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# Review of Doing Honest Work in College: How to Prepare Citations, Avoid Plagiarism, and Achieve Real Academic Success

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## Review of *Doing Honest Work in College: How to Prepare Citations, Avoid Plagiarism, and Achieve Real Academic Success*

### **Comments**

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match between particular skills and positions/offices with responsibility for social or organizational outcomes or goals. But within the past decade or so, since the dawn of the new millennium, both of these concepts seem to have merged—and not flawlessly.

To Millennials, everyone is equal and special. (See Jean M. Twenge's *Generation Me* [2007] for a great analysis of how this change in undergraduate student identities and experiences developed.) Consequently, everyone has leadership potential and ability, no matter one's inherent nature or one's role within an organization. Marcy Levy Shankman and Scott J. Allen's *Emotionally Intelligent Leadership* demonstrates the utility—and the futility—of this line of thinking as applied to college students.

This book is written for an audience of undergraduate students, no doubt to be used in student leadership seminars and courses. According to the authors, "This book will help you begin or enhance the development of your leadership potential. This book will also help you think more critically about the topic of leadership" (p. 1).

But more to the point, the authors then state, "If you hope to lead others, this book will help you think about the role of leader in a new way. If you're interested in being a good team member, a good employee, or even a good friend, EIL will provide you with some of the tools needed to be successful in a formal (appointed) or informal (voluntary) leadership role" (p. 2). But, oddly, "This book will also help you become a better *follower*—a role or position often left out of discussions on leadership" (p.2). So although everyone can be a leader, not everyone can be a leader? That confusion of purpose or focus permeates the book.

Shankman and Allen use the concept of "emotional intelligence," which, they say, "was made popular by Daniel Goleman in his book *Emotional Intelligence*" (1998) (p. 5). Three "core facets" comprise this intelligence: consciousness of self, consciousness of others, and consciousness of context. Each consciousness—and one's overall emotional intelligence—can be monitored. Each consciousness is operationalized in a number of areas, most having to do with communicating clearly and reflexively about one's self, about others, and about the groups and environments in which one participates. The authors' intended critical approach to understanding and becoming leaders and/or followers is framed within these areas; it is apparently to result from reading the "Student Voice" section and other inclusions of undergraduates' comments about leadership.

I searched the book in vain for any clue to the origin of the student comments. Unfortunately, these comments are short, containing little more than adages and aphorisms. Furthermore, I doubt

whether the authors' intended audience would be able to reflect much—let alone critically—since that audience would conceivably not have much experience in leading others.

Augmenting the student comments in fostering critical reflection is another facet of each chapter, "Reflection Questions," which are vague and which are seemingly designed to promote followership as often as leadership. For example, "What does it mean to be a good citizen in your organization? Would others agree with your definition?" (p. 84); "On a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 being highest, at what level of optimism would you rate the organization with which you most closely associate? On what basis do you make this rating?" (p. 67); and one that is particularly suppositional and subjective, "How does losing control of emotions affect a leader?"

I don't think reading this slight book would harm any undergraduate; at the very least, as the authors write, "This book is intended to be a fast read" (p. 8). Indeed, improving skills to analyze contexts and to communicate with others are useful practices. On the other hand, I don't think that this book will teach students much about leadership.

#### REFERENCES

- Goleman, D. (1995). *Emotional intelligence*. New York: Bantam Books.
- Twenge, J. M. (2007). *Generation me: Why today's young Americans are more confident, assertive, entitled—and more miserable than ever before*. New York: Free Press.

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**Charles Lipson. *Doing Honest Work in College: How to Prepare Citations, Avoid Plagiarism, and Achieve Real Academic Success*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008. Paper: \$13.00. ISBN: 13-978-0226-4847-30.**

REVIEWED BY MARYBETH GASMAN, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR, UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA

Each year, I catch someone plagiarizing in one of my classes. When this happens, I confront the student and one of three things happens: (a) The student confesses, usually explaining how stressed he or she is; (b) The student denies the charges, acting stunned that I would accuse him or her of such a deed; or (c) The student says, "I didn't know *that* was plagiarism."

