

The Complete  

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Corporate  

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Chaplain's  

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Handbook



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*The Complete Corporate Chaplain's Handbook*  
By Mark Cress, Chris Hobgood and Dwayne Reece  
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## Preface

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Although this work may ultimately be found most often in an academic setting, it may surprise people that the authors did not set out to produce a scholarly treatise or defense of any kind. Rather, the objective was that readers be compelled to engage God, other people, and even themselves as they explore the ministry of corporate chaplaincy through the eyes, ears, and hearts of those who have walked it out.

These pages are intended to provide a guidebook of not only the “why’s”, but also the “how-to’s”, for real-life, on-the-ground situations encountered every day in the work of corporate chaplaincy. They are also designed to facilitate the deeply probing questions that will focus and solidify one’s calling, as well as clarify and confront relationships and personal issues. In other words, this book is not for the faint of heart!

The authors have committed their lives to serving Christ in the workplace. In addition to their own twenty-plus years of service as corporate chaplains, God has blessed them with a team of certified corporate chaplains from which to draw rich and abiding training experiences.

Corporate Chaplains of America agreed in 2005 to work with a leading US seminary to assist in offering a course in the fundamentals of corporate chaplaincy for a future Master of Arts in Workplace Ministry degree program. One early challenge proved to be the fact that no text existed for such a class. Lanphier Press graciously stepped up to ensure a publication would be produced to allow the process to move forward.

The authors were tasked to create a volume that is both practical and thorough. Although no single work short of the Scriptures can ever hope to fully cover even a single subject of study, what follows is the first draft in moving forth the process management training of a great and untapped mission field.

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## Acknowledgements

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Pulling together a work like this is never accomplished in a vacuum. For every writer in a book project, there are always scores of players in the background who are rarely recognized for all the extra efforts necessary to make it a reality. The authors of this text wish to thank the precious people who have worked tirelessly to keep this project on target and to get it ultimately into your hands today.

Cindy Rice coordinated every word of this text between three authors and many revisions. She proofed every syllable and corrected many errors before the text was ever seen by other professionals on the team. Projects such as this do not happen without talented, caring people like Cindy.

Robin Crabtree artistically designed the cover and skillfully typeset the text. In addition she offered edit references and technical assistance without which we would still be at ground zero.

José Rondón provided scholarly research assistance that helped transform the book from the draft stage to an appropriate textbook format.

As in every Lanphier project, Jeff Hilles provided leadership, insight, and warm friendship to every member of the textbook development team.

The following chaplains went the extra mile in providing case studies and anecdotal stories that add a richness and depth to this work: Albert Beltran, Greg Bennett, Gaylon Benton, Susan Hogan, Sherry Kiser, Brian Page, Gene Rund, Henry Sanchez, Jeff Seeger, Troy Talmadge, and Gary Williams.

It also takes many encouragers to pull off a task like this - folks who pray, call, cheer, support, egg on, push, and promote. They are very much appreciated and include: Danny Akin, Bruce Battle, Rick Butler, Paul Carlisle, Randy Clark, Danny Cox, Jess Duboy, Ron Duke, Jim Goldston, George King, Ellen McNally, Chuck Milian, Bob Pettus, Frank Reed, Steve Steff, and Tom Vande Gutche.

Also, special thanks to Howard Piekarz and the fine team at Edwards Brothers.





# Introduction

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## The Complete Corporate Chaplain's Handbook



## INTRODUCTION

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### The Complete Corporate Chaplain's Handbook

