

# Readers and Leaders: Seven Books for Continuous Learning

By **Garry Priam**

*As leaders, we are all faced with making decisions and continually processing vast amounts of information with the goal of making our organizations and ourselves better.*

*For HR professionals, being a leader comes with the territory, and reading is fundamental for generating new ideas, affecting change and inspiring others. Below are seven books which I have in my consulting practice to assist companies, HR professionals and executive teams to become better leaders.*

## **The Five Dysfunctions of a Team: A Leadership Fable** By Patrick Lencioni

This is a great book for exploring team environments—work, sports, home, community—and common challenges. The strength of Lencioni’s book is that it discusses team failure and how to strengthen the “roots” of an organizational tree. The principles presented within are noteworthy and beneficial to both team members and team leaders. You will see yourself and your team in this book. Through a real life fable, Lencioni leads you through the steps needed to move a team from dysfunction to health. This book is simple, practical and filled with wisdom.

## **365 Best Inspirational Quotes: Daily Motivation For Your Best Year Ever** by Kevin Kruse

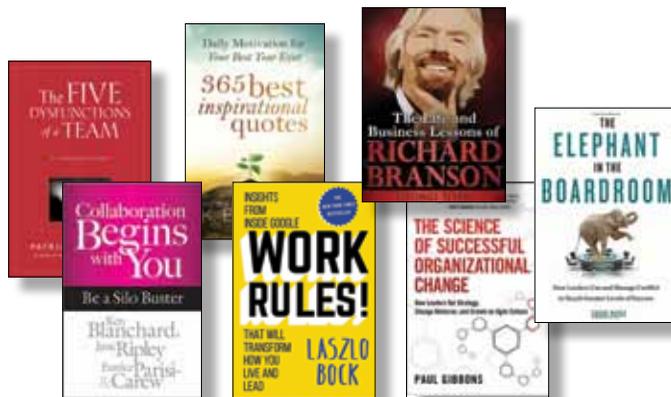
Never overlook the power of simplicity as this is a super little book with a purpose—to motivate you and your team. This is a quick read and many of the quotes are both memorable and inspiring. While you can read one a day, I find myself reading a number of them one right after the other, looking for that spark that will connect. This is a simple exercise and there are books which offer similar inspiration, so find one that connects and use it.

## **Richard Branson: The Life and Business Lessons of Richard Branson** By George Ilian

Richard Branson’s life is like the ultimate “rags to riches” story, even though he didn’t grow up poor he did not come from a wealthy family. He is one of the most successful businessmen in history, has dabbled in nearly every market that exists and created some new ones of his own. The Virgin brand is massive and known by nearly everyone in one form or another. A very interesting look into the life of the ultimate entrepreneur who pretty much everyone can learn something from, this is an essential read.

## **The Elephant in the Boardroom: How Leaders Use and Manage Conflict to Reach Greater Levels of Success** By Edgar Papke

Conflict is not necessarily undesirable, just as not all forms of stress should be avoided. Remember that there is such a thing as good stress; it’s called eustress and can generate results.



Throughout the ages, great leaders have created situations in which conflict is necessary to find the right solution to a problem. *The Elephant in the Boardroom* looks at how to effectively confront and constructively manage the conflict that is found at the heart of organizations and teams.

## **The Science of Successful Organizational Change: How Leaders Set Strategy, Change Behaviour, and Create an Agile Culture** By Paul Gibbons

If change were easy, there would not be so many books on the topic, but this one resonates by veering away from commonly tread ground. Gibbon’s book offers up a blueprint for change, bringing an enduring realm of challenge into the context of the most recent advances in a wide range of related topics: mindfulness, behavioural economics, the psychology of risk-taking, neuroscience and complexity theory. Looking at external and internal impactors alike, this book is a great one for any leader dealing with complexity and uncertainty in regards to strategic decisions made to entice learning and risk-taking.

## **Work Rules!: Insights from Inside Google That Will Transform How You Live and Lead** By Laszlo Bock

*Work Rules!* is a must read for all organizational leaders including HR professionals. The book is practical, easy to read and evidence-based. It is more than a book about Google, it is a book about unleashing talent in a modern workplace. The author discusses the staff and talent challenges companies will be facing based on the changing nature of the workplace.

## **Collaboration Begins With You: Be A Silo Buster** By Ken Blanchard, Jane Ripley, Eunice Parisi-Carew

A lot of organizations, whether they be for or not-for-profit, have work silos which cause corporate culture problems. As a consultant who helps companies to mentally break down those silos, I related to the story of this book, as will any progressive HR professional or business leader. Grounded around the word UNITE, the authors summarize strategies for gaining collaboration grounded in: Utilizing difference, Nurturing safety and trust, Involving others with clear values and goals, Talking openly and Empowering yourself and others. From this basis, the authors espouse a heart/head/hand system of approach in which people’s hearts are gained before their heads buy-in and hands get to work. 📌

Garry Priam, B.Sc., Adv. Project Mgmt. is a professional speaker, corporate trainer, project manager, Italian author and owner of Mossa International Incorporated (mossa-intl.com) which specializes in business consulting and change management solutions.