[SAMPLE]

Business Book Summaries Selections
Mapped to [Corporate] Leadership Competencies

Change Management
- Built to Change: *How to Achieve Sustained Organizational Effectiveness*
- Making Strategy Work: *Leading Effective Execution and Change*
- FutureThink: *How to Think Clearly in a Time of Change*
- Building the Bridge As You Walk On It: *A Guide For Leading Change*

Collaboration
- Collaborating To Compete: *Using Strategic Alliances and Acquisitions in the Global Marketplace*
- The Power of We: *Succeeding Through Partnerships*
- X-Engineering the Corporation: *Reinventing Your Business in the Digital Age*
- The Southwest Airlines Way: *Using the Power of Relationships to Achieve High Performance*

Mentoring / Coaching
- Power Mentoring: *How Successful Mentors and Protégés Get the Most Out of Their Relationships*
- Managers as Mentors: *Building Partnerships for Learning*
- Tales From the Top: *Ten Crucial Questions from the World's #1 Executive Coach*
- Secrets of an Executive Coach: *Proven Methods for Helping Leaders Excel Under Pressure*

Global Business
- The World Is Flat: *A Brief History of the Twenty-First Century*
- Global Diversity: Winning Customers and Engaging Employees Within World Markets
- Working Globe Smart: *12 People Skills for Doing Business Across Borders*
- Business Across Cultures: *From the Culture for Business Series*

Decision Making
- How Great Decisions Get Made: *10 Easy Steps for Reaching Agreement on Even the Toughest Issues*
- Why Decisions Fail: *Avoiding the Blunders and Traps That Lead to Debacles*
- Smart Choices: *A Practical Guide to Making Better Decisions*
- A Rock and a Hard Place: *How To Make Ethical Business Decisions When the Choices Are Tough*
Integrity
♦ Absolute Honesty: Building a Corporate Culture That Values Straight Talk and Rewards Integrity
♦ The Trusted Leader: Bringing Out the Best in Your People and Your Company
♦ The Leadership Challenge
♦ Principle-Centered Leadership

Strategic Thinking
♦ The Well-Timed Strategy: Managing the Business Cycle for Competitive Advantage
♦ Reinventing Strategy: Using Strategic Learning to Create and Sustain Breakthrough Performance
♦ businessThink: Rules for Getting It Right, Now and No Matter What!
♦ Thinking Inside the Box: The 12 Timeless Rules for Managing a Successful Business

Pursuing Innovation
♦ The Ten Faces of Innovation: IDEO’s Strategies for Beating the Devil’s Advocate & Driving Creativity Through Your Organization
♦ Driving Growth Through Innovation: How Leading Firms Are Transforming Their Futures
♦ The Seeds of Innovation: Cultivating the Synergy That Fosters New Ideas
♦ The Inventive Organization: Hope and Daring at Work

Communications
♦ The DNA of Leadership: Leverage Your Instincts to Communicate, Differentiate, Innovate
♦ Corporate Conversations: A Guide to Crafting Effective and Appropriate Internal Communications
♦ The Leader’s Voice: How Communication Can Inspire Action and Get Results!
♦ How the Way We Talk Can Change the Way We Work: Seven Languages for Transformation

Contributing to Team Success
♦ When Teams Work Best: 6,000 Team Members and Leaders Tell What It Takes to Succeed
♦ Hot Spots: Why Some Teams, Workplaces, and Organizations Buzz with Energy - And Others Don’t
♦ Executive Teams: The Ultimate Guide to Turning Top Executives into a Top-Notch Team
♦ Cross-Functional Teams: Working With Allies, Enemies, and Other Strangers
Built to Change
_How to Achieve Sustained Organizational Effectiveness_
By: Edward E. Lawler III and Christopher G. Worley
Foreword by Jerry Porras

_Built to Change_ addresses an important and ever-prevalent element of modern business that challenges organizations big and small, old and new. That immense issue is change, the one thing that most businesses simply are not designed for. Lawler and Worley take the critical matter of business-wide change head-on—subverting traditional messages touting unwavering stability and strict structure as a means to success. Their message is simple: Change or perish. And in this book, they show the business world how to make it happen.

Nothing, say the authors, is truly “built to last,” least of all competitive advantage, valuable human capital, and long-term success when stagnation, blind stability, and an aversion to transformation (no matter how small) leads an organization’s ideals.

Making Strategy Work
_Leading Effective Execution and Change_
By: Lawrence G. Hrebiniak

Although there is a wealth of literature, models, and techniques to guide organizations through the definition and planning stages of business strategy, many enterprises are finding the time and resources they commit to such tasks have been expended with little or no reward. The reason? There has been no definitive model for the _execution_ of these strategies; and without execution, not even the most brilliant strategy can succeed.

