COACHING *for* LEADERS

13 Crucial Books That Every Leader Should Know

1. How to Win Friends and Influence People
First published back in 1936, this book remains the gold standard for developing your human relations skills. Dale Carnegie will guide you through a proven process of building rapport with others, gaining cooperation, and ultimately being able to influence effectively.

2. The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People
This is probably the best book in the last 50 years focusing on personal leadership. Leaders are most effective when they are leading themselves well first, and Stephen Covey takes you on a journey through the seven habits that will help you do this very proactively.

3. The Leadership Challenge (6th edition)

If what you're looking for is a great overview of all the major skills of being an effective leader, this is your book. Kouzes and Posner share their lessons from years of research on everyday leaders and teach you the five practices that every leader should utilize.

4. Just Mercy

Leaders must be on the forefront of equity and inclusion in their organizations. This masterpiece from Bryan Stevenson opens a window to the injustice that so many people of color face in our society. It's the best nonfiction book I've read in the last decade.

5. Daring Greatly

Brené Brown has invited so many of us to lean into something we tend be fearful of: vulnerability. This book shows you how to embrace vulnerability so you can lead with more authenticity.

6. Leading Change

This book teaches you the best model that I know of to lead an organization through a major change. Kotter will teach you his 8-step model and then help guide you to managing your team through the change.

7. [Long Walk to Freedom](#)

Nelson Mandela's seminal work is the best biography I've ever read. This page-turner captures his remarkable life of leadership and the humanity behind one of the greatest leaders in modern times.

8. [Difficult Conversations](#)

I like this book because it doesn't attempt to oversimplify the complex, but rather brings lots of awareness to what is said and unsaid by two or more parties. It will challenge and improve the way you think before, during, and after tough conversations – and help you get better results.

9. [What Got You Here Won't Get You There](#)

The perfect book for anyone who feels like they have stalled. The 20 workplace habits you need to break are featured early in the book. Marshall Goldsmith has an incredible reputation for teaching leaders what to stop doing that is getting on their way to being effective.

10. [Drive](#)

When I first read this book, I was stunned that I hadn't come across more of this research. Daniel Pink puts together a ton of research into human behavior and then makes it accessible for any of us. This book will captivate you and also challenge many of your assumptions on how to motivate others.

11. [The Coaching Habit: Say Less, Ask More & Change the Way You Lead Forever](#)
This is the best, single book on how to bring coaching skills into your daily interactions as a leader. If you've ever heard, "You should be coaching your people," this is the first book to pick up.

12. [The 5 Dysfunctions of a Team](#)
Patrick Lencioni teaches you the five most common team dysfunctions and provides a path forward to lead a team that really works. If a team isn't meeting expectations — or you're just beginning to lead teams — it's essential.

13. [Leadership and Self-Deception](#)
The "sleeper" book that nobody seems to have heard of, but should be on the desk of every leader. It's a powerful framework for getting out of your own box and discovering the joy of serving others through leadership.

Bonus: How to Read More
The best way I know of to read a ton these days is to combine an [Amazon Kindle](#) with an [account at Audible](#). Both work through Amazon's ecosystem and sync seamlessly, so you can pick up right where you leave off — whether you're listening on the road or reading in your favorite chair.

If you've never tried Audible, [use this link to get FREE access for 30 days and two FREE audiobooks](#).

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Author

Dave Stachowiak is the [host and producer](#) of the Coaching for Leaders podcast. He probably reads more now than he ever did in school.