Charles Lipson, a professor and director of undergraduate studies in political science at the University of Chicago, has written a readable and

engaging book that gives students the tools to do honest work in college. Written in a way that students of all levels can comprehend, *Doing Honest Work in College* provides an overview of academic (dis)honesty, plagiarism, note taking, working in groups, and citing appropriately.

This is a useful book that, after reading, I would recommend for every undergraduate and graduate student regardless of institutional type. Lipson walks the student (and any other reader) through the ins and outs of doing excellent academic work in a variety of settings, including on tests, in group presentations, and in science labs. He spends ample time delineating the excuses that students use to explain cheating or plagiarism and then pokes holes in these excuses—in effect, acting as the conscience of the student.

He then defines plagiarism, providing explicit examples in table format to help students understand plagiarism in every possible form. I found this section of the book to be of great interest because it is crystal clear and, after reading it, students will be hard pressed to say, “I don’t know what plagiarism is.”

Another useful section of the book pertains to note taking. I get the feeling that Lipson really wants students to succeed in an honest way. He provides specific instructions on how to take notes in a way that will not result in “accidental” plagiarism. For example, one strategy that he suggests is called “Q notes,” which involves putting a “Q” and a page number next to anything that one pulls from a source. He suggests getting into the habit of doing this so that you don’t accidentally lift someone else’s words while taking notes. All of us, student or faculty member, could benefit from this strategy.

Also of great use is Lipson’s advice on how to paraphrase. He shows many examples of paraphrasing that steal ideas or merely change a word or two as well as examples of the correct way to paraphrase. Paraphrasing is a skill that we tend to take for granted as professors; however, many of our students do not know how to do it properly.

Although Lipson’s strategies for academic honesty, avoiding plagiarism, and paraphrasing are excellent, the reason I am suggesting that all college students purchase this book is his inclusion of “mini guides” to all of the major citation styles (APA, Chicago, MLA). This book and the inclusion of these guides is a professor’s dream! Year after year, I recommend that my students buy the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* or the *Chicago Manual of Style*. Students may purchase one of these guides, but they rarely break the binding as they find the books intimidating and unwieldy. As a result, I end up reading papers without a common citation style and dealing with students who say

they can’t figure out how to cite anything. Lipson provides students with a “no excuses” guide for citing articles, books, book chapters, interviews, the internet, etc. In addition, he includes citation styles for many different disciplines, including anthropology, biology, medicine, and chemistry, making this book usable by just about any student. Although the first edition of *Doing Honest Work in College* was published in 2004, this new edition has been updated to include students’ use of Wikipedia, the non-refereed, on-line encyclopedia. Given that the *Oxford English Dictionary* began in the same way as Wikipedia, with many different people contributing to it, I have tried to keep an open mind about its use. However, I have to admit to being greatly frustrated when students rely on Wikipedia for their course papers because they fail to realize that none of the material is vetted by scholars. Lipson clearly explains the danger in relying on Wikipedia to students, noting why the validity of sources matters in scholarly research. Of course, most faculty members discuss the difference between peer-reviewed and popular sources, but having Lipson back us up is helpful. He also explains how easy it has become to intentionally and unintentionally plagiarize in the internet age and how to avoid it.

Although some of Lipson’s ideas and suggestions seem blatantly obvious, they need to be, given students’ ignorance around issues of plagiarism. Overall, *Doing Honest Work in College* is humorous, useful, and invaluable. I plan on recommending it regularly, with the hope that I will confront fewer cases of academic dishonesty.

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**Joseph E. Garcia and Karen J. Hoelscher. *Managing Diversity Flashpoints in Higher Education*. Westport, CT: Praeger, 2008. 160 pp. Cloth: \$49.95. ISBN: 13-978-0275-989-804.**

REVIEWED BY JOY GASTON GAYLES, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR, ADULT AND HIGHER EDUCATION, NORTH CAROLINA STATE UNIVERSITY

Colleges and universities in the United States are more culturally diverse now than ever before in the history of higher education, and this trend will likely continue in the future. Therefore, it is imperative for members of campus communities, namely students, faculty, and staff, to be able to communicate effectively across cultural differences.

The ability to work effectively with people from various cultural groups has been identified in recent literature as an important outcome of undergraduate education. Moreover, potential employers expect college graduates to work well