_Making Strategy Work_ focuses on the processes, decisions, and actions needed to implement the strategy, providing a roadmap for ensuring that strategy is executed effectively. The execution of a strategic plan is infinitely more complex than the planning. Just a few of the obstacles to effective strategy execution are: the long timeframes necessary for execution; poor or vague strategy; conflicts with the organizational power structure; inadequate communication or sharing of information; unclear responsibility and accountability in the execution process; and an inability to manage change, including cultural change within an enterprise.

FutureThink
_How to Think Clearly in a Time of Change_
By: Edie Weiner and Arnold Brown

The future is about change but, according to Weiner and Brown, the future can only be grasped when objective information about change is combined with clear views. Unfortunately, the prevalence of “knee-jerk clichés and management fads” in the business literature has caused too many people and organizations to overlook the basics of good thinking because too many minds are being held captive by assumptions, prejudices, and prejudgments.

_FutureThink_ provides breakthrough, serendipitous thinking techniques, grounded in science and supported by the authors’ broad and successful work as futurists. This guide to seeing the positive possibilities and implications of change is offered to help “strategists,” whether they are senior business professionals, middle managers, government leaders, entrepreneurs, or teenagers, wake up and see beyond their biases and blinders—their “educated incapacity”—so that they can break out of the rut of stereotypical and lazy contemplation.
Building the Bridge As You Walk On It
A Guide For Leading Change
By: Robert E. Quinn

Building the Bridge As You Walk On It, the third book in Robert Quinn's trilogy about how to effect deep change, offers a new approach to leadership development. Quinn believes that people, no matter what their position in life, spend most of their time in a normal state, which is comfort-centered, externally driven, self-focused, and internally closed. However, it is possible for anyone to enter what he calls the fundamental state of leadership, a state of mind that is a results-centered, internally driven, other-focused, and externally open.

Once people embrace this state of mind, they are personally transformed. They can become creators of a new order. They accomplish this by acting as signals - stimuli - to which other respond, thus bringing about organizational change. This, simply put, is Quinn's approach to leadership development: personal change must always precede organizational change.

Collaboration

Collaborating To Compete
Using Strategic Alliances and Acquisitions in the Global Marketplace
By: Joel Bleeke and David Ernst, editors, McKinsey & Company, Inc. Foreword by Kenichi Ohmae

Collaboration is itself a product of collaboration among associates in McKinsey & Company offices around the globe (a brief biographical sketch is provided for each contributor). Represented are diverse cultures, professional experiences, and educational backgrounds, yet the quality of writing, the style and tone, the level of concreteness and clarity, and the organization of facts and interpretations remain consistent. Moreover, each article displays an authoritative command of the subject that sustains the reader’s interest throughout.

Collaborating to Compete offers important insights that can help managers choose and understand the appropriate mindset for their strategic situations, their corporate cultures, and the culture of their partners. The book also offers a new and essential perspective for those who continue to view the differences among the regions of the Triad as being restrictive.

The Power of We
Succeeding Through Partnerships
By: Jonathan Tisch

Jonathan Tisch, Chairman and CEO of Loews Hotels and one of the nation's most influential corporate executives, understands the power of partnerships in achieving success. Although he developed his leadership philosophy in the context of the travel and tourism industry, its principles are applicable to any industry, community service, or government. The key to success, according to Tisch, is partnering with individuals and community groups to achieve what no single organization can achieve alone.

In The Power of We, Tisch illustrates his management philosophy of cooperation and partnership at all levels with an abundance of background information and personal stories from Loews Hotels, providing both the mindset that companies should adopt in pursuit of their business and advice on practical applications.

X-Engineering the Corporation
Reinventing Your Business in the Digital Age
By: James Champy

In Reengineering the Corporation (1993), Michael Hammer, with coauthor, Champy, offered the advice that work would have to be reengineered in terms of processes, if businesses were to respond successfully to the mega changes wrought by globalization, rampant competition, and the growing demands of increasingly sophisticated customers. The result was a great wave of reengineering worldwide that achieved enormous efficiencies in every conceivable industry. Nonetheless, Champy believes that the technological revolution and the global economic realignment of the past five years demand that companies move into the next stage of transformation. It is a step requiring that the advantages of reengineering be extended beyond the company to benefit, not only the company’s shareholders, but also its managers, employees, customers, suppliers, and partners as well.
Calling this new challenge of connectedness and interdependency X-engineering (the X signifies the crossing of boundaries between organizations), Champy offers X-Engineering the Corporation. In it, he sets forth the theory and practice of this next-stage approach, providing detailed case histories of some of the companies that have had great success in applying X-engineering, and revealing an inspirational new vision of business in which information and products flow freely.