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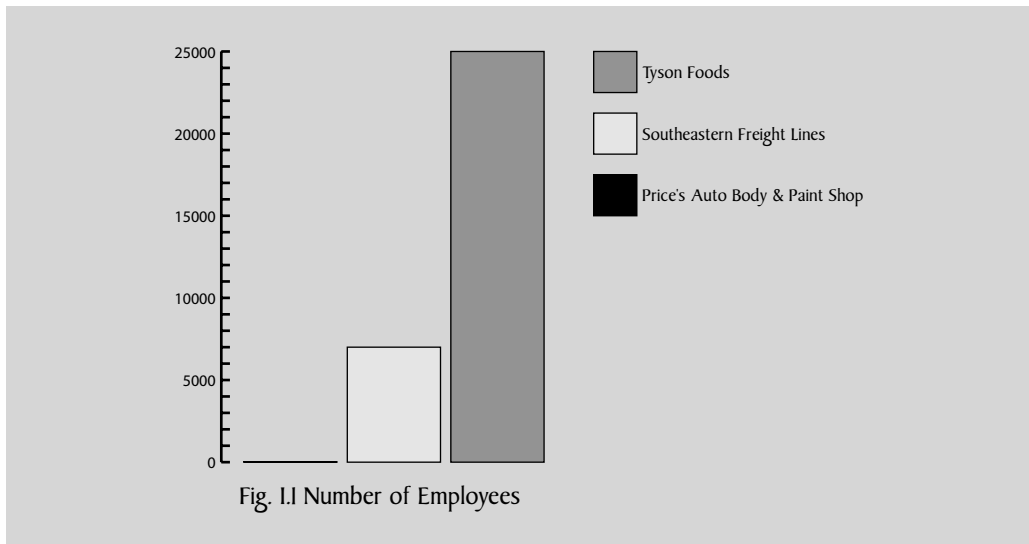
**C**orporate Chaplaincy is a concept that is often new to many people. Ask most people about chaplains and they will be familiar only with hospital chaplains or military chaplains. Put the words corporate and chaplain together to form the title “corporate chaplain,” and most often you will be met with a look of puzzlement and the obvious question: “What is a corporate chaplain?” The goal of this book is not only to answer this question, but also to equip the prospective chaplain for the greatest of callings to serve in the greatest of mission fields – the workplace.

While the industry awareness may be quite low, the reality is that there are more than 4,000 chaplains serving in the American workplace today, and the trend toward the provision of chaplains caring for employees is on the upswing. Companies as small as Price's Auto Body & Paint Shop of Raleigh, NC with 25 employees, and companies as large as Southeastern Freight Lines employing over 7,000, are seeing the benefits of caring for their most valuable of assets – their associates. However, it is not just private Christian-owned-and-operated companies fueling this trend. Even publicly held companies utilize workplace chaplains. Tyson Foods relies on 52 part-time chaplains serving in 39 plants to care for its workforce of 25,000. John Tyson, the grandson of the founder of the company and current CEO, is the driving force behind the program.

*The Complete Corporate Chaplain's Handbook* was born out of a decade of providing genuine caring in the workplace through the work of Corporate Chaplains of America. The past ten years of experience has been invested in doing two things: first, serving the needs of employees and second, developing a process-managed approach to further the care of employees. The first goal is being accomplished every day as chaplains traverse cubicle aisles, loading docks, and office buildings across America seeking to impact the lives of associates in crisis. Within the pages of this book, this process-managed approach to chaplaincy has been distilled into workable teaching material. Our purpose in producing it is to contribute to the expansion of the corporate chaplaincy movement, not only in the U.S. but throughout the world.

This volume explores, in exhaustive fashion, the corporate chaplaincy movement

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from the Christian perspective. It will trace the history of corporate chaplaincy, examine various corporate chaplaincy models, and cover the practical aspects of the myriad of ministry opportunities encountered by a corporate chaplain. In its pragmatism, the goal of *The Complete Corporate Chaplain's Handbook* is to equip men and women for the work of corporate chaplaincy. Interspersed throughout the text will be a combination of practical exercises and case studies designed to engage the corporate chaplaincy student in the equipping process.

The handbook is organized into five units. The first unit engages the student through a fictional, yet realistic, look at the first twelve weeks in the life of a corporate chaplain. Unit 2 lays a foundation for corporate chaplaincy. The biblical basis for corporate chaplaincy is explored, the history of the corporate chaplaincy movement is reviewed, and different models for corporate chaplaincy are detailed. The third unit examines the world in which we operate. The human resource angle of corporate chaplaincy is considered, along with the challenge of postmodernism and multiculturalism. Unit 4 details the core principles of corporate chaplaincy. These principles serve as the guiding force for the care provided by corporate chaplains in a wide spectrum of situations. The book concludes in unit five with practical principles for equipping the corporate chaplain to help employees in times of crisis.

