



April 2018

Book Review: How Will You Measure Your Life? by Clayton M. Christensen, James Allworth, and Karen Dillon

Tanner Hafen
Brigham Young University, mariannari@hotmail.com

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/marriottstudentreview>

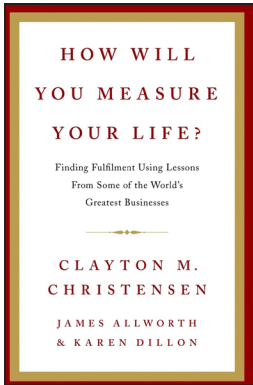
 Part of the [Business Administration, Management, and Operations Commons](#), and the [Business and Corporate Communications Commons](#)

Marriott Student Review is a student journal created and published as a project for the Writing for Business Communications course at Brigham Young University (BYU). The views expressed in Marriott Student Review are not necessarily endorsed by BYU or The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

Recommended Citation

Hafen, Tanner (2018) "Book Review: How Will You Measure Your Life? by Clayton M. Christensen, James Allworth, and Karen Dillon," *Marriott Student Review*: Vol. 2 : Iss. 1 , Article 18.
Available at: <https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/marriottstudentreview/vol2/iss1/18>

This Book Review is brought to you for free and open access by the All Journals at BYU ScholarsArchive. It has been accepted for inclusion in Marriott Student Review by an authorized editor of BYU ScholarsArchive. For more information, please contact scholarsarchive@byu.edu, ellen_amatangelo@byu.edu.



How Will You Measure Your Life?

By: Clayton M. Christensen, James Allworth, and Karen Dillon

Review by Tanner Hafen

The drive to succeed is alive and well at BYU. Students have high hopes for their futures, as they should. However, if they're not careful, it's quite likely things won't turn out as they had hoped. Clayton Christensen and his colleagues introduce this idea powerfully in *How Will You Measure Your Life?* and provide guidance, backed by business theory, which will help anyone—especially the college students preparing for life—find success at work and at home. Since he is one of the most influential business thinkers in the world, as well as a committed Latter-day Saint, Christensen's words carry weight at BYU.

The book proceeds through three sections, each one aimed at helping the reader succeed in a different aspect of life. Christensen concentrates on "Finding Happiness in Your Career," then moves on to "Finding Happiness in Your Relationships," and ends with the appropriately titled, "Staying Out of Jail." Drawing on the business theory he teaches at Harvard Business School, real examples from real business, and his own personal and family life, Christensen teaches valuable lessons.

For example, you could ask yourself what your dream job is. What attracts you to it? How are you going to get there? Christensen introduces several ideas about motivation; strategy; and resources processes, and priorities; and shows how they might influence the fulfillment the reader may actually find in their future careers. Perhaps his own career is the best example. After all, it makes sense that Christensen, so incredibly successful in his field, must have arrived at his dream

job. Nope. He always wanted to be the editor of the *Wall Street Journal*. Through taking advantage of unanticipated opportunities and not rigidly sticking to some unrealistic five-year-plan, Christensen has found a career that he loves.

More important than career, though, is family. Christensen spends significant time in his book talking about the satisfaction that comes from good relationships with spouses, children, and friends, and how they can easily fail if you're not careful. One way he does this is using the Theory of Good and Bad Capital; basically the idea that new businesses fail when they invest too much in the wrong strategy. Christensen shows how people do this all the time in their relationships, especially by prioritizing work over those relationships. In the long run, though, neglecting these relationships will likely lead to failure, just as in the business world.

Ultimately, though, Christensen concludes that the ideas he presents are most effective when they are supported by a clearly defined purpose. He shares the story of how he, as a busy economics student at Oxford, took time away from his studies for an hour every day to determine what his purpose in life would be. For many students, especially those in the Marriott School, such a sacrifice might seem unreasonable, especially since success in school is very important. However, Christensen makes clear that the purpose he discovered "is the most valuable, useful piece of knowledge that [he] ever gained," and if he "instead spent that hour each day learning the latest techniques for mastering the problems of autocorrelation in regression analysis, [he] would have badly misspent [his] life."

How Will You Measure Your Life? is an important book for any person with a desire for success. It offers valuable lessons from an inspiring man, and reading it will help anyone to avoid the pitfalls of a driven life and to find success at work and home.