good quality; worker B checks the product before accepting it to verify that it is of good quality and is ready for the next step in the production process.

VBL passage 49: "...subsidiarity provides business leaders with three practical steps:

- Clearly define the realm of autonomy and decision rights to be made at every level of the company. . .
- Teach and equip employees, making sure that they have the right tools, training, and experience to carry out their tasks.
- Accept that the persons to whom tasks and responsibilities have been given will make their decisions in freedom and, thereby in full trust, the risks of their decisions. . .nurture mutual respect and responsibility. . ."

VBL passage 50: "Under the principle of subsidiarity. . . [co-workers] are indeed 'co-entrepreneurs.'"

Each *kabalikat* (*community mate*) or TLCKer is expected to ensure that costs are kept reasonable and profit optimized.

Example #9

Sales officers are provided with order quantity-based price guides and are expected to negotiate the best prices and terms of payment for the company and to resist the temptation to sell at the lowest possible price just to bag the order. Commissions are a percentage of transaction value, so desired performance is rewarded commensurately.

To optimize operating profit:

- Materials Control ensures leather hides ordered and delivered are of the optimum size and quality to ensure maximum yield and reduce spoilage.
- Materials Preparation cuts components with the end in view of maximizing yield and minimizing spoilage further.
- Assembly organizes its work teams for each step in the process to ensure maximum productivity, assigning the right craftsman for the right process and reengineering process to increase productivity

After-action reviews are conducted after each major project is completed to analyze best practice for each step in the business process (from inquiry to order

fulfillment), the objective of which is to increase productivity and efficiency while ensuring product and service quality. This fosters continuous learning and improvement with a focus on our multiple bottom lines.

3.6 *Sevilla's Practitioner Reflections*

As we continue managing our enterprise, leading our community of workers *kabalikat* in the search for life in its fullness (*hanap-buhay*) and advocating sustainable (mutually nurturing) relationships with all our stakeholders, we are growing more convinced that work is a vehicle for salvation of human flourishing (transformation, conversion).

We have also learned that our circle of influence of promoting integral human development is not limited to ourselves and our *kabalikat community mates* in TLC. Instead our circle has grown to include both SWWA and TWWA, now integral parts of our value chain. We are committed to spreading the gospel of good work—work that is a vehicle for the full flourishing of (wo)man, reading the signs of the times and responding to the call of the times.

Before our involvement with De La Salle University's Management and Organization Department (MOD) and its advocacy for the practice of CST in the workplace, we were not aware that this was in fact the framework for our leadership style. While both my husband and I were born into Catholic families and studied in Catholic schools, we did not consciously strive to practice Catholic social teaching as business leaders. We simply practiced what we believed was right, guided by the Christian principles we had imbibed as we were growing up. We were very vocal about our values, and one of the gifts of being entrepreneurs is being able to “walk our talk” and advocate our deepest held values.

Our involvement with De La Salle's MOD has resulted in our active engagement in training business students to make socially responsible decisions, telling our story and sharing our experiences in the hope of contributing toward building God's kingdom in the world of business.

4 Conclusion

The challenge for managers to organize work for human development is a daunting one, given the demands of global competitiveness. Fortunately, the normative bases for good work and humanistic management are fully explained. Considerable intellectual resources have been generated by CST and VBL, particularly on the nature of work and its relationship to human dignity and development. These resources are accessible for the guidance of prudent managers of good will everywhere.

However, the use of such knowledge resources requires disciplined prudence and practical creativity, as shown by the example of The Leather Collection. Business organizations do not become humane places for people to work in by default. In fact, the opposite is the natural tendency. Thus, business leaders must actively manage in order to provide conditions for workers to flourish to their full potential in terms of health, emotion, thinking, relationships, morality, aesthetics, and transcendent purpose. The business leaders of The Leather Collection enable such conditions through culturally relevant language, values-based communication practices, collaboration, and sensitive policy enforcement.

We recommend that other managers likewise conscientiously pursue practice guided by principles of human development, the common good, and subsidiarity. They will have to apply their creative abilities to adapt their practices to the principles. Their task will be assisted not only by deep and reflective study of the principles but also through collaborations with researchers and teachers on CST. Finally, the task of advancing humanistic management and good work becomes more feasible if business educators and committed practitioners will work alongside each other, as the authors have done in writing this chapter.

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