

“egonomics”
by David Marcum and Steven Smith (2007)
Two Lessons for the CoB: Lesson 2

Egonomics is an interesting book. Many of the quotes praising it suggest it as a book that should be required for all MBA students. That is a good idea. Lessons in this book – and there are many – have applications in the CoB for faculty, staff and students, but especially certain administrators.

A second lesson for the CoB deals with veracity. The authors tell us that “veracity” implies habitual pursuit of, and adherence to, truth. Truth is a destination (page 207). One way an organization handles this is by “hearing down” and “speaking up”. “Hearing down” is listening to subordinates openly and fairly. “Speaking up” concerns the manner in which you talk to your bosses. The authors suggest the biggest problem with this method is a closed mind. A closed mind does not need to listen to (real or perceived) subordinates; the closed mind is dismissive of them. The closed mind will be a suck-up to get his or her way, not what may be in the best interest of the organization.

I doubt the authors ever met George Carter, and they probably never will, but he could be an example for a sequel for them. He won’t be because the authors consult with major companies, and therefore do not need an irrelevant, past-prime “administrator”. He could, however, serve as an “even down there in a Tier IV business school” example to illustrate this is a universal problem. George Carter, a “what is” kind of closed mind.