

# Death by meeting essay



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Death by Meeting is a book written by Patrick Lencioni. Lencioni lived in San Francisco Bay Area with his wife and kids. Aside from writing books such as The Five Temptations of a CEO, The Five Dysfunctions of a Team, The Four Obsessions of an Extraordinary Executive, and Death by Meeting, Patrick Lencioni is also the president of the Table Group in San Francisco Bay Area. Death by Meeting has two parts. Under these two parts, there are four sub-parts in the first part, which is entitled Fable and seven sub-parts in the second part, which entitled Model.

The first part (Fable) is a story of a businessman named Casey McDaniel. All four parts were divided into: flashback, plot point, protagonist, action, and resolution. All these parts became the outline of the story where the main character, Casey made a big difference from the beginning of his meetings up to this final meeting. Casey has a business called Yip. This business is about selling software focusing on golf games because Casey was a golf player and he was totally addicted with this sport. Loyalty to the sport golf made him realize that he wants to put up a business that will connect to what he likes and hobby.

He started his business from scratch that made him more responsible and hardworking. He really wanted to be noticeable in the business industry being the first interactive videogame maker specialized in golf sport. His business made a big impact to the customers especially golfers because he put all his knowledge, theories, strategies, and talents in golf to his software. That is why, some great golfers owed something to Casey because of his creation. However, Casey's software is not for everyone. It was created for

the entertainment and knowledge of adults. It was not for kids as Casey's creation was not for fun of children.

Other than this, only few people could afford it because he privatized his company. With this situation, problems started to occur. Because only few people (though they are many but not as was we think as public) can have this, the company could not support the whole needs or luxuries of its people or employees. Casey had a big problem with that. During their meeting, one of the executives told about this issue and it really stuck to Casey's brain. Aside from this problem, one of the internal and biggest problem of Yip their meetings. Their meetings are always lethargic, unfocused, and passionless.

Even they have so many agendas they don't have any resolution with these. They just blew those agendas away by evaporating the issues especially when they are running out of time. After thinking for so many times, Casey decided to sell Yip to Playsoft. But even he sells Yip and his company will then only be one of the divisions of Playsoft, it must be Casey will still be the CEO of Yip and all his people will come with him when Yip went to Playsoft. T. J. Harrison, in behalf of Playsoft, agreed to the conditions of Casey. When they started to be part of the Playsoft, the stock of Playsoft went down, so they had a big problem.

All of the executives are having a hard time making their division more competitive and to earn points from the stock market. They had meetings every Monday at ten o'clock in the morning. Nothing has changed, their meetings always seemed to be dull and lifeless but they are actually satisfied or maybe immune with this kind of meeting. One day, J. T. decided

to come over to Casey's executive meeting. Casey became anxious with the decision of J. T. because he knows that their meetings were definitely not fun. But J. T. still insisted to come even if Casey told him that they could talk only the two of them if J. T. has a problem.

The day of the meeting came. J. T. was present in the meeting. He observed Casey's executives. Like the usual meeting of the group, it was totally passionless, dull, and boring. J. T. got an opportunity to get Casey's position because he saw that Casey was not a good facilitator to his executives and that they don't even get their agendas done. All their agendas flew like a bird in the field. Casey's Administrative Assistant named Gia was pregnant. She needs to rest because she will give birth to a twin that is why she needs to leave his boss Casey.

Then, he needs someone to occupy the position of Gia temporarily. Casey knew that his friend's son was searching for a job to sustain its needs for its school taking up his PhD. The boy named Will who was only 27 years old. Despite of its being over qualified, Casey still tried to hire Will because Casey will only hire him temporarily. At first, Will was a hesitated man who was coping up for something he needs to do for his boss until one day, he saw his boss very problematic while seating on his desk. Casey already knew that J. T. wanted to take his position. Will wanted to find ways how to help his boss.

He went to his first meeting with his new colleagues. He found out that the meetings was so terrible and he wanted to scream to the executives because they are talking non-sense. When one executive asked him about what he can say about the meeting, he confessed that it was terribly bad. After what

happened, Will researched and theorizes what things must be considered making the executive meetings more entertaining and lively. Because Will was studying film, he started to connect film with meetings. That is why he found out that their meetings must have conflict in order to hook the executives' or the listeners' attention.

Will talked to the executives during the meeting about what he had been theorizing and it works. After some meetings, Will still thought of something that is missing from his theory and he still needs to find it. He saw that the missing link was structure. On the next meeting, he started to speak in front of the executives again teaching them about structure of drama in television connecting to the structure of meetings. They need to do this because J. T. would be in one of their meetings and Casey thought that it would be J. T.'s final step whether he will take Casey's position or not.

