

## **Book and Resource Review Section**

Kim L. Siegenthaler, Editor  
Appalachian State University

Phillip C. Wankat. *The Effective, Efficient Professor – Teaching, Scholarship and Service*. Boston, MA. Allyn and Bacon. 2002. 292 pages.

Reviewed by:  
Lowell Caneday, Ph.D.  
Oklahoma State University

What happens when a chemical engineer reads Mihayli Csikszentmihalyi's theory of "flow?" At least one engineer was motivated to find greater satisfaction in life through improving skills to meet the challenges of being a professor. Such was the case for Phillip Wankat, Clifton Lovell Distinguished Professor of Chemical Engineering at Purdue University. As a result of his personal efforts and experiences to become a more effective, efficient professor, Wankat authored this book with the intent of helping "college faculty at all levels of instruction to take charge of their careers." The author completed post-doctoral degrees in Counseling and Personnel Services, a fact that becomes apparent in his understanding of teaching, learning and human behavior.

*The Effective, Efficient Professor* presents four broad units to assist faculty in various aspects of their careers regardless of their respective disciplines. These four parts are (1) Time Management Techniques for Academics, (2) Effective and Efficient Teaching, (3) Effective, Efficient Students, and (4) Scholarship and Service. These four parts are further divided into 12 chapters, each of which is developed in such a manner that it can be used independently. Yet all the chapters follow a unified theme, building one upon another.

The fact that Wankat is an engineer is most noticeable in his penchant for figures, tables and lists. His figures are often schematic representations of interactions and models of theories. As a result the figures assist the reader in understanding concepts discussed in the text. The tables summarize principles, tips and methods encouraged in the text for reader application. Several of the tables are worthy of copying and posting on personal bulletin boards! The lists are included in the text and become usable summaries of concepts presented or personal checkpoints for assessment for the reader.

Each chapter begins with a review of literature presenting the theories and foundations on which the chapter is based. The review of literature in each chapter exhibits an appropriate mix of classic theory, supporting research, and documented application to assist the reader in implementing and exercising those components that will be most valuable. Much of the literature is familiar to professionals in higher education, but the reminders, interpretations and connections provided by Wankat serve as a “continuing education unit” for the reader.

Recent discussions in recreation, parks and leisure studies among faculty and department chairs regarding the expectations of new faculty members, the recruitment of students into doctoral programs, and the development of existing faculty members indicate a need for the content presented in *The Effective, Efficient Professor*. While the book is clearly written for faculty members, it would also have great value for doctoral students in a seminar related to preparation for teaching. The doctoral student would gain insight into the reality of expectations for faculty members, regardless of the institution providing employment. The doctoral student would avoid some of the pitfalls common to entry-level faculty members and the frustrations frequently found within academe. The faculty member would gain an understanding of processes and procedures within most universities, while also having the opportunity to apply techniques that have worked for others.

Wankat has chosen to include brief biographies or “characterizations” of real or composite people with whom he has worked. These people become familiar to the reader as they demonstrate behaviors and situations common to faculty members. Each characterization leads to resolutions of problems, corrective actions to avoid particular circumstances, and insights into results of inefficiency and ineffectiveness.

The range of topics incorporated into *The Effective, Efficient Professor* does not allow Wankat to achieve a full analysis of every topic if he were to remain efficient and effective in the book. It does provide the reader with an opportunity to achieve personal objectives in moving through Bloom’s taxonomy of learning through adequate development of topics, provision of opportunity for application, techniques for analysis, and ideas for evaluation. These topics include syllabus development, teaching with technology, multiple pedagogical paradigms, advising of students, effective and efficient writing, classification and rewards for scholarship, promotion and tenure, professional service, and working with or serving as an administrator.

Part Three describes working with undergraduate and graduate students. Whether the reader works primarily with either group or with both groups, this discussion will enhance relationships between faculty members and students. Involving students in the academic and social life of a college or university is linked with learning styles, time management, and “learning how to learn.” Working with graduate assistants is connected to research advisement and “learning how to teach.”

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Wankat concludes *The Effective, Efficient Professor* with a presentation of a “one-minute” approach to change or a “12-step” procedure. He acknowledges that faculty members at various points in their matching of skills with challenges will need minor tune-ups or major overhauls. The recommended “12-step” procedure is the one component in the book for which Wankat does not provide evidence of effectiveness. He asserts its reasonable application and transfer of learning from effective 12-step programs, recognizing that regaining control of various aspects of life is crucial to effectiveness and efficiency.

*The Effective, Efficient Professor* is worthy of individual reading by faculty member or student, but may have its greatest value in group discussion. A mentoring relationship between faculty members or advisor and student would provide the best application of the principles presented. In addition, *The Effective, Efficient Professor* would serve well as a text in a doctoral seminar for preparation of the next generation of faculty members. As asserted on the back cover, this book “will help college faculty at all levels of instruction take charge of their careers!”