



REQUIRED READING

These books have been singled out for their excellence over time and relevance within today's entrepreneurial environment. Certifiable classics, the techniques and principles within them are tried and time tested. No successful entrepreneur should be without a copy of each on his or her bookshelf.

Good to Great – Jim Collins

In my opinion, the most important business book written to date. It covers the five key areas where excellence is needed in order to become a great company. Based on fact rather than opinion, Collins does a great job of not only telling you what it takes, but shows you as well.

The fundamentals outlined in the book are crucial to building an outstanding company.

First, Break All the Rules –Buckingham, Clifton

What Good to Great is to great companies, this book is to great managers. The Gallup organization conducted two exhaustive studies over a period of twenty five years interviewed over one million employees from a broad range of companies, industries and countries. Buckingham and Coffman have taken this information and answer two fundamental questions. First, "What do the most talented employees need from their workplace?" and second, "How do the world's greatest managers find, focus and keep talented employees?"

The answer, it turns out is that "It ain't management as usual" and that's why you have to break all the rules.

The Effective Executive – Peter Drucker

First published in 1967, this masterpiece by the 'Father of Modern Management' tells us that the true measure of an executive is the ability to "get the right things done." The lessons and techniques he teaches are as relevant today as they were groundbreaking when written.

So if you or your management team are having trouble in getting things done, this is the one book you need to read!

The Goal – Eli Goldratt

"What's The Goal?"

Written in novel form, we follow the journey of Alex Rogo as he faces the challenges of turning around a company on the brink of extinction. Aided by his "guru" Jonah, Alex finds the keys to process design and continual improvement spelled out in a style that is hard hitting and simplistic in nature. Although the story takes place in a manufacturing environment, the principals and examples have direct relevance to all businesses, big and small, from service to production and distribution.

Most importantly, if you can't answer the question posed in the beginning of this review – run, don't walk to your nearest bookstore!

Visionary Business – Marc Allen

A first person account of how to build a visionary business that supports its employees, its community and the environment. Fact based and written in story form, Marc Allen shares the 25 practical and concrete principals used to take his business from a small start-up operation with no capital to a major independent publisher.

An easy read, each chapter is based on an individual principal with the final pages serving as a summary for easy reference.

The Leadership Pipeline – Noel, Drotter, Charan

The authors played a significant role in GE's leadership development programs and have done a great job of bringing the information down to the entrepreneurial level. With that you get a proven model showing how to identify future leaders, assess their competence and plan their continued development within the organization.

What I like best about it is that it's direct, to the point and literally tells you that if your company is a certain size, you need go no further.

Crucial Conversations – Patterson, Grenny, McMillan, Switzler

No company will survive and thrive unless it masters communication. Everyone needs to talk and this book shows you how and when to hold conversations when it matters most. It focuses on how to hold the tough discussions when opinions differ, emotions are involved and the stakes are high. They not only show you techniques to use, but also how and when to use them.

Remember, having a crucial conversation at the wrong time is often more harmful than having no conversation at all.

Winning – Jack Welch

Maybe the greatest CEO of his generation, Jack has written a book for the ages. His methodical approach covers the leadership, management, decision making and most importantly, continued growth and learning one needs to grow a winning organization. His no BS approach and plain talk is refreshing and to the point. One of the Winning is destined to become the bible of business for generations to come. It clearly and succinctly lays out the answers to the most difficult, important questions people face both on and off

I'd share this with everyone in the organization.

The Art of War – Sun Tsu

Written over 2500 years ago as a military book, the battlefield strategies easily transfer into the business world. The book will give you greater insight into human nature, positioning and negotiation.

It's been 'translated' into business form, but I prefer reading the original and transferring the lessons into my own world.

S.P.I.N. Selling - Rachkam

Based on a 12-year study into effective sales performance, I feel this is the best book on selling ever written. At the time, the sales strategy was unique and ground breaking as like some of the other books listed, it forced you to break all the rules.

The techniques in this book do not only lend themselves to building a great sales process, but will transfer into most business processes as well.