BOOK SUMMARY

The following is a Summary of:
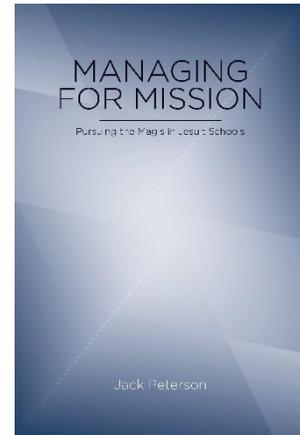*Managing for Mission: Pursuing the Magis in Jesuit Schools*
By Jack Peterson (jackpeterson@managingformission.com)
Lulu Press, 2012, 364 pages

To order, go to the following link:
http://www.managingformission.com/publications/4574830335

MANAGING FOR MISSION
Administrative consulting for faith-based schools

Managing for Mission: Pursuing the Magis in Jesuit Schools

By Jack Peterson

A (very) brief summary

Managing for Mission is based on the author's 32 years of experience in the administration of a Jesuit high school in Tacoma, Washington, but the principles are applicable to the management of all faith-based schools.

1. **Management.** Catholic schools require both leadership and management. Leadership is the process of inspiring people to move beyond the status quo toward a common vision. Management is aligning toward its goals the many decisions made throughout the organization. Both are important, but we tend to focus on leadership skills like charisma, visioning, and the ability to inspire confidence, and undervalue sound management. Metaphor: If leadership is the wave that brings the water crashing against the shore, management is the tide that brings the rest of the ocean with it.

2. **Systems & Models.** Whatever we are doing, we are working within a system. We often are not aware of the systemic nature of our institutions, but they are systems designed, intentionally or unintentionally, to bring about the results they produce. A key part of management is understanding what the system is and adjusting it to align with the mission. One way to do this is to use models, as architects do when they design buildings. A model is a representation of the key components of a system so that we can readily see what those components are and how they interact. By comparing a workable model in which all the essential components are identified with our current modes of operation, we can discover why we are getting the results we're getting and make adjustments to get different results. Conversely, if we are unaware of the system at work in our schools and unable to articulate a model, we will be unable to move from the status quo.

3. Four models. In our schools, there are actually four models at work. Each must be functional in itself and must support the functionality of the other three. These four are: the apostolic model, the pedagogical model, the community model and the business model. Together they make up the system that drives our schools, but to understand how they work together, they need to be considered separately. This is because in our schools most people live in one model or the other. A few live in two models, and no one, except the president, and to some extent the Board, lives in all four.

4. Apostolic Model. We believe that the mission of our schools to spread the Good News comes to us through the school's sponsor from the Church, which received it from the apostles, who received it from Jesus himself. Like other Church organizations—parishes, retreat centers, missions—we have an apostolic mission, and it is only because of this mission that we exist at all. It is important that we are effective in carrying out this mission, and so we need a functional apostolic model. We need to know what apostolic outcomes we seek, what message we have been charged to convey, who the receivers of this message are, who the deliverers of the message are and what our methods of delivering that message are. These are the main components of our apostolic model. While the leader of the school doesn't need to be the foremost expert in this area, he or she must embody the school's mission and know how to manage the apostolic model toward it.

5. Pedagogical Model. Though we are like parishes and retreat centers in having an apostolic mission, we also differ from them, because we are schools. So we need an effective pedagogical model. We need to help students learn, grow and gain skills to respond to the vocations God is calling them too. We need to meet the expectations of colleges and the state and parents looking for an education for their children. We can't simply say, "Send your students to us to hear the Gospel." We need to preach that Gospel in a special way, in the context of a school. We need to know our pedagogical outcomes, what assumptions we make about our learners, who our teachers are, how we design our curriculum and what our pedagogical methods are. These are the major components of our pedagogical model. The school's leader must know how to foster all these components.