Corporate chaplaincy is but one piece of what has come to be known as the workplace ministry movement. While much is being accomplished, all aimed at penetrating

the American workplace with the message of the gospel, this text will restrict itself to the role played by the chaplain in the American free enterprise system. Corporate chaplaincy is not new. Evidence points to the first chaplaincy program in the workplace beginning in the 1940s. Ministry in the marketplace is not new. In fact, it dates back



Fig. 1.2 Companies of all shapes and sizes are beginning to provide chaplaincy as a benefit for their employees.

to the days of Jesus and the work of the early church. One does not need to peer far into American business history to see a movement of God. Jeremiah Lanphier, a businessman in New York, ignited a revival in 1851 through the vehicle of a simple lunchtime prayer meeting. Today, that movement, awakened a century and a half ago finds its expression through the conduit of over 1,000 workplace ministries.

These ministries function through a variety of methods, including workplace prayer meetings and bible studies, Christian business mentoring groups like CI2, workplace ministry conferences, and the subject of this work, corporate chaplaincy.

## What is a corporate chaplain?

Simply defined, a chaplain is a spiritual caregiver. Dictionaries usually classify a chaplain as a member of the clergy attached to a chapel who conducts religious services for an institution, such as a prison, a hospital, or for the armed services. With this definition in mind, this text will identify a corporate chaplain as a personal and spiritual caregiver whose primary job is to serve the emotional, physical, spiritual, and personal needs of people in the workplace.

## What is a process-managed approach to corporate chaplaincy?

Process management is something most people would recognize but may not

readily be able to define. Perhaps an example will best describe the term. If I succumb to my children's pleas for a McDonald's cheeseburger on the way to the beach, process management demands that a cheeseburger in another town taste the same as the one I buy them in our hometown of Raleigh, NC. Why? Because McDonald's uses the same ingredients, trains their employees in the same cooking process, and utilizes the same equipment in every location in order to prepare a cheeseburger with consistent taste and consistent quality.

Likewise, a process-managed approach to corporate chaplaincy stipulates that chaplaincy care look the same in Raleigh, NC as it looks in Grants Pass, OR. Does this mean the chaplains look the same? The simple answer is no. Process management in corporate chaplaincy means that the process of care provided to the employees utilizes a consistency that spans culture, age, geography, and uniqueness of circumstances, in order to ensure that chaplains are responding in similar fashion throughout the various workplaces they serve. Process management begins with the recruitment process, is accomplished significantly through a proper training model, extends through the chaplain introduction process, and finds its completion through a consistency of response among chaplain team members to the variety of crises encountered.

The following description of Corporate Chaplains of America's process-managed approach to the work of corporate chaplaincy is offered in order to lay a framework for the remainder of this text. A certified chaplain is provided to serve each company and their employees. Each chaplain is assigned to serve between two and eight companies, and approximately 650 employees, overall. The chaplain then arrives at the client companies at regularly appointed hours, makes the rounds, and sees if anyone wants or needs to talk. Each chaplain has the established goal of seeing every employee once a week and visiting each company they serve one time per week for every one hundred employees under chaplaincy care. The purpose of this goal is simply to build a trusting and caring relationship with each employee. Employees served are also given a business card that bears the name of their chaplain. The card displays the phrase "Caring in the Workplace" and a direct 800 number to reach their chaplain 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

As the relationship with each employee develops, the chaplain is positioned to serve as a pastoral caregiver to employees and their families. In essence, the chaplain is serving as a pastor to people who have no pastor. Care can include hospital visitation, marriage or family caregiving, performance of funeral services, and assistance with a variety of other difficult issues. The care provided is always at the initiation of the

employee and only after permission is granted by the employee.

The caregiving ministry provided by Corporate Chaplains of America has succeeded because it has utilized a very practical strategy to achieve a very focused goal. The goal is simple - the personal and spiritual care of people. The strategy is to reach people where they are by addressing their point of need during a moment of crisis. According to statistics, people are more likely to be found at work than at home or church. Consider a few basic statistics. One out of five people work more than 49 hours per week. Sixty percent of women are in the American workforce. Seventy-five percent of women with children are currently employed. Twenty-seven percent of all families are single-parent families, meaning the head of the home faces the challenges of both employment and parenting alone. These statistics translate into twenty-two fewer hours per week families can spend with their children.

In spite of the stress brought on by the competing demands of family and work responsibilities, people continue to ignore avenues such as counselors, employee assistance programs, and the church as sources of strength and support. Data from the Barna Research Group indicates that 60 percent of people do not attend church on a typical weekend. What this data indicates is that a significant majority of people encountered in the work environment have no pastor or other caregiver to turn to during a time of crisis. Perhaps an even more alarming statistic indicates that adults over age eighteen have only a 6 percent likelihood of accepting Christ as Savior. What this statistic tells us in simple terms is that only 6 percent are likely to discover a long term spiritual solution to the problems they face. It is the remaining majority that Corporate Chaplains of America seeks to reach with the life-changing Good News of Jesus Christ.

