

The Well-Read Leader

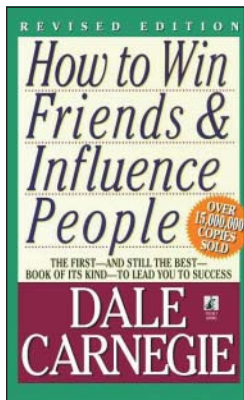
Books to bring out the best in you

By Felicia J. Barclay

Real leaders never stop learning, and a good book is a portable source of education. *Florida Leader* has rounded up reading recommendations from student, business, political, and publishing leaders to help you become the best you can be.

Jose "Pepi" Diaz, Winner 2002 Florida College Student of the Year Award University of Miami

Some of the classics I enjoy are *How to Win Friends and Influence People* by Dale Carnegie, *Rich Dad Poor Dad* by Robert



Kiyosaki, and *Seven Habits of Highly Effective People* by Stephen R. Covey.

Those are all motivational books in terms of leadership.

Carnegie's book was one of my favorite self-help books because it was so easy to read and so entertaining. I read it in less than one day, and

to me, that's the mark of a book that has truly enthralled me. I loved it. I learned that you must treat everyone as an equal in order to succeed. Some people think that you have to lead from above, but these books show you that you must be humble. Contact Diaz at jfdiaz36@aol.com

Dr. Donna E. Shalala President University of Miami

Two books that I would recommend are *The Little Prince* by Antoine de Saint-Exupery and *The Republic* by Plato. I recommend *The Republic* because it warns us about tyranny and the rule of the few and *The Little Prince* because it centers on themes of peace, hope, love, and compassion.

Contact Shalala at dshalala@miami.edu

Lt. Governor Frank Brogan State of Florida

To Kill a Mockingbird, while a fictional text, exudes leadership and all that it represents: courage, principle, and dedication to a mission. The main character, Atticus Finch, has a quiet and dignified leadership style portrayed in a way that would rival any textbook on the subject.

Contact Brogan at kay.kammel@myflorida.com

Charity E. Hamilton, Finalist 2002 Florida College Student of the Year Award Florida Gulf Coast University

Leadership isn't a quality that can be created solely through reading books and studying methods. However, these practices can only help to develop the existing, innate leadership skills one has. There is one book you could check out called *The New Leader, Bringing Creativity and Innovation to the Workplace* by Gregory P. Smith. I had to read a book dealing with contemporary leadership and teaming for one of my summer courses, and this book does have some excellent tips on dealing with others and developing your own leadership skills.

Contact Hamilton at peerlessme@aol.com

Anne Collins Manager of College Relations Office Depot

The book that has had the greatest impact on me as a leader is *Who Moved My Cheese?* by Spencer Johnson, M.D. It's an "easy" read with a powerful message. In today's business world, we're faced with constant changes. Businesses have to change to survive in the competitive market, and as an employee and especially as a manager leading change, we have several choices in handling this change.

The book really opened my eyes as to how people handle change when faced with it. It's easy to get caught up in the "it's not fair, it's not how we've always done it"... but this entertaining book helped me to see how important it is to recognize that change is inevitable and there are positive ways to face it. It's critical as a leader—your team looks to you to see how you handle change, and they will emulate your response in many cases.

Contact Collins at collins@officedepot.com

Vincent Alex Brown Executive Editor Oxendine Publishing

The kind of intellectual, issues-addressing fiction that Michael Crichton puts out gets me thinking as much as any business or leadership texts. But for those, the list is endless.

In their hallmark book, *In Search of Excellence*, Tom Peters and Robert Waterman point out companies big and small that did things successfully and right,



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from handling employees to serving customers. Two doctors, Spencer Johnson, M.D. and Kenneth H. Blanchard, Ph.D., keep cranking out valuable texts that summarize broad topics. Their first, *The One Minute Manager*, was written in a novel form that tells the story of a young man in search of successful management skills. It made it clear to me that it just takes a minute here and there to write down goals, catch someone doing something right, and praise others. Each of those positive minutes adds up to a day of successful management of a talented team.

Autobiographies from leaders such as Lee Iacocca and the late Tom Landry provide insight from real leaders turning failure into success in the real world. The former head of Chrysler Corporation tells how, at Ford, he and his team put sexy sheet metal on a family sedan chassis and came up with a classic, the Mustang. At Chrysler, he went on to father the mini-van. It reminds me that your gut, along with good common and business sense, can help you excel. Landry, as head coach of America's team, the Dallas Cowboys, describes his dedication, consistency, and commitment to his faith in God, wife, and team. It reminds me that consistent character over time matters and *does* make a difference.

Contact Brown at vince@studentleader.com

Michael Gale, Finalist 2002 Florida College Student of the Year Award University of Florida

The most influential book I ever read about leadership was *Leadership and the New Science* by Margaret Wheatley. This text

takes scientific theories and concepts, including chaos theory, particle and energy theory, and rules of biology, and applies them to organizational management and other leadership concepts. Basically we can look at what science has to say about communication and structure, and apply that to the more conceptual work we do in the field of leadership. This was an amazing text that helped to shape my leadership style because as a student of the sciences, I often don't have

anything to relate to when it comes to leadership assessment and implementation within my discipline. This text does an amazing job of opening up our eyes to what science can teach us about leadership. A definitive text for both science and non-science people alike.

Contact Gale at diversify@ufl.edu

