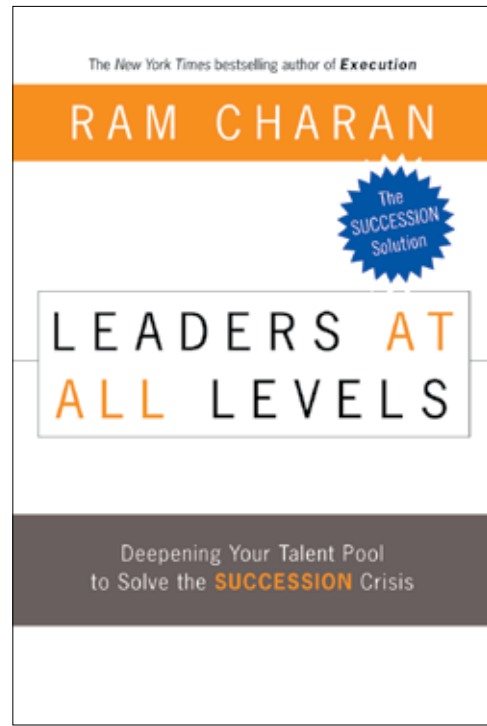


A SUCCESSION SOLUTION

Leaders at All Levels: Deepening Your Talent Pool to Solve the Succession Crisis

By Ram Charan
(Jossey-Bass, 172 pp., \$27.95)

Reviewed by Pam Leigh



Even before globalization increased the complexity of running today's companies, deciding who was going to succeed a departing CEO was never easy for a board of directors.

Now, to make that decision even more angst-filled, the state of leadership in today's corporations has slipped precipitously. In his introduction to *Leaders at All Levels*, top corporate consultant Ram Charan observes, "CEOs are failing sooner and failing harder, leaving companies in turmoil. At all levels, companies are short on the quantity and quality of leaders they need."

A recent survey found that less than one in four directors believes his company's board is effective at developing a succession plan. A major reason for this, Charan writes, is that too many companies are relying on traditional leadership development practices, which just don't cut it.

As an alternative, he presents his blueprint for the leadership crisis—the apprenticeship model. By using this

new approach, he says a company can learn to better identify and then groom its future leaders. According to Charan, this "new approach transforms leadership development from a discreet activity into one that is fully integrated into the fabric of the business and one in which line leaders play a central role."

As the author readily admits, this model is largely untested. In fact, it's so new that only a few companies have in place a leadership development process that follows the book's tenets. But two corporations that do use it—General Electric and Colgate-Palmolive—have reaped extraordinary leadership benefits. The author says this model of leadership development is radical and not for the faint-hearted, but he also never intended that it be adopted word for word. He says it is the principles

that ultimately count, and these can be modified to suit each company's needs. And many companies are successfully using some of the model's basic methodologies.

Charan's model evolved from three observations he made about how great business leaders actually develop.

- 1) Leaders are different from other people, and no amount of classroom instruction can make one.
- 2) Leaders develop their talent through practice and self-correction.
- 3) A CEO's job requires giant leaps in learning—and each job of a high-potential candidate must be more complex than the one before.

The model offers a hands-on process for leaders and their bosses. In a nutshell, it provides practice, feedback, corrections, and more practice. It's all about spotting leaders early on and putting them into situations that drive them to fast growth. How early? Charan suggests the first year is not too soon. As he points out, an executive only gets about five steps up the career ladder before becoming eligible for the CEO post—five jobs to hone skills, develop problem-solving ability, and demonstrate the right leadership stuff.

The win-win of using this model is that high potentials get stiff challenges—picked for them—which help them stretch and grow; and the company gets better leaders at all levels and, later, a small pool of the best choices when it comes time to pick the next CEO. Of course, not all employees with high potential will make it to the top. Most will become niche leaders; some will drop out for various reasons. But a few, typically five, will make it to the threshold of commanding the floor with a view.

Leaders at All Levels is a good read. That's not too surprising given that Charan has many books under his belt with which to perfect his writing skills, including the *New York Times* bestseller, *Execution*. In less than 200

concise pages, *Leaders* gives concrete advice on how to spot a leader and how to customize her leadership development path, offers real-life examples to illustrate the model, summarizes key points, and includes a few quizzes and questionnaires to help the reader grasp and personalize the material.

The book offers both companies and individuals a roadmap to follow for leadership development. A company can create an enduring legacy of leadership excellence. An individual can map his own career growth.

This book is worth four cups of a stimulating, wake-up brew.

Pam Leigh is a freelance writer from Reston, Virginia; pleighwriter@earthlink.net.

Of course, not all employees with perceived high potential will make it to the top. Most will become niche leaders; some will drop out for various reasons. But a few, typically five, will make it to the threshold of commanding the floor with a view.

Earn your degree in 18 months online!

ANNOUNCING ...

*...our NEW Master's Degree in
Human Capital Management*

If you're responsible for recruiting, managing, inspiring, or retaining employees, this is the degree for you.

Learn more about these important skills and importantly, how to measure the impact of effective human capital management from the nationally-known thought leader in human capital development and ROI – Bellevue University.