Corporate Chaplains of America has utilized a strategy of employing full-time chaplains for carrying out its mission of caring for and serving employees in the workplace. While this approach has been very effective, the results achieved can be better still. This improvement can come through a process of multiplication as chaplains are trained and equipped to offer consistent, well planned care in the lives of employees, to live out their faith in the workplace, and to share the life-changing Good News of Jesus Christ.

This book is needed for three basic reasons. First, an understanding of the biblical basis for corporate chaplaincy is essential. Secondly, it will serve as a tool to expand the work of corporate chaplaincy throughout the United States and the world. Finally,

those people God is calling into full-time service as corporate chaplains will see themselves in these pages and be drawn into what He wants them to do.

Matthew 9:35-38 records the teaching of Jesus as He spoke of the need for additional workers for the harvest field. The statistical support from the past ten years of chaplaincy service demonstrates clearly that the field of the American workplace and the corporate chaplaincy movement is poised for strong growth in the years to come. While the field is in position for increase, the need for workers is great. Ephesians 4:11-13 records the apostle Paul providing practical instruction about the responsibility of equipping people for the work of service. It is the desire of the authors that this work provide practical instruction, so that men and women might be equipped for the role of corporate chaplain.

Some who will read this text and be taught its content will recognize God's call upon their lives into full-time Christian service. As this call is answered, Jesus' request for more workers for the harvest field will be answered. Effectively trained chaplains will be essential for the strong growth of the corporate chaplaincy movement and its continued success in solidly impacting the workplace. The words of Jesus recorded in Matthew 9:36-38 can be very easily applied to today's workplace.

<sup>36</sup> *He felt great pity for the crowds that came, because their problems were so great and they didn't know where to go for help. They were like sheep without a shepherd.*  
<sup>37</sup> *He said to his disciples, 'The harvest is so great, but the workers are so few.'* <sup>38</sup> *So pray to the Lord who is in charge of the harvest; ask him to send out more workers for his fields' (Matthew 9:36-38 NLT).*

The authors' prayer for the readers of this work is that they might discover some practical help for the most pragmatic of callings - the call to corporate chaplaincy. Thank you for embarking on this journey of discovery and for allowing us the privilege of sharing some lessons learned along the way.

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## Stories From the Field: #1

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### "What Is a Corporate Chaplain?"

*The day had already been busy. Six hours had been invested in the life of one family, and it was only lunch time. Corporate Chaplain Alan Floyd waited patiently in line to*

*place an order for his favorite sub, a turkey and cheese on honey oat bread. As the line snaked slowly forward he noticed the gray-haired, slightly balding man with the yellow bow tie staring at the logo prominently displayed over the pocket on the left side of his chest. The red triangle logo and the words Corporate Chaplains of America were always clearly visible from ten feet away. After five years of chaplain service, Alan was familiar with the response and knew the question that was coming before it was even asked. "What is a corporate chaplain?" Alan thought back to the day he had boarded an elevator to the 5th floor cancer wing of Rich Creek Memorial Hospital and had been asked that question for the first time. His answer that day had been a rambling description that really failed to communicate anything at all. After many false starts, he was eventually able to explain he was an ordained minister who happened to serve in companies instead of churches. The bow tie man responded to his answer with a puzzled expression and a response he was to hear many more times over the years: "I've never heard of that. I didn't know there was such a thing."*

## Questions

1. How would you respond to the question, "What is a corporate chaplain?"
2. What would be your response to the statement, "I didn't know there were corporate chaplains"?

## Practical Exercise # 1

Conduct an internet search using the words "workplace ministry". Identify the top five workplace ministries, spend time examining their web sites, and develop a half page summary of each ministry.

## Practical Exercise # 2

Conduct an internet search using the words "corporate chaplaincy".

1. Identify five individual corporate chaplaincy organizations. Examine each organization's website and write a half page description of their work.
2. Identify five newspaper or magazine articles dealing with the corporate chaplaincy movement. Read each article and write a 1 page reflection paper on general insights gained from the articles. Are the articles favorable? Are there challenges to the movement? What does the future of the movement look like?