6. Community Model. One of the most salient aspects of Faith-based schools is the vitality of their communities. A fabric of healthy relationships encourages students to grow, to learn, to take risks and stretch themselves. We take community for granted and don't think of it as having a model, but when it breaks down students feel it as a decline in the care that gives them the freedom to grow. Where do we look to strengthen the community? There must be

a chain of care from the students, to the teachers, to the administration, to the board, to the Church and ultimately to Jesus. A broken link in that chain of care will be felt by the students and will weaken not only the community but the apostolic, pedagogical and business models. To keep things on track, or get them back on track, we need to pay attention to how we bring people, especially faculty, into the community, how we prepare them for the mission, how we structure people's work together, how we make decisions and how we hold people accountable. There is a lot of detail behind this, but the president must keep an eye on the components of a healthy community.

7. **Business Model.** People working in schools are usually not interested in its business model because they don't want it to be running the school. The irony is that ignoring the business model increases the likelihood that it will trump the other three. For a non-profit organization, a business model is simply how it garners enough revenue to cover the expenses of accomplishing its mission. If revenues fall short of expenses, resources for the apostolic, pedagogical and community models begin to erode and with them the models themselves. But our business model can also, if we are not careful, be successful in covering expenses in ways that are injurious to the other models. The components of the business model are product, purchasers, price, promotion and production method. How these are defined and structured in a Faith-based school involves reflection that can at times be counter-intuitive. For instance, who is the customer: the student or the parents? What is the product: programs, knowledge and skills or the change sought in the student? The president must help the community develop a rigorous understanding of its business model and align it to the school's mission.

8. **Governance.** The chain of care that extends from the student back to the Church and to Christ is also a chain of accountability. The community entrusts to individuals and groups the authority and responsibility to make decisions on behalf of the entire community. In the school, at the top of this chain of accountability is the board, which is entrusted by the school's sponosr with governance of the school in accordance to its mission. The board in turn delegates to the president the administration of the school in accordance with its mission, who in turn delegates to various other administrators, faculty and staff the supervision of various aspects of the school's program. The principle of subsidiarity, a key element of Catholic social teaching, posits that decisions should be made at the appropriate level and this authority should not be usurped by the levels below or above. So the board of a faith-based school is to exercise governance, both holding the president accountable and providing care and support, while respecting its own delegation of administrative authority.

9. Four Values. Woven through the four models is a set of values that binds them all together. Many could be mentioned here, but let me highlight four: **Purpose:** one of the distinguishing characteristics of our faith is that we believe we have been created for a purpose. Our students' lives have a purpose; we who work in the schools do so out of a sense of vocation; and our schools themselves are mission centered. As a result, we need to view everything we do in light of the purpose for which God made us, and we must learn how to measure our outcomes in light of that purpose. **Freedom:** God has given us free will and is apparently unwilling to take it back. God works patiently, creatively and humbly to shape us without taking away our freedom. We would do well to emulate God in how we run our schools. Our goal should be conversion not compliance. **Growth:** In the world as God has created it we are either growing or dying. As schools we are in the growth business. We want our students to grow, and to accomplish that we must be open to growth ourselves. Growth means change, and change can frighten us, whether we are teachers, administrators or board members. But if we are to be schools of life, we must be schools of growth. **Trust:** Underlying all these values and making them possible is trust. See how much God trusts us, even though we have done little to deserve it. Lack of trust will block our progress at every turn, and yet it is so hard for us to trust as God does. Unlike God, we want others to earn our trust first. We often see good communication as requisite to trust. But the converse is more true. Good communication requires trust. One of the challenges of our presidents is to get the ball rolling by trusting first: trusting God to be holding the school in his hands, trusting that all members of the community have the light of Jesus in them and trusting themselves that the Spirit is blessing their work, even when they feel isolated and alone.

More information can be obtained at the website www.managingformission.com
Or by emailing jackpeterson@managingformission.com

MANAGING FOR MISSION
Administrative consulting for faith-based schools