Call today to enroll.
800-756-7920 • www.bellevue.edu

**BELLEVUE UNIVERSITY**
Real Learning for Real Life

Accredited by The Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools. The Bellevue University College of Business also is accredited by the International Assembly for Collegiate Business Education (IACBE). Bellevue University does not discriminate on the basis of age, race, color, religion, sex, national origin, or disability in the educational programs and activities it operates.



Holy Cow!
LeaderGuide Pro™
Version 6
You have to see it
to believe it!!

Order your trial demo of
 LeaderGuide Pro™ V6 today!

It's Even Faster!

- Create formatted Leader Guides from slides AND notes
- Export formatted material into Participant Guides

It's Even Better!

- Add LGP modules, lessons & blocks to Participant Guides
- Use LGP Express for short presentations

And it Continues to:

- Ensure consistency no matter who builds your material
- Improve productivity

Like the Idea but Lack the Time?

- We will convert your existing material to LeaderGuide Pro format

www.leaderguidepro.com
info@leaderguidepro.com
 866-227-9111 Toll Free!



BOOKS //

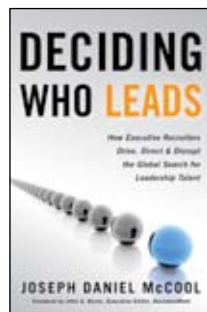
Cream of the Crop

TAKE A LOOK AT SOME OF THE OTHER BOOKS ON LEADERSHIP THAT SHOULD BE ON YOUR BOOKSHELF.

Deciding Who Leads: How Executive Recruiters Drive, Direct, and Disrupt the Global Search for Leadership Talent

By Joseph Daniel McCool
 (Davies-Black, 248 pp., \$27.95)

This book examines the challenges, agents, influence, and true potential of executive search consulting. It explores the growth, success, and wide acceptance of externally led executive management recruitment, which has become the single-most influential form of management consulting engaged by organizations because the demands for leadership are at an all-time high, and executive tenure is at a record low.



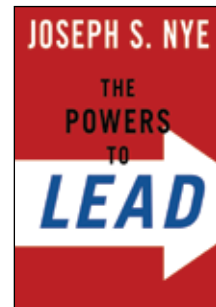
Executive recruiters, according to McCool, sit in a powerful position to influence the gender, cultural, and overall demographic profile of C-level leaders, senior management teams, and corporate and not-for-profit boards of directors. He explains that executive search consultants and organizations share in the task of deciding who is chosen for the leadership position, but the task of deciding who should get a chance to contend for the top position still lies with the consultants.

Paula Ketter

The Powers to Lead

By Joseph S. Nye
 (Oxford University Press, 206 pp., \$21.95)

Nye, a former Clinton administration official, views management and leadership skills through the prism of presidential leadership. He applies his widely admired soft power theory of international politics to an analysis of management. It is not enough for a leader to simply use the hard power of a forceful personality, otherwise she will encounter resistance. Listening carefully, collecting information from a variety of unbiased sources, and articulating a vision are all necessary components of leadership.



His armchair analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the various presidents will be familiar and at times, banal. Reading about the various ingredients, the reader realizes how few, if any, of the so-called great leaders possessed a full complement of exemplary traits. Individuals who crave power often become standouts, but only the best ones learn when and how to curb their ambition to reach greater heights.

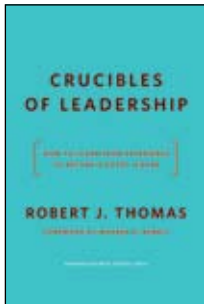
Michael Laff

Crucibles of Leadership: How to Learn from Experience to Become a Great Leader

By Robert J. Thomas

(Harvard Business School Press, 256 pp., \$29.95)

.....
In medieval times, alchemists used a vessel called a crucible to grind base metals into gold. A crucible in a leadership context is a transformative experience in which a person comes out with an altered sense of identity or purpose. In *Crucibles of Leadership*, Thomas, executive director of Accenture's Institute for High Performance Business at Tufts University, explores



how leaders are not simply made from their experiences, but also from what they make of their experiences.

Much of the data from this book is garnered from interviews with leaders from numerous organization such as Amazon.com, Marriot International, the U.S. Marines, the Mormon Church, and Teach for America. Many of the interviewees' experiences include family life, wartime trauma, athletic competition, or personal loss rather than work-related situations.

These trials that force individuals to answer questions about what they consider important to them often become not only the defining moments for leaders, but also the starting points for developing personal learning strategies. Thomas offers self-assessments, exercises (including videotaping yourself at work), and setting an agenda for devising one's own personal learning strategy. He also includes lessons to help recognize an impending crucible, and how to cope with and respond to it.

Aparna Nancherla

EDUCATION AS VALUABLE AS YOUR EMPLOYEES.



The Strayer University Educational Alliance program.

Let Strayer University help you develop your company's most important asset: your employees. We will evaluate your e-learning and instructor-led corporate training programs to provide comparable college credits to your employees. In addition, we can customize our educational programs to your company's needs, and provide online reports and a central billing system to better measure the return on your investment.

Strayer University is a regionally accredited, nationally recognized university with more than 115 years of experience in helping full-time employees fit education into their lives, and their career.



To learn more about Strayer University's educated approach to workforce development, call 703.339.3000 or email bizdev@strayer.edu.