The day came when J. T. went to Casey's executive meeting again. All things are in its place and the executives are ready for their meeting. The meeting went on differently from its previous meetings and J. T. was really amazed and through this amazement, he just wrote down notes on and on until the meeting was done. Casey and Will knew that they have succeeded from the theory that Will made. Until one day, the over-all boss of Playsoft sent letters to the executives and vice presidents of the company. Casey read the letter and he realized that it was not his position J. T. would replace but it the over-all boss of Playsoft.

The next part was only a form of elaboration of the theories Will did to the executives. Patrick elaborated how movies and meetings will be closely

connected with each other in terms of hooking its audience and executives. In terms of church meeting perspective, I can see that Casey symbolizes man who is weak, having so many problems, and engaging with different types of other people. I can see that J. T. symbolizes evil in a way that he put man to the test that he will make man suffer just for him to be contented and happy like J. T. was imparting in the story.

Ken symbolizes, God the Father (Will's Father) for he gave his son Will to Casey to help him and be with him even for only few moment. Ken also has his famous line in the story that " Casey was one of his favorite people in the world," which Will always telling Casey and himself. Will symbolizes Jesus Christ who helped Casey to stand up from his dark side and see the light of good possibilities. The executives symbolize fear, temptation, lack of contentment, anger, impatience, rudeness, and other negativities made by man. The strength of the story in terms of church meeting perspective is that the resolution is quite climatic.

When you read this book, you tend to wait for the productivity of the following meetings. The last meeting done by Casey's group was the most important meeting for they knew that it was the critical part for them as executives and for Yip. The resolution of the story did not go down after the meeting. One would still finish the next chapters of the story because you want to see what will happen next to the group especially Casey and Will. The book also elaborated its scenes, scenario, and ideas thoroughly. Reading this book is worthwhile even if it's too long for a " fable".

These strengths both the book into greater perspective and ideas and despite of focusing its attention to the business world, everyone could still relate to it because there are lots of branches that was tackled in the story. Having plenty of characters is not a crowd. Lencioni described his characters delicately and creatively. Fun, laughter, anger, and other feelings were incorporated all at the same time by the characters Lencioni made. As the reader I saw the distinction of these characters with one another as the author applies it to the situations that he had written.

The reader will also have a full-blown imagination of the setting and situation he or she will be reading. The best thing with this is that Casey and J. T. had a closure on their issues with one another. They talk and closed the loop between them. And as I can see, man won over evil with the help of Christ. In the end of the story, J. T. did not accepted the new position his boss gave him because he said that he can't be a good over-all CEO in Playsoft. The only weakness of the story from a church meeting perspective is that man always relies on its feelings. Sometimes, he ignored other things because of what he feels.

There are parts of the story where Casey always left Will without knowing because of his emotional problem. Casey always does this kind of things to Will but Will do not complain but sometimes, Will was asking himself about the attitude of Casey. But he also tried to ignore it and just go to his work as Casey commanded him. Sometimes, we forget as human that's God is willing to help us despite of our being rude and hypocrite. We tend to let God wait for the time that we really need him and begging for his mercy. God gave his son Christ to be with us and help us with our lives – to fix it and live right.

But most of time, we ignore him as long as we can manage things, as long as we handle it even if it's very hard. We just find him when we really don't know what to do and if he fails to answer us right away, we became angry to say that he don't love us. This is only weak point of the story in a religious or church perspective. As a whole, the book or the story rather was entertaining and knowledgeable. It is not only for business people but also for everyone who was afraid of facing others because of their incapacity and fear towards people who are much higher than what they are.

The story let his readers think of the possibilities and positive outcome of those situations. Readers can be angry in some part of the story, but most of it was entertaining and fun. When we relate this to a religious perspective the characters in the story really connects with those symbols that I have discussed. Man is always weak, as we all know. Man needs someone who can make his burden lesser. Will played an important role to this story where he became the bridge of being good and being contented human. He made Casey a man with conviction to fulfill his goal and purpose towards other people that would rely on him.

There is a part of the story when Casey let Will went to Chicago to be a volunteer in their project there. Even if Will doesn't want to leave Casey especially in that point where the crucial part of their life is coming, he still obeyed Casey. That was Christ who always obeyed man even if it's already bad or wrong, he still wants to please man to say how much he loves him. And when Will came back from Chicago, he still find way to help Casey for the meeting. The enlightening part of the story can be seen through this



part, when everything is crucial and hard, man tend to find Christ to be with him until the pain was through.