

Coach Battista's Reading List

Here is a list of books I have found to be beneficial for personal and professional growth, and some of the books I have read just for fun. I will list books that I think may be of interest to you. In some cases I will simply list the book and author, and in others I will make some short comments on why I found that particular book a worthwhile read. Of course, most of my books will have a slant toward athletics, management, motivation, and the Civil War! I am not much of a reader of fiction (I find real life stories much more fascinating!) so you won't see too many fiction selections suggested (sorry!).

By the way, if you are like me and find it hard to spend a large amount of time reading simply for pleasure, I would recommend you consider a service like Soundview's "Executive Book Summaries" found at www.summary.com. I have subscribed for several years and like the way they review books and give you a chance to whet your appetite prior to deciding to purchase a book. They pride themselves on giving "Concentrated Knowledge for the Busy Executive".

Let me begin with one of my favorite all-time business books (that sit on display in my office for every visitor to see!):

"Good to Great" by *Jim Collins*. This is the follow-up to another best-selling book by Collins "Built to Last". Good to Great describes companies who have made the transformation from good companies to great ones and have mastered the strategies and tactics that allow them to be sustainable. Good, therefore, is the enemy of Excellence!

"Inside the Magic Kingdom: Seven Keys to Disney's Success" by *Tom Coleman* – a terrific quick read about the importance of customer service and guest relations.

"Dig Your Well before You're Thirsty" by *Harvey MacKay*. A terrific book about networking from one of the top business book authors of the past 25 years. I heard Harvey speak at an MBA commencement in the early 1990's and have become a fan (I receive his on-line service via email).

"Swimming with the Sharks without Being Eaten Alive" by *Harvey MacKay*

"Sharkproof" by *Harvey MacKay*

"Meet You in Hell" by *Les Standiford*. It is a gripping true story about the relationship between Andrew Carnegie and Henry Clay Frick. It will especially appeal to anyone from Western PA, NYC, and anyone interested in the history of the formation of the large corporations that dominated the industrial revolution.

"1001 Ways to Energize Employees" by *Bob Nelson*. A terrific "How to" book about how to get your employees excited about working for you.



“1001 Ways to Reward Employees” by Bob Nelson. The companion book that shows you creative ways to recognize employees that goes above and beyond pay raises and bonuses that are harder and harder to come by anyway!

“Corps Business. The 30 Management Principles of the U.S. Marines” by David H. Freedman. How can you not learn great things from an organization that was founded in 1775 and still kicks butt today! Semper Fi!

“Leading with the Heart. Coach K’s Successful Strategies for Basketball, Business, and Life” by Mike Krzyzewski. I referenced this book throughout the 4 year National Championship run we had with the Penn State Icers from 2000-2003. It takes you behind the scenes for every part of the season with great examples of strategies, tactics, and skills needed to build a winning organization. Can’t find too many programs that are as consistently successful as Duke basketball.

“Fake Work” by Brent Peterson and Gaylan Nielson. Ah yes, one of my favorite books about “sock counters”. People who always make you think they are more valuable than they really are to the organization. The subtitle says it all: “Why People are Working Harder Than Ever but accomplishing less, and How to Fix the Problem”.

“Death by Meeting” by Patrick Lencioni. I have become a huge fan of Patrick’s and have read 6 of his “Leadership Fables” and his “Field Guide”. They are easy reads and provide great advice for facing real life problems within organizations, teams, and businesses.

Other Books by Patrick Lencioni:

“Silos, Politics, and Turf Wars”. Should be mandatory reading for anyone in large organizations where productivity is secondary and “Protecting ones turf” reigns supreme!

“The Five Dysfunctions of a Team”. Are you afraid to have good old-fashioned debate that is frank and full of drama? Do you hold each other accountable?

“Overcoming the Five Dysfunctions of a Team”. The “operations manual” for fixing what ails your team!

“The Five Temptations of a CEO”. Can you say “micromanage?”

“The Three Signs of a Miserable Job”. I just want to feel relevant. It’s more important than money and a job title!

“If you Don’t Make Waves You’ll Drown” by Dave Anderson. The one book every manager should read and the one my bosses all wish I wouldn’t have read! LOL! It’s all about being a leader in these politically correct times!

“Your Gut is Still Not Smarter Than Your Head”. *By Kevin Clancy and Peter Krieg.* Just the facts Jack! Anyone who uses the “WAG” method of decision making needs to read this book about fact-based Marketing driven by data and quantifiable goals. WAG stands for “Wild Ass Guess”!

“Sickles at Gettysburg” *by James Hessler.* A book about a General who faked his way through the war and tried to profit at every corner, only to fall on his sword time and time again!

“Gettysburg: Culp’s Hill and Cemetery Ridge” *by Harry W. Pfanz.* Two of the most important pieces of real estate in the most pivotal battle of the Civil War.

“The Killer Angels” *by Michael Shaara.* The “Fictionalized History” of the Battle of Gettysburg that Ted Turner turned into a major motion-picture. It puts you into the very soul of the characters from General Robert E. Lee to Colonel Joshua Chamberlin. It’s not all factual but it’s great story telling!

“Gone for Soldiers”. *by Jeff Shaara.* Like father like son, Jeff picks up where his father left off telling the story of the pre-Civil War escapades of Captain Robert E. Lee who is fighting for the U.S against Santa Anna and is fighting alongside Thomas “Stonewall” Jackson, Ulysses Grant, James Longstreet, George Meade, George Pickett and others who become legends of the Civil War.

“Gods and Generals”. *by Jeff Shaara.* This is the prequel to Killer Angels and takes you from the start of the Civil War to the summer of 1863 just prior to Gettysburg.

“The Last Full Measure”. *by Jeff Shaara.* The last two years of the Civil War are detailed in this final book of the “Trilogy” about the Civil war from Jeff and his father. The final chapters about the fates of Lee, Grant, Longstreet, and Chamberlin are fascinating!

“Going for the Gold: How the U.S Won at Lake Placid” *by Tim Wendel.* If you liked the movie “Miracle” about the 1980 USA Hockey team pulling off the greatest upset in the history of team sports, you’ll love this insider’s look at how the “Miracle at Lake Placid” came to be.

“The Games Do Count: America’s Best and Brightest on the power of Sports” – *by Brian Kilmeade* – Stories about successful members of the business world, