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From the Daily Press business department: a list of business books you should read.

Daily Press business news staffers recommend their favorite business books

[BY CYNTHIA H. CHO](#)

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Upon entering someone's home for the first time, I am drawn immediately to the bookshelves. The books we read say a lot about who we are and who we want to be, what we want to learn and what we want to achieve.

So I wanted to know what business books my colleagues and bosses were reading or would recommend reading. Below are their (and my) suggestions and reasons for liking each of the books.

We also want to know what you consider must-read titles. Please let us know by visiting www.dailypress.com/bizbooks and posting a comment.

And I should mention that Bradley A. Stertz, who is the news editor at the Daily Press, co-authored a book that was included in Fortune magazine's "The Smartest Books We Know" list, published in 2005.

Stertz recently said that his book, "Taken For A Ride: How Daimler-Benz Drove Off With Chrysler," provides insights on "the importance of gaining an early and focused strategic edge when engaging in high-stakes negotiations."

Essential Economics by Matthew Bishop

This book by The Economist magazine's business editor explains key terms in the dismal science with entries organized from A to Z. After reading it, you'll never be confused by a passing reference to a "J-curve" or some other tricky term. A J-curve is, according to Essential Economics, the shape of the trend of a county's trade balance following a devaluation. —*Victor Reklaitis*

Barbarians at the Gate: The Fall of RJR Nabisco by Bryan Burrough and John Helyar The inside story of a leveraged buyout, all in the name of increasing the stock price, is told by two

Wall Street Journal reporters. The inside stories show just how much ego and greed can play in the decision-making process of a \$25 billion deal. –*Steve Rocca*

Nice Girls Don't Get the Corner Office: 101 Unconscious Mistakes Women Make That Sabotage Their Careers by Lois P. Frankel

The book opens with a self-assessment that asks you to rate how true statements like "I can tell you in thirty seconds or less how I bring value to my firm" are of you. Then Frankel identifies and offers solutions for 101 mistakes she believes women make in the workplace. Mistake 27: Feeding others. Mistake 52: Giving away your ideas. Mistake 101: Crying. –*Cynthia H. Cho*

Corps Business: The 30 Management Principles of the U.S. Marines by David H. Freedman

This book compares leadership principles that are cornerstone to the U.S. Marine Corps and shows how they are just as effective in the business world. The book is a smooth read, with each chapter focusing on a unique leadership trait, then comparing its use by the world's best fighting force to its application by today's business leaders. –*Jim Manner*

The Tipping Point: How Little Things Can Make a Big Difference by Malcolm Gladwell

A tipping point is "that magic moment when an idea, trend, or social behavior crosses a threshold, tips, and spreads like wildfire." Gladwell attempts to explain why, for example, sales of Hush Puppies jumped in the mid-1990s and suicides on the islands of Micronesia rose between the 1960s and 1980s. Gladwell also writes that social epidemics are dependent on certain kinds of people; he identifies them as Connectors, Mavens and Salesmen. –*C.H.C.*

"Kaizen: The Key to Japan's Competitive Success" by Masaaki Imai

The fundamental message behind "Kaizen" is the fundamental message behind Toyota's rise to become the world's best automaker. That is, focus relentlessly on quality and customer satisfaction above all else, remain flexible throughout your manufacturing system -- whether it's a car plant, news organization or boutique store -- [and] maintain a clear and basic corporate structure with a consistent message from the top on down. But above all, look at everything you do every day and ask yourself and others, "How can I do this better, faster, at lower cost to deliver more to customers tomorrow?" –*Bradley A. Stertz*

The Great American Jobs Scam: Corporate Tax Dodging and the Myth of Job Creation by Greg LeRoy

The author is the founder of a Washington-based economic development watchdog organization called Good Jobs First. If you've ever had doubts about any locality's economic development projects, you'll enjoy this book. The book also says it aims to show "how corrupted economic development brings us layoffs, outsourcing, overcrowded schools, runaway sprawl and higher taxes." –*V.R.*

Freakonomics: A Rogue Economist Explores the Hidden Side of Everything by Steven D.

