

Mentoring Leaders: Wisdom for Developing Character, Calling and Competency

Carson Pue (Baker Books, 2005)

In many ways, this book is more about leadership than it is about mentoring. It would be a valuable guidebook for Christian leaders who are being mentored, and for those who are mentors.

Carson Pue is president of Arrow Leadership Ministries, the original Arrow, on which CPAS' Arrow programme is based. Thus his book focuses on the areas at the heart of Arrow: character, calling and competency. It is written with men *and* women in mind – the intention is made clear at the beginning – but most of the examples are of male leaders. There are some excellent sections which specifically address the concerns of women, but these are relatively brief.

The book is structured around five phases of mentoring and growth for leaders: self-awareness, freeing up, visioneering, implementing, and sustaining. There is a wealth of wisdom on all these – the need to find our security as leaders in God, to work through areas which hold us back, how to discover our life vision and to help others to identify corporate vision, how to implement vision, and how to keep going in the tough times, to deal with fear, loneliness and other challenges which leaders face.

The book also covers 'life balance' issues, how to manage people, whether paid staff or volunteers, and how to be accountable. In the Epilogue, Pue suggests two ways to remain focused as a leader: be a lifelong mentor and be a lifelong learner.

I found this a very comprehensive leadership book, full of great insights, and well illustrated with stories, biblical references, and in places helpful diagrams and lists, or questions to ponder. The down-side is that it is not a very well-written book; there is so much overlap between all the areas of leadership that one subject merges with another, and the result feels at times rather a rag-bag.

I would still recommend it. In every chapter there is a wealth of leadership experience which would repay careful reading and reflection. One woman who commends the book writes: 'Read this slowly with a pen and a journal at your side. The concepts are invigorating and practical; this is the best of instruction for leaders on the job.'

As an introduction to the values and principles of the Arrow leadership programme (see www.cpas.org.uk/arrow), this is a great resource. Some may read the book and want to do the Programme, spending 18 months rooting the principles in their lives. For those who are over 40 (and too old for Arrow), this book, along with James Lawrence's *Growing Leaders*, makes some of the insights of Arrow available. Real-world solutions to the real-world challenges facing Christian leaders today.

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