The Southwest Airlines Way
Using the Power of Relationships to Achieve High Performance
By: Jody Hoffer Gittell

Southwest Airlines has sustained a steady 10 to 15 percent rate of growth throughout its 32-year history, and has been profitable every year but its first. For most of 2002, its total market value of about $9 billion was larger than that of all other major U.S. airlines combined. It has been called "the most successful airline in history" by Fortune magazine and it has been included in Fortune’s list of the "100 Best Companies to Work for in America” for three years in succession. And, the enterprise has enjoyed lower turnover rates than other U.S. carriers.

Believing that the innovative ways that Southwest has achieved its success has the potential to "transform the airline industry in the same way Toyota transforms the auto industry in the 1980s,” Gittell presents The Southwest Airlines Way. This in-depth profile, based on eight years of airline-industry field research, reveals the policies, strategies, and techniques that make up the company’s relationship-focused business model and explains how that model is its competitive advantage. It is a comprehensive analysis that offers managers, not just in the airlines industry, but in any economic sector, the tools for increasing productivity and profitability, encouraging teamwork, and building a dedicated, innovative workforce.

Mentoring / Coaching

Power Mentoring
How Successful Mentors and Protégés Get the Most Out of Their Relationships
By: Ellen E. Ensher, Susan E. Murphy

Today, few employees spend their entire career at one company. Some people move from company to company in search of raises and promotions; while some move from project to project. Employment patterns have also changed and there is no longer one clear pathway to success, much less a clearly defined career pathway. Mentoring relationships have changed as well. Just as most of us do not stay with one employer, most of us do not stay with just one mentor. Power Mentoring, by Ellen Ensher and Susan Murphy, contains advice and a how-to plan for those looking to be protégés or mentors and for those who already are.

According to research on mentoring, mentors furnish both emotional and career support. They help clarify expectations, encourage development, and provide opportunities for a protégé to learn and grow. The relationship, though, is not a one-way street. Mentors also receive benefits. They are able to improve their skills in coaching and providing feedback, and they gain a greater sense of personal fulfillment.

Managers as Mentors
Building Partnerships for Learning
By: Chip R. Bell

The first edition of Managers as Mentors (1996) was offered to provide supervisors and managers with the competence and confidence to shed the old authoritarian, patriarchal leader/manager model. Bell believed that, in the contemporary workplace, the requirement of learning is constant; thus, managers must adopt a partnering relationship that supports, enables, and facilitates workers so that high levels of performance and a continuous learning environment are ensured.

Today, says, Bell, because the economy is even more challenging that it was then, “helping employees grow” must now be the absolute top priority of all managers. Due to the fact that mentoring has grown in importance, managers need proficiency rather than programs, accessible resources and practical techniques rather than rules and policies, and immediately actionable guidelines rather than philosophical discussion and theory. As a consequence, the author thinks that this second edition of his work is more important than the first, for it is offered to address these needs.

Tales From the Top
Ten Crucial Questions from the World’s #1 Executive Coach
By: Graham Alexander
Every executive, even those in charge of successful companies, needs nurturing and coaching every once in a while. *Tales From the Top* by Graham Alexander gives busy executives access to a highly-rated executive coach, allowing them to reap the benefits of such mentoring on their own schedule.

In his highly accessible work, Alexander poses ten crucial questions that will help CEOs and potential CEOs challenge themselves, thereby increasing their personal effectiveness. Senior leaders and managers will also learn how other executives have answered these questions and how the insights they have gained has changed their companies. He provides practical tips, action items, wake-up calls, and leadership notes. And through examples from years of coaching top executives, Alexander spells out why the answers to his ten questions are critical for anyone’s success.

**Secrets of an Executive Coach**

*Proven Methods for Helping Leaders Excel Under Pressure*

By: *Alan Downs*

Too often, the corporate life of many executives is driven by what Downs calls the ongoing process of truth management a major component of executive failure that attempts to minimize pain and maximize success by glossing over mistakes, fabricating successes, and hiding conflicts behind a facade of cooperation. In this struggle to survive, executives suppress desires and values and sometimes even abdicate their convictions, until something traumatic occurs. Then, everything comes spilling out to the detriment of their careers, businesses, and personal lives.

It is at this point, says, the author, that executive coaches can do their best work, and he offers *Secrets of an Executive Coach* as a step-by-step primer for that purpose. The work applies the tenets of clinical psychology to the unique stresses of executive leadership and reveals the important psychological insights executive coaches need to cut through an executive’s destructive attitudes and behaviors. It presents the fundamental coaching techniques required to help executives confront and resolve a range of personal and professional crises in order to achieve lasting breakthrough results.

