

# Restoring Pride of Workmanship

## WORDS OF WISDOM ABOUT DEMING'S POINT 12

The 12th of W. Edwards Deming's 14 Points for Management reads in part, "Eliminate barriers that rob people of pride of workmanship." Such barriers will not only be found in destructive practices like annual appraisals of performance. They also exist in the absence of gainful employment and the dignity one experiences in having a job in the first place.

Deming once commented, "Unemployment is not inevitable. Unemployment is a sign of bad management; lost the market." Pope St. John Paul II observed that "work is a good thing for man. Even though it bears the mark of 'bonum arduum' [meaning 'a difficult good'], in the terminology of Saint Thomas, it is a good thing for man." Pope Francis has said that the two biggest social evils that need to be addressed today are the loneliness of the old and the unemployment of the young. "We are running the risk of having a generation that does not work. From work comes a person's dignity."

Abraham Lincoln is credited with the observation that one cannot build character and courage by taking away a man's initiative and independence. The Committee on Constitutional Government published a leaflet in 1942 entitled "Lincoln on Limitation[s]" that attributed the following statement to our 16th president.

You cannot bring about prosperity by discouraging thrift. You cannot strengthen the weak by weakening the strong. You cannot help little men by tearing down big men. You cannot lift the wage earner by pulling down the wage payer. You cannot help the poor by destroying the rich. You cannot establish sound security on borrowed money. You cannot further the brotherhood of man by inciting class hatred. You cannot keep out of trouble by spending more than you earn. You cannot build character and courage by destroying men's initiative and independence. You cannot help men permanently by doing for them what they can and should do for themselves.

W. Edwards Deming, St. John Paul II, Pope Francis, Abraham Lincoln. If only our current business and government leaders would take their words of wisdom to heart!

### Notes

J. A. Coleman, "Pope Francis on the Dignity of Labor," [America Magazine](#), America Press Inc., New York, NY, November 20, 2013.

W. E. Deming, [Out of the Crisis](#), MIT Center for Advanced Engineering Study, Cambridge, MA (1986), pp. 77-85.

\_\_\_\_\_, "Lincoln on Limitation[s]," Committee on Constitutional Government (1942), leaflet.

\_\_\_\_\_, [Management's Five Deadly Diseases: A Conversation with Dr. W. Edwards Deming](#), Encyclopaedia Britannica Corporation, Lake Orion, MI (1984), videocassette.

NCR Staff, "Pope's Quotes: Dignity of Work," [National Catholic Reporter](#), National Catholic Reporter Publishing Company, Kansas City, MO, August 20, 2014.

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