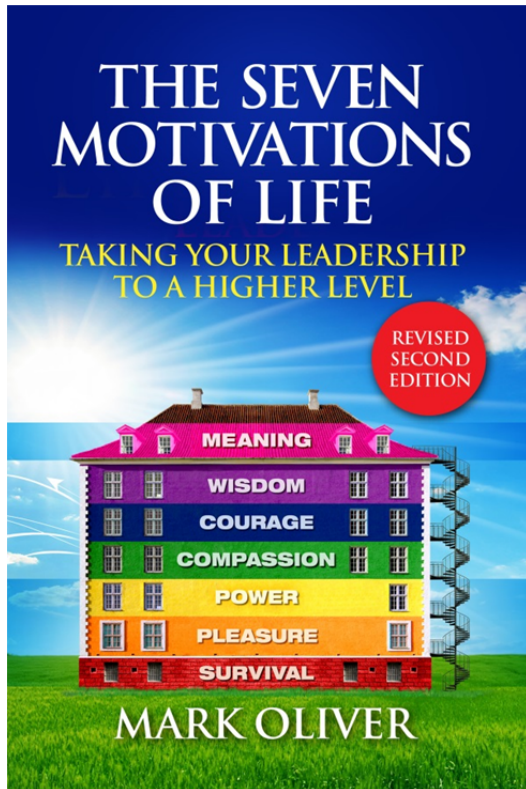


BOOK REVIEWS:

THE SEVEN MOTIVATIONS OF LIFE - by Mark Oliver



Mark Oliver has more than 20 years' experience facilitating leadership development courses. Oliver's Universal Hierarchy of Motivation (UHM) is the central premise of this book, and using this model he provides a platform to deepen our awareness and achieve more meaning and mastery in life.

The seven motivational levels he covers are survival, pleasure, power, compassion, courage, wisdom and meaning. He states that the UHM is not sequential and offers valuable insights on how we can enhance self-awareness and leadership in personal and professional life.

The book features a rich tapestry of anecdotes, parables and examples from religion, philosophy, politics, military and business. It is organised into three parts – Your Professional Life: What is your purpose? Your Personal Life: Who are you? *and* Your greater purpose in life: Where do you go at the end of your life- if anywhere?

Chapters delve into our motivational drivers, which fuel our decisions. The higher the level of motivation, the greater is our capacity for positive influence and dealing with challenges. With powerful examples and quotes from Mandela, Mother Teresa, Dwight Eisenhower and Lao Tzu, we are shown how thoughts and attitudes determine our behaviours.

Oliver maps each level of the UHM to particular traits and growth areas, be it psychological or spiritual. For example, if we are driven by power and pleasure, our likely traits are control and passion and our intrinsic focus is the self. Whereas, if we are guided more by courage and compassion, our intrinsic focus is selfless and we are driven by our motivation to save others.

For HR practitioners, I especially liked this point about new engagement questionnaires typically focus more on satisfaction and communication rather than accountability, feedback and grace, defined as courteous goodwill. Also, chapters on Working with Emotions and Values, Understanding Psychology and Ideal Life roles and Finding Meaning deserves special mention. UHM's links to neuroscience and MBTI are well presented.

This framework for understanding human behaviour has relevant applications for our work and personal life. Oliver's UHM manages to create a unique stamp as he navigates leadership styles and principles of psychology with a deft compass, anchoring us to our values and drives to achieve true ascent.

Reviewed by Priya Subrahmanayan, CAHRI