

## *Soul at Work Study Guide*

### **One-session study guide**

- 1 Benefiel argues that integrity, character, and profitability are natural partners. Are you convinced by her examples?
- 2 Can responsibility to shareholders be reconciled with values?
- 3 Some of the examples in the book are American and some are Irish. Is it easier to reconcile integrity and profitability in some cultures than in others?
- 4 Is it fair to hire for values as well as for skills?
- 5 Have you ever bought (or not bought) a product or service for reasons other than (or in addition to) quality or price?
- 6 How would you feel if your boss or co-workers started talking about values or spirituality at work? What ways of talking about values or spirituality would seem appropriate to you? What ways of talking about spirituality or values would seem inappropriate?
- 7 Does including more than one faith tradition in an organization dilute spirituality?
- 8 Reflect on your own leadership roles at work, at home, or in other settings by considering the questions in the longer study guides below.

### **Three-week study guide**

Week 1:

Read Chapters 1-3 of *Soul at Work*.

Think about a time you have been in a leadership role, in your church, your family, a business, or some other setting. (The understanding of leadership in this book is broad, viewing everyone as a leader, since everyone has a sphere of influence.) In what ways is your setting like one or more of the organizations profiled in Chapter 1? In what ways were you like the leaders profiled in Chapters 2 and 3? What might you have learned from the leaders profiled in Chapters 2 and 3, in order to address your leadership situation more effectively?

Week 2:

Read Chapters 4-6.

Continue to consider the leadership situation you considered in Week 1. In what ways did you exercise spiritual discernment, as outlined in Chapter 4? In what ways did you nurture spirituality throughout your business, family, church, or other setting, in ways similar to the organizations highlighted in Chapters 5 and 6? What might you have learned from the leaders highlighted in Chapter 4, or from the organizations highlighted in Chapters 5 and 6?

Week 3:

Suggestion to facilitator: Photocopy blank charts (at end of study guide) like the ones on

pp. 149 and 153 for participants to fill out as they reflect on their own situations.  
Read Chapters 7-9 and the Conclusion  
Continue to consider the leadership situation you considered in the first two weeks.  
In what ways did you act like the leaders in Chapters 7-9 and the Conclusion? What might you have learned from them?

### **Four-week study guide**

Week 1:

Read Chapters 1-3 of *Soul at Work*.

Think about a time you have been in a leadership role, in your church, your family, a business, or some other setting. (The understanding of leadership in this book is broad, viewing everyone as a leader, since everyone has a sphere of influence.) In what ways is your setting like one or more of the organizations profiled in Chapter 1? In what ways were you like the leaders profiled in Chapters 2 and 3? What might you have learned from the leaders profiled in Chapters 2 and 3, in order to address your leadership situation more effectively?

Week 2:

Read Chapters 4-6.

Continue to consider the leadership situation you considered in Week 1. In what ways did you exercise spiritual discernment, as outlined in Chapter 4? In what ways did you nurture spirituality throughout your business, family, church, or other setting, in ways similar to the organizations highlighted in Chapters 5 and 6? What might you have learned from the leaders highlighted in Chapter 4, or from the organizations highlighted in Chapters 5 and 6?

Week 3:

Read Chapters 7-8.

Continue to consider the leadership situation you considered in the first two weeks. In what ways did you act like the leaders in Chapters 7-8? What might you have learned from them?

Week 4:

Suggestion to facilitator: Photocopy blank charts (at end of study guide) like the ones on pp. 149 and 153 for participants to fill out as they reflect on their own situations.

Read Chapter 9 and the Conclusion.

Continue to consider the leadership situation you considered in the first three weeks. In what ways did you act like the leaders of Reell Precision Manufacturing in Chapter 9? What might you have learned from them? Can you see your own spiritual development in the chart on Page 136 (understanding, of course, that spiritual development is never this neat, and more like a spiral than a linear chart)? Can you see the spiritual

development of your setting in the chart on Page 144? Consider the chart on Page 149 in relation to your leadership setting. In which of the four quadrants do you have support, and in which do you lack support? How might you strengthen your weaker quadrants? Consider the chart on Page 153 in relation to your leadership setting. In which of the six areas is your setting strong? In which areas is it weak? How might you strengthen the weaker areas? How do the four suggestions in “Getting from Here to There” (pp. 152-154) inform you?

### **Six-week study guide**

Week 1:

Read Chapters 1-3 of *Soul at Work*.

Think about a time you have been in a leadership role, in your church, your family, a business, or some other setting. (The understanding of leadership in this book is broad, viewing everyone as a leader, since everyone has a sphere of influence.) In what ways is your setting like one or more of the organizations profiled in Chapter 1? In what ways were you like the leaders profiled in Chapters 2 and 3? What might you have learned from the leaders profiled in Chapters 2 and 3, in order to address your leadership situation more effectively?

Week 2:

Read Chapters 4-5.

Continue to consider the leadership situation you considered in Week 1. In what ways did you exercise spiritual discernment, as outlined in Chapter 4? In what ways did you nurture spirituality throughout your business, family, church, or other setting, in ways similar to the organizations highlighted in Chapter 5? What might you have learned from the leaders highlighted in Chapter 4, or from the organizations highlighted in Chapter 5?

Week 3:

Read Chapters 6-7.

Continue to consider the leadership situation you considered in the first two weeks. In what ways did you act like the leaders in Chapters 6-7? What might you have learned from them?

Week 4:

Read Chapter 8.

Continue to consider the leadership situation you considered in the first three weeks. In what ways have you practiced group spiritual discernment in your setting?

Week 5:

Read Chapter 9.

Continue to consider the leadership situation you considered in the first four weeks. In

what ways did you act like the leaders of Reell Precision Manufacturing in Chapter 9? What might you have learned from them? Can you see your own spiritual development in the chart on Page 136 (understanding, of course, that spiritual development is never this neat, and more like a spiral than a linear chart)? Can you see the spiritual development of your setting in the chart on Page 144?

Week 6:

Suggestion to facilitator: Photocopy blank charts (at end of study guide) like the ones on pp. 149 and 153 for participants to fill out as they reflect on their own situations.

Read the Conclusion.

Continue to consider the leadership situation you considered in the first five weeks.

Consider the chart on Page 149 in relation to your leadership setting. In which of the four quadrants do you have support, and in which do you lack support? How might you strengthen your weaker quadrants? Consider the chart on Page 153 in relation to your leadership setting. In which of the six areas is your setting strong? In which areas is it weak? How might you strengthen the weaker areas? How do the four suggestions in “Getting from Here to There” (pp. 152-154) inform you?

**Appendix:**

Blank copy of chart on Page 149:

	Outside workplace	Inside workplace
Individual spiritual practice		
Spiritual community		

Blank copy of chart on P. 153:

Attend to soul in official documents	
Hire for congruence with mission	
Devote time and attention to nurturing organizational soul	
Dedicate personnel to the task	
Create specific structures and processes that nurture the soul of the organization	