

# FIRED UP AND BURNED OUT

by Michael Lee Stallard

## Synopsis

by Janis Apted

Associate Vice President of Faculty Development  
at The University of Texas M.D. Anderson Cancer Center

Why do we go to work every day? Apart from having to earn a living, there must be some reason human beings decided that joining a group of people to get something done was worth the effort. But what allows us to thrive at work?

It is dispiriting to read that the Gallup Organization concludes that “fewer than three in ten Americans are engaged in their work.” That’s a lot of human energy going down the drain.

In my 38 years of work experience in several countries and different institutions, I’ve had times when I was growing and learning and thriving and other times when I felt like I was dying on the vine (which certainly prompted me to move). One of my best work experiences was the five years I spent as a volunteer, working nights and weekends, on a global project whose goal I thought was impossible. That volunteer work became my touchstone of what a growth-enhancing culture was like and how much people will put into an effort they believe in.

***Fired Up or Burned Out*** looks at what it takes to create authentic connection in the workplace. It is filled with examples of extraordinary leaders throughout history who had vision, well-defined values, and a compelling way of motivating others. These leaders understood what ignites the human spirit and allows us to achieve astonishing results by surpassing our own expectations.

As leaders ourselves, helping teams or students or staff to reach their full potential is a gift we give people every day. Everyone wants meaningful work, no matter what job they have. This book shows us how to be those leaders who can empower people to reach their full potential.

I chose this book because a group of faculty here at MD Anderson selected it for their own book club discussion and loved it. It was chosen as one of the best business books of the year when it was published in 2007. It is compelling and worth the time. In light of current economic challenges, it is even more important to know how to engage people in their work.