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**Global Business**

**The World Is Flat**

*A Brief History of the Twenty-First Century*

By: *Thomas L. Friedman*

Although outsourcing is the current hot topic, Friedman reports that outsourcing is just one dimension of a much more fundamental phenomenon unfolding today – the flattening of the world. Massive technological investment, the explosion of software, and the plummeting price of computers and their worldwide diffusion have all come together to create a platform for intellectual work/capital to be delivered from anywhere to anywhere. This convergence has provided a whole new degree of freedom in the way people perform tasks, especially intellectual tasks.

Thus, countries like India and China are now able to compete for global knowledge work as never before, and America will be challenged as never before by this new milestone in human progress. This is what *The World Is Flat* is all about. It provides an understanding of how this flattening process occurred and what its implications might be for countries, companies, and individuals.

**Global Diversity**

*Winning Customers and Engaging Employees Within World Markets*

By: *Ernest Gundling and Anita Zanchettin*

To be successful in a world market, corporations need to learn to adapt their services and products to meet local needs and preferences. To this end, a superficial knowledge of the culture and diversity within a country is insufficient. Instead, what is needed is a deeper understanding of differences – both subtle and obvious – that may impact business and workplace expectations.

Ernest Gundling and Anita Zanchettin offer the basis for such an understanding in *Global Diversity*. Specifically, the authors provide knowledge of key diversity issues within eight countries - China, Egypt, India, Japan, Mexico, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States - selected for population, economy, and regional balance. The authors present extensive detail on diversity variables such as age, language, gender, socioeconomic status, religion, regional origin, ethnicity, regional background, and family background. In addition, they offer an analysis of practical workplace implications for each diversity variable discussed. The authors conclude with a practical six-step approach to *Global Diversity* that corporations can use to maximize their success in the world market.
Working Globe Smart
12 People Skills for Doing Business Across Borders
By: Ernest Gundling

Anyone who crosses a national or cultural boundary while conducting business faces a common set of hazards. Differences in language, social customs, and business styles add further complexity to already-complicated transactions. The inability to relate and cooperate with counterparts from other countries and cultures is one of the main causes of problems in global business negotiations. With the expansion of the global business environment, having interpersonal skills attuned to cultural differences is no longer simply a matter of proper business etiquette, but a critical competitive advantage.

Working Globe Smart is about global leadership and the creation of a corporate culture of engagement with people from around the world. By embracing the 12 people skills that form the basis of this book, managers and executives can avoid frustration and realize important business opportunities that may otherwise be missed.

Business Across Cultures
From the Culture for Business Series
By: Fons Trompenaars, Peter Woolliams

In a global economy, contemplation of culture is neither new nor unusual. In fact, it is crucial for a successful business venture. Often when company executives seek to break into the international market or form alliances or merge with another company, they spend a lot of time and money studying their own culture as well as the culture they are merging with. But, culture is a tricky thing. It is hard to wrap your arms around, and in many instances, the concept of culture is simplified to a point where it no longer has meaning.

Fons Trompenaars and Peter Woolliams pull together extensive research and practical experience in Business Across Cultures to create a toolkit for executives contemplating the tricky terrain of culture and an approach to reconciling cultural differences.

Decision Making

How Great Decisions Get Made
10 Easy Steps for Reaching Agreement on Even the Toughest Issues
By: Don Maruska

In How Great Decisions Get Made, Maruska outlines ten steps that will help any group reach truly effective, innovative decisions backed by genuine commitment from all concerned. His ten-step process has been the foundation for breakthroughs in businesses ranging from Fortune 500 companies to start-ups, in non-profit and community organizations, and in government agencies. Maruska’s methodology, illustrated in a number of case studies throughout the text, is rooted in hope-based rather than the fear-driven decision making, in positive rather than negative interaction among group members. Maruska invites his readers to become “agents of hope” in their organizations, thus laying the groundwork for open communication and, inevitably, leading to solutions that maximize any group’s potential.

Why Decisions Fail
Avoiding the Blunders and Traps That Lead to Debacles
By: Paul C. Nutt

In his 20 years of studying decisions, how they are made, what works, what fails, and why, Nutt’s key finding is that despite the vast sums spent implementing decisions, organizations only realize benefits half of the time. In other words, there is a 50 percent decision failure rate and, according to the author, these failures can be traced to three specific blunders and seven specific traps that “ensnare decision makers” and lead to disastrous debacles.

