Have you ever found yourself in a situation where you were searching for just the right words? *How to Say the Right Thing Every Time* by Robert D. Ramsey offers a useful, fast-paced guide full of practical tips on saying the right thing every time. Presented in a direct, upbeat manner, this guide offers real-world examples to make an educator’s choice of words appropriate for every occasion.

Ramsey begins with the 20 biggest mistakes school leaders make. The book then continues with chapters devoted to saying the right thing to students, parents, peers, and even the press. Just about any audience that you may address is covered. In addition, there is a chapter on saying the right thing in special situations, such as delivering an eulogy. Ramsey even includes a chapter that addresses the use of body language and gestures.

Straight talk is the essence of communication that Ramsey presents to readers. His seven-step code for saying the right thing epitomizes clear and quick communication, and a resource section at the end of the book includes 101 ways to be a better communicator. Throughout the book there are also helpful lists, referenced by number in the table of contents, with topics ranging from “Power Interview Questions” and “Parent Tips” to “Words of Tribute.” Ramsey even points out situations when saying nothing is appropriate.

*How to Say the Right Thing Every Time* is full of do’s and don’t’s for easy reference. It is all here for the busy educator who needs to say the right thing all the time. After reading this book, I knew I would be referring to it often, and I’m sure it will have worn edges from being pulled off the shelf. Consider keeping *How to Say the Right Thing Every Time* within easy reach.

Reviewed by Susan Romero, Principal, St. James the Less School, La Crescenta, California, stjamesthelessprincipal@yahoo.com.
Genuine School Leadership: Experience, Reflection, and Beliefs

Genuine School Leadership: Experience, Reflection, and Beliefs examines various elements that are needed by school leaders. The authors pursue the notion that spirituality is often overlooked as we undertake our daily duties, and thus emphasize an understanding of one’s own spirituality and how it impacts the role of school leadership.

Several components and techniques that facilitate successful school leadership are explored and explained. One component is the realization that school leaders are entrusted with the safety of students and this trust is often given without question. Another is that educational leaders often try to ignore or suppress their spirituality. The authors discuss the need to embrace this spirituality and recognize its importance and the role it has in developing an individual into a school leader.

This book started out slow for me, and my initial reaction was a desire not to finish reading it. The concept of spirituality is one that I felt was private and did not impact my role as a school leader. However, as I continued reading, I found myself agreeing more and more with the authors. In addition, I realized that the foundation established earlier in the book allowed for deeper understanding and application of the components being emphasized to enhance leader effectiveness. Now that I have finished reading this book, I find myself sharing examples with other leaders not only within the school district but also in other professions.

I recommend this book and believe it to be worthwhile for educational leaders to read. It caused me to reflect about various beliefs and interactions. It also instilled in me a greater understanding of what I bring to the profession and, whether I choose to recognize it or not, that personal experiences, including spirituality, impact my day-to-day interactions as a school leader.

Reviewed by Jon Stern, Principal, Wabasha-Kellogg Elementary and High School, Wabasha, Minnesota, jstern@wabasha-kellogg.k12.mn.us.

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