Levitt and Stephen J. Dubner

This book challenges your basic assumptions about ... everything. Well, perhaps not quite everything, but major forces in our society, hence our economy. With chapter titles like "How is the Ku Klux Klan Like A Group of Real Estate Agents?" and "What Makes a Perfect Parent?" the book delivers surprising analysis of data to arrive at conclusions you'd never expect. – *Novelda Sommers*

Liar's Poker: Rising Through the Wreckage on Wall Street by Michael Lewis

Lewis explores the culture on Wall Street in the late 1980s and is pretty direct about showing that it's not about what you know but how you act. It's a story about getting rich without using tact or finesses, by taking advantage of others' weaknesses. –*S.R.*

Warren Buffett Speaks: Wit and Wisdom from the World's Greatest Investor by Janet Lowe

Great for a Buffett beginner, the book shares some vintage Buffett quotes that show you how the investing guru thinks and makes decisions. The author breaks them into sections like "only buy securities that you understand" and gives a short prelude that reveals something about Buffett's life or philosophy. –*Chris Flores*

Long Walk to Freedom: The Autobiography of Nelson Mandela by Nelson Mandela

Nelson Mandela leads a movement from prison while facing odds that would have left a lesser person to wallow in bitterness and despair. He then negotiates with his former enemies to create a democratic South Africa. Mandela delivers detailed analyses of his strategies, his missteps and his victories, as well as character studies of his opponents and allies. There are many lessons to be drawn from this book that can be applied in the business world. –*N.S.*

"Fit In, Stand Out: Mastering the FISO Factor, The Key to Leadership Effective in Business and Life" by Blythe McGarvie

This book notes that to rise to the top of any business organization, you must excel at fitting in while pushing for transformative change that allows you to stand out from the crowd. Its principal value is to show how essential it is to build a base of support to move your business in new directions. The author is a James City County-based consultant and former chief financial officer. –*B.A.S.*

Trust Us We're Experts: How Industry Manipulates Science and Gambles with Your Future by Sheldon Rampton and John Stauber

This book, in many ways, traces the history of the most sophisticated spin that industry can manufacture when a product is being questioned as potentially harmful. It shows how companies and slick public relations firms create front groups, manipulate data and co-opt academics to avoid regulation. –*C.F.*

The Work of Nations: Preparing Ourselves for 21st Century Capitalism by Robert B. Reich

This is a clearly written book about how America should forget about protecting mediocre jobs but instead should focus on making our children the smartest in the world and our transportation infrastructure second to none so that businesses will voluntarily want to set up shop in the United States. –*Peter Dujardin*

Fast Food Nation: The Dark Side of the All-American Meal by Eric Schlosser

This detailed account investigates and analyzes the fast food industry in the United States. This book will make you think twice every time you're about to ingest anything from McDonald's, Burger King or other fast food joints -- and might make you never want to eat such fare again. Reading the book, you find yourself respecting some of the original founders of the fast food restaurants, but not what the industry has become. –*P.D.*

The Bible It's not the answer that most would expect, but even though this book doesn't provide a step-by-step guide for business or financial success, it does share insights even more important. For instance, King Solomon offers a study that acquiring the world's greatest riches should be tempered with the wisdom to use the money effectively, rather than letting it rule or ruin your life. –*J.M.*

The following people contributed to this list:

Bradley A. Stertz, news editor, is in charge of all news, business and community news coverage and news production at the Daily Press. He was the business editor from July 2002 to December 2003. Steve Rocca, who was the business editor until February, now coordinates news coverage for dailypress.com. Novelda Sommers is the business editor. She formerly covered personal finance and workplace issues as a reporter. Jim Manner is a senior copy editor, business page designer and former Marine. Cynthia H. Cho covers health care and retail. Chris Flores covers real estate and telecommunications. Peter Dujardin covers the ship-building industry and ports. Victor Reklaitis covers tourism, airports and general Williamsburg business news.

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