Because Nutt believes that avoiding these mishaps can cut the failure rate significantly, he offers Why Decisions Fail an analysis of the chain of blunders and traps that led to some infamous debacles, including the Firestone Tire recall, the New York City blackout, EuroDisney, the Ford Pinto, the Beech Nut Baby Food and Nestle Infant Formula scandals, the Challenger disaster, the collapse of Barings Bank, and the siege at Waco. Using these debacles, Nutt illustrates how common tactical errors and traps can derail the decision-making process and then details alternative approaches that managers in any organization can use to improve their decision-making practices.
Smart Choices
_A Practical Guide to Making Better Decisions_
_By: John S. Hammond, Ralph L. Keeney, Howard Raiffa_

Decisions are part of the basic fabric of everyday living. They shape and influence the course of careers and the quality of personal lives. Thus, making Smart Choices has relevance for all individuals, regardless of occupation, age, sex, or socio-economic status. Despite the importance of decision making, however, most people haven’t learned the skill, so they rely on luck and end up making mediocre choices or no choice at all.

Smart Choices takes the guesswork and luck factor out of the decision-making process and offers a systematic approach designed for non-specialists. It outlines the fundamental elements involved in making decisions, explains decision-analysis techniques, and presents dozens of real-life scenarios that effectively illustrate each concept.

A Rock and a Hard Place
_How To Make Ethical Business Decisions When the Choices Are Tough_
_By: Kent Hodgson_

Far more attention needs to be given to the values and principles—both business and ethical—that business people hold, for the simple reason that they make up the foundation upon which decisions are made. Solving business/ethical issues and challenges is every manager’s responsibility. Value-based decision-making demands basic ethics skills as well as business skills—the implication being that the decision maker knows and uses a process that consciously merges the business and ethical factors inherent in most situations. While not leading to perfect solutions, decisions flowing from both business and moral values can produce more effective, responsible, and defensible resolutions to most dilemmas.

Integrity

Absolute Honesty
_Building a Corporate Culture That Values Straight Talk and Rewards Integrity_
_By: Larry Johnson and Bob Phillips_

With shocking revelations of deliberate corporate dishonesty and manipulation appearing almost daily in the media, many are beginning to wonder if the realities of business and the concept of integrity are, by definition, mutually exclusive. Johnson and Phillips believe, however, that this is definitely not the case. It is their premise that a majority of organizations strive to do the right thing. They understand that it is in their best interests, and in the best interests of their customers, employees, shareholders, and communities, to stand on truth, honesty, and accountability. Thus, the issue for this majority is not whether they should be truthful and responsible but, rather, how to “integrate such practices into the culture so that they are rewarded, self-perpetuating, and virtually automatic.”

Drawing on the practices they have observed and helped implement in such companies as American Express, Harley-Davidson, Sequent Computers, Tektronix, and Intel, the authors present _Absolute Honesty_ - a simple, but powerful, template that offers a timeless blueprint, based on “six laws of Absolute Honesty.” These laws go beyond principles to offer executives and managers practical guidelines for building cultures that foster healthy debate and open, honest communication, and help them create workplaces where ethical principles automatically drive every decision.

The Trusted Leader
_Bringing Out the Best in Your People and Your Company_
_By: Robert Galford and Anne Siebold Drapeau_

According to Galford and Drapeau, companies cannot hope to build long-term success unless they build trust with their clients and customers, and they cannot build trust with clients and customers unless they have leaders who can help permeate trust through all levels of the organization. Trust must become a discipline that is managed along with strategy and operations.

Based on their extensive research and experience, the authors present _The Trusted Leader_, a comprehensive, practical guide for senior leaders that identifies the critical types of trust they need to master, offers a practical formula for building organizational confidence, analyzes the obstacles to trust, and demonstrates how crises, restructurings, mergers, and executive departures can be transformed into trust-building experiences.
The Leadership Challenge  
By: James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner  
The first edition of *Leadership Challenge* (1987) became one of the best-selling leadership books of all time and a modern classic on the subject. Now that the recent dot-com bust seems to have withered the entrepreneurial spirit of the late 1980s, and the innovative spirit of the mid-1990s (when the second edition was published), people are wondering if what was true about leadership then still applies today. As part of their extensive research for this third edition, Kouzes and Posner asked leaders: "What’s new, and what’s different?” They found that, though the context has changed, the content of leadership remains the same; thus, they offer *The Leadership Challenge* as a comprehensive, significantly revised and updated field guide—“a personal coach in a book.”

Within this new context, they reaffirm what leaders do; reiterate the fundamental principles that support these leadership practices; provide examples of real people, demonstrating each practice; and offer specific recommendations on what anyone-executives, managers, employees, students, volunteers, parents, etc., can do to assimilate these practices and continually develop their capabilities as leaders.

