

VOCATIONAL EXCELLENCE

TRADEMARK OF
A RELIABLE MAN



LARRY KENNEDY, PH.D.

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Reliable Man® Books
email: mail@ReliableMan.com
http://www.ReliableMan.com

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To protect the privacy of individuals and families, I have changed the names of some persons and places, as well as other details not significant to the lesson. It is my desire to convey the important facts and principles necessary for spiritual and vocational growth without bringing harm to any person.

One of God's greatest blessings is a faithful partner who is willing to live and grow with you through all that life has to offer. My precious wife, Dorothy, has been the purest example of vocational excellence, having made the health and well-being of our family the Lord's highest calling. She is truly a gift from God.



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Author's Preface

The first book in the “Reliable Man” series, *Becoming a Reliable Man of Faith and Practice* (2003), described the foundational values of personal reliability and spiritual growth. The values and strategies we reviewed included the fundamentals of personal authenticity and ethical dependability, the constructs of intellectual integrity and moral conscience, and the spiritual disciplines for becoming a reliable man.

Our study of those values was based upon the premise that a man must divide his energies into two primary areas of responsibility: his personal life at home and his work. Although the things we do at home and at work are very different, the values that make us who we are at both places are the same, no matter how we earn our living. Our values directly influence our relationships and leadership style, how well we do our job, and every decision we make. The right values, along with the strategies that support them, provide our family, friends, and co-workers with the sense of confidence they will need to respect and trust us.

In addition to being personally reliable, a man also needs credible work skills to succeed and flourish in life. This means we must add to our personal reliability the values that will shape and sustain our career and produce a reputation of excellence. For centuries these values have proven to be dependable in building organizations and developing enterprise in every vocational setting. Whether our work is in a business, nonprofit agency, or ministry, I know from experience that we can benefit personally and professionally from applying these sensible concepts. The Four Foundational Values of Vocational Excellence are:

Vocational Certainty:

a measure of our faithfulness to God's agenda

Process Quality:

a measure of our diligence in planning and budgeting

Administrative Consistency:

a measure of our attention to details

Executive Credibility:

a measure of our sincerity and skill with people

Webster's Dictionary defines a missionary as "a person undertaking a mission." In that respect, I have realized that most of what we do as followers of Christ is not by accident, but a result of God's agenda for our life, which includes working and doing it well so that we can make a living. But beyond that, our work is intended to strategically place us where we can influence people. That is why the most important strategy we can learn is how to cooperate with the Lord's plan for our life, bringing all of our energy and talents under His leadership.

This book is for the man who wants more out of his work than a paycheck. It describes a work-life philosophy that is rooted in biblical principles and proven in the real world; and it is the fruit of over thirty years experience in training volunteers, humanitarian developers, and corporate executives. With a background in engineering and business, I served five years as an associate pastor at a large, ministry-oriented church, while I continued my graduate studies in management. Since 1985, I have spent half my time making a living as a management consultant specializing in organizational design and process management. This has enabled me to fulfill my ministry calling in various missions to reach men for Christ, including extensive pastoral counseling and nine years traveling to St. Petersburg, Russia, to develop charitable medical programs for the poor and elderly.

At the beginning of each chapter, I have written stories about some of the men I met in Russia and my encounters with them. Each account emphasizes the importance of the value in the chapter title. Then I have described five supporting strategies with stories and examples from my family, church, ministry, and business experiences over the span of my walk with Christ. To protect the privacy of individuals and families, I have changed the names of some persons and places, and other details not significant to the lesson. It is my desire to convey the important facts and principles of each story without bringing harm to any person.

I hope that this book will help you gain a clearer perspective of your own circumstances and that your work-life will become more satisfying each day.

Larry Kennedy