

Professional Development Reading List for Club Managers

I was asked recently to provide a professional development reading list for club managers. Here is a list of those books that made a strong impact on my thinking about both leadership and business management. I have listed two of my own books because they represent my mature understanding of leadership after a long career in the hospitality industry.

[Good to Great: Why Some Companies Make the Leap... and Others Don't](#) by Jim Collins

Groundbreaking book that pinpoints the underlying disciplines of great companies. Based on empirical evidence, not management theory. If you only read one book on what makes businesses successful, this is the one.

[Dignity: The Essential Role It Plays in Resolving Conflict](#) by Donna Hicks, Ph.D.

Given the essential role that dignity and sense of self-worth plays in an employee's contribution to any enterprise, leaders must become aware of the Ten Essential Elements of Dignity and the Ten Temptations to Violate Dignity. Because people matter, it pays to treat them well by honoring their inherent dignity, but leaders have to know how – an important and well-written book! Read [my review](#).

[The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People](#) by Stephen R. Covey

Intense and theoretical, designed as a transformational program for anyone who wants to be a great leader and manager. Can be a challenge for some people, but worth the effort to complete.

[The Business of Golf: What Are You Thinking](#) by James Keegan

This book is a must read for anyone in the golf business. Well worth the \$99.95 price! I've never met James Keegan, but he has written the best book about the business of golf that I've read. He has dozens of ideas that are alone worth the price of the book. I wish his book was available when starting my career in club and golf course management.

[The 51 Fatal Business Errors and How to Avoid Them](#) by Jim Muehlhausen

Jim Muehlhausen uses his immense experience from consulting and coaching CEOs to spell out 51 common, though fatal, business errors. As I read the book, much resonated with my hospitality management background. It's amazing to me how so many businesses suffer from the same common issues, rooted in our own managerial and leadership shortcomings. I highly recommend this book to any hospitality manager or business owner.

[The 100/0 Principle: The Secret to Great Relationships](#) by Al Ritter

A great little book with a simple, yet unbelievably effective way to improve personal and professional relationships. Every leader should practice this principle in his or her relationship with followers. Read [my review](#).

[In Search of Excellence: Lessons from America's Best-Run Companies](#) by Thomas J. Peters and Robert H. Waterman

The classic book on how to achieve excellence in your organization. Plenty of examples of companies that have done just that.

[Developing the Leader within You](#) by John C. Maxwell

Interesting and entertaining book on leadership. Great tool for teaching leadership, not only to yourself, but your subordinate team. Full of lists, anecdotes, and memorable quotes.

[The Game of Work: How to Enjoy Work as Much as Play](#) by Charles Coonradt

Lays out the paradox of why people are willing to put in any effort to improve their golf game, bowling scores, or best time in a 10k, but find work a drag. Gives ideas to make work more fun through metrics and making individual accountabilities measurable.

[Try Giving Yourself Away](#) by David Dunn

Simple and profound, this book had a life-changing impact on me in how I interact with others. I found this book, first published in 1947, years ago in a motel lobby while at the coast on a weekend getaway. It has informed my leadership style and way of treating people ever since.

[Message to Garcia](#) by Elbert Hubbard

Somewhat dated, but short and easy-to-read book that focuses on the rare quality of personal initiative and perseverance.

[Topgrading: How Leading Companies Win by Hiring, Coaching, and Keeping the Best People](#) by Bradford D. Smart, Ph.D.

Great details on why the wrong people are hired and how to hire A-players and coach your team members to maximum performance. Based on author's experience working with Fortune 500 companies, but with plenty of lessons for business leaders and owners at all levels.

[Made to Stick: Why Some Ideas Survive and Others Die](#) by Chip and Dan Heath

Highly entertaining book on how to ensure your ideas "sell."

[Nudge: Improving Decisions about Health, Wealth, and Happiness](#) by Richard H. Thaler and Cass R. Sunstein

Immensely entertaining book that discusses the small psychological details of why people do what they do. Most helpful for leaders who need to get the most out of their diverse workforce.

[At America's Service: How Your Company Can Join the Customer Service Revolution](#) by Karl Albrecht

Details the challenges and strategies of delivering high levels of service to customers.

[Leadership on the Line: A Guide for Front Line Supervisors, Business Owners, and Emerging Leaders, 2nd Edition](#) by Yours Truly

My own book, designed to teach Service-Based Leadership to first-time and front-line managers and supervisors - a critically underserved group for leadership training.

[Leadership on the Line – The Workbook](#) by Yours Truly

Another one of my own. It picks up on the ideas and principles found in *Leadership on the Line: A Guide for Front Line Supervisors, Business Owners, and Emerging Leaders* and builds on them with Leadership Values, Lessons, Applications, and Assessments. A great tool for teaching a common understanding and application of leadership to your management team. I reread both books with some frequency as they are a great reminder of the day-to-day basics of Service-Based Leadership.

Ed Rehkopf, Club Resources International