Principle-Centered Leadership  
By: Stephen R. Covey  
A compass to personal fulfillment and professional success through timeless ethical and managerial principles. Covey incorporates the *Seven Habits of Highly Effective People* and related principles and application practices and processes into a new paradigm of *Principle-Centered Leadership* (PCL), his approach to solving some of the toughest dilemmas of modern business and personal life. *Principle-Centered Leadership* tells how real leadership power comes from an honorable character - proactive influence. In our attempts to influence others, we must also be aware of three common mistakes: advising before understanding; attempting to build/rebuild relationships without changing conduct or attitude; and assuming that good example and relationship are sufficient.

**Strategic Thinking**

The Well-Timed Strategy  
*Managing the Business Cycle for Competitive Advantage*  
By: Peter Navarro  
When plotting strategy to achieve competitive advantage, many companies fail to take into account the importance of the business cycle. The business cycle revolves around economic movements that ebb and flow between recessionary troughs and prosperous peaks. This cycle is arguably one of the single most important determinants of corporate profitability and stock price performance.

*The Well-Timed Strategy* addresses what author Peter Navarro refers to as “Master Cyclist” principles and explains how well-timed strategies and tactics can be used to manage the business cycle for competitive advantage. This book delves into a vast range of considerable opportunities to help corporate teams gain an edge over business rivals during both recessionary and expansionary phases of the business cycle. Real-world examples demonstrate the management and mismanagement of the business cycle, and teach business executives how to improve their company’s stature and performance.

Reinventing Strategy  
*Using Strategic Learning to Create and Sustain Breakthrough Performance*  
By: Willie Pietersen  
According to Pietersen, today’s new leadership challenge is a journey of discovery in which management, particularly in large, established firms, must learn to “think out of the box” and “move out of their comfort zones,” in order to create and lead adaptive organizations that change and innovate continuously. The objective is not learning for learning’s sake, but learning strategically so as “to build an organization that continuously learns new things and [repeatedly] translates them into breakthrough strategies.”

*Reinventing Strategy* distills the author’s extensive experience, both as a CEO and as a teacher, consultant, and researcher at Columbia Business School, to offer a set of operating principles and a leadership process—Strategic Learning—that has proven effective in enabling business leaders to develop superior insights, transform them into winning strategies, and foster adaptive enterprises.
businessThink
Rules for Getting It Right, Now and No Matter What!
By: Dave Marcum, Steve Smith, and Mahan Khalsa

Despite the chaos of world events and the attendant unpredictability of the economy, optimism in the power of innovation continues to prevail, stronger than ever. Around the globe, 101 new patents are applied for every hour, and approximately 2,265 enterprises are started each day. Unfortunately, the number of business failures is almost on par with the number of business launches. Every hour, of every day, more than 46 businesses cease operation.

Marcum, Smith, and Khalsa believe that the monumental gap between generating new ideas and getting results is due to the monumental lack of "business" thinking. They reason that because decisions about what an enterprise can do and should do are driven by thinking, everyone throughout the enterprise must apply sounder judgment to the decision-making process in order to get sound results. businessThink introduces a simple, proven framework, accompanied by a set of "acid-test" rules, for clearly and deeply thinking through every proposed product, process, and business strategy so that the right opportunities are seized, time and again, and the company creates and maintains product/service relevance.

Thinking Inside the Box
The 12 Timeless Rules for Managing a Successful Business
By: Kirk Cheyfitz

No business advice has been more frequently, or freely, dispensed over the last dozen or so years than that of “thinking outside the box” as the key to success in a rapidly changing, increasingly high-tech environment. The result, for many businesses, and for the economy in general, has been disastrous. Before “thinking outside the box” comes Thinking Inside the Box.

Author Kirk Cheyfitz, veteran journalist and publications entrepreneur, outlines a set of twelve basic, timeless principles—which he calls “The Box”—that form the basis of all business success. These rules, the “planks” that make up the box, are timeless because the nature of commerce, in spite of advances in technology, does not change. This fact has become painfully obvious in the wake of the dot-com collapses, the telecom disasters, and the Enron debacle of the 1990s and early 2000s. The corollary of this premise is that managing a business does not require genius nor constant invention, but does require paying attention to history and to present reality while applying hard work and prudence.

Pursuing Innovation

The Ten Faces of Innovation
IDEO’s Strategies for Beating the Devil’s Advocate & Driving Creativity Through Your Organization
By: Thomas Kelley, with Jonathan Littman

According to Tom Kelley (The Art of Innovation), individuals, who assume the role of Devil’s Advocate, can be some of the most potent destroyers of innovation in a corporation. These ubiquitous idea wreckers cloak themselves in the seemingly innocuous and objective Devil’s Advocate persona so they can raise the questions and concerns that effectively kill fragile new ideas, without having to take any responsibility for their negative attacks. At a time when great new insights, ideas, concepts and plans are the most critical ingredients in the long-term success of any organization, the Devil’s Advocate represents a subtle threat to the entire business world.

The Ten Faces of Innovation is designed to help individuals, throughout the organization, bring the human element of innovation to the workings of the enterprise. Inspired by the strategies and roles that have emerged at IDEO, Kelley examines the ten learning, organizing, and building personas individuals can undertake as a means of fending off creativity-stifling naysayers and foster innovation.

Driving Growth Through Innovation
How Leading Firms Are Transforming Their Futures
By: Robert B. Tucker

According to Tucker, “in most cases today, the practice of innovation can be likened to the mating of pandas: infrequent, clumsy, and often ineffective.” His research found that though many executives view innovation as holding the most potential for achieving future growth, and though most consider it their primary strategic challenge, surpassing even globalization and e-commerce, they claim not to have derived full business value from their innovation initiatives. Thus, Tucker concludes that “there is a gap between what managers know they must do to achieve growth, and what they are often able to do in practice.”
Driving Growth Through Innovation is offered to these executives, as well as to, general managers, project managers, sales and marketing executives, and individual contributors to help them transform the practice of innovation so that it becomes a systematic process, embedded in the organization's culture, and the source of uncommon levels of growth. The author goes behind the scenes of 23 companies that have redesigned every stage of how they implement new ideas and synthesizes their best practices into an accessible, practical innovation blueprint for winning new customers and growing new revenue.

The Seeds of Innovation
Cultivating the Synergy That Fosters New Ideas
By: Elaine Dundon

Dundon notes that this age of economic uncertainty, strained resources, and increased global competition not only calls for innovation, but also for Innovation Management as a source of new inspiration and uniquely effective solutions. However, the author has found that most organizations have no clear idea of what innovation is all about. It is stated as an objective, but there is a failure to initiate any concrete actions or to provide support. And, at every level, individuals and teams limit their view of innovation to creative thinking.

The Seeds of Innovation is based on Dundon's successful Innovation Management course at the University of Toronto and presents a disciplined and practical Nine-Step Innovation Process that organizations of any size, in any industry, can use to guide their innovation activities for maximum impact. It combines learning from the areas of creative, strategic, and transformational thinking to demonstrate how these “seeds” create the synergy for fostering new ideas at the individual, team, or organizational level.

The Inventive Organization
Hope and Daring at Work
By: Jill Janov

An in-depth exploration of how to develop the relationships needed to get work done. Janov describes the six frameworks that underlie the organizational capacity to anticipate and lead change; she delineates the requisite acts of leading and following that support this capacity; and she reveals how to manage the necessary organizational transition from command and control to self-regulation and interdependence.

This book is about the soft issues of organization. It is about how such things as hope - focusing on the potential and not simply on what is; and about daring to visualize the possibilities of creating meaningful and effective organizational relationships among individuals. It is about a new way of thinking that includes feeling, we are talking about conventional wisdom with a new attitude. Dealing with the discomfort of change can move people and organizations in one of two directions: Either they become afraid and revert to denial, which leads to maintaining the status quo, or they see other possibilities that move them into invention and ultimately into renewal.

Communications

The DNA of Leadership
Leverage Your Instincts to Communicate, Differentiate, Innovate
By: Judith E. Glaser

In The DNA of Leadership, which follows her successful Creating WE, author Judith Glaser identifies the seven leadership practices that can re-shape an organization into a culture that enables people to work effectively together. In explaining these practices, she creatively uses the metaphor of genes and DNA. Just as individuals’ DNA determines their destinies, companies’ “organizational DNA” determines their destinies – their successes or failures. Great leaders of the twenty-first century are “masters of a new conversation.” They live and breathe and behave with wisdom, understanding what transformation is all about. This is a book about the wisdom that underlies leadership. It is not about varied, or possible, leadership styles. It is about leadership genes expressed in conversations and practices, ethics, codes of conduct, and culture.

Corporate Conversations
A Guide to Crafting Effective and Appropriate Internal Communications
By: Shel Holtz

For most companies, communication programs and communications departments are interpreted as advertising, marketing, media relations, and for some, investor relations. Managing an internal program of internal
communication—employee communication—is often ignored as a corporate function, and frequently at the expense of the company’s bottom-line results.

In Corporate Conversations, Shel Holtz, who has more than twenty-five years of experience in corporate communications, details three primary results that companies can achieve with a strong employee communications program: commitment and loyalty; quality work that meets customers’ needs; and employees who represent the company consistent with the company’s image.

Intentional or not, everything a company does, or does not do, whether with words, actions, or even silence, sends a message to employees. To be competitive, and successful, managers can control how they communicate with their most important audience—their employees.

The Leader’s Voice
How Communication Can Inspire Action and Get Results!
By: Boyd Clarke & Ron Crossland

Often, leaders speak, their constituents applaud on cue, and the illusion is formed that communication has occurred. Unfortunately, this disconnect only breeds communication static that, over time, pushes leaders to resort to command-and-control approaches, which only serve to “break” talent rather than foster it. Clark and Crossland believe, however, that one voice - The Leader’s Voice - can make all the difference - can energize, unite, and encourage all who hear it to do extraordinary work.

Thus, The Leader’s Voice offers sales managers, project directors, IT managers, manufacturing supervisors, and executive leadership teams, as well as CEOs, clear principles (rather than techniques) and timeless examples to help them find their own Leader’s Voice and, thereby gain: better alignment around key strategic initiatives, improved productivity, greater leadership credibility, higher morale, increased efficiency, and better communication among all employees.

How the Way We Talk Can Change the Way We Work
Seven Languages for Transformation
By: Robert Kegan and Lisa Laskow Lahey

Even when people are able to make substantial changes in their own lives or in their organizations, these changes are usually temporary and, soon, everything is back to business as usual. How the Way We Talk Can Change the Way We Work presents a new technology of personal learning, built around seven transformative languages that permit individuals to realize new kinds of thinking, feeling, and experiencing. With these new languages, individuals and organizations can diagnose their immunity to change, unleash the energy trapped in this immune system, and maintain and upgrade their technology of personal learning in order to ensure lasting transformations.

Contributing to Team Success

When Teams Work Best
6,000 Team Members and Leaders Tell What It Takes to Succeed
By: Frank M. J. LaFasto and Carl E. Larson

During the past several decades, the trend toward collaborative teamwork has grown tremendously. Teams can be found everywhere in the public and private sectors, and they come in many forms—executive teams, management teams, teams created around functional areas, special-purpose teams, cross-functional teams, industry teams, etc., depending on the work to be done. But, though most leaders and managers understand the necessity of these kinds of relationships, and view them as a valuable tool for managing today’s complex and rapidly changing environment, teamwork has not, for the most part lived up to its potential—despite this theoretical understanding.

When Teams Work Best, a report of the results of 15 years of research, seeks to close that gap. Speaking to executives, managers, team leaders, and team members, LaFasto and Larson offer an analysis of the conditions that approximately 6,000 team members themselves say contribute both to the success and failure of teams.
Hot Spots
Why Some Teams, Workplaces, and Organizations Buzz with Energy - And Others Don’t
By: Lynda Gratton

According to Gratton, Hot Spots are places and times—workplaces, teams, departments, companies, factories, cities, industries, coffee shops, hallways, and/or conferences—where people work in exceptionally creative and collaborative ways, creating great energy, innovation, productivity, and excitement. In these situations, people feel energized and vibrant, they buzz with ideas, and others around them share this excitement. As a result, unprecedented value is created for organizations and life is immeasurably enhanced for those participating in the phenomenon.

Hot Spots is the result of more than ten years of research into how these creative places and times emerge and how organizations can create environments in which they will proliferate. It describes four critical qualities that an organizational culture must have to support the budding of these hotbeds of creativity and innovation. It looks at what executives, managers, and HR professionals can do to ensure that energy is concentrated in them. And, it offers activities and tools that leaders up and down the organization can adapt as a means of shaping the context in which Hot Spots can flourish.

Executive Teams
The Ultimate Guide to Turning Top Executives into a Top-Notch Team
By: David Nadler, the Delta Consulting Group, and Janet L. Spencer

Because executive leadership is becoming increasingly more complex and demanding, many CEOs have found it necessary to establish Executive Teams to assist them in the task of running the enterprise. This movement toward corporate-level teamwork raises major questions about the composition, organization, chemistry, and function of this new leadership model that, if not properly addressed, can seriously jeopardize a company’s well-being.

Executive Teams answers these questions. Applying the knowledge gained through their work with more than 130 top organizations, the authors provide a broad framework, as well as a wealth of practice-driven insights and strategies, that CEOs, team members, and those who work with them can use to create and maintain highly successful Executive Teams.

Cross-Functional Teams
Working With Allies, Enemies, and Other Strangers
By: Glen M. Parker

Cross-Functional Teams offers specific, practical advice on how to create successful cross-functional teamwork. Parker explains how Cross-Functional Teams are different from and require different approaches than traditional teams. He details how to form these teams, what type of leadership is required, and what procedures in the organization need to be changed or added.

The data that forms the basis of Cross-Functional Teams come from the author’s original research of public and private organizations, as well as critical evaluations of material that has already been published. Parker succinctly and clearly organizes, integrates, and evaluates this data into a thoughtful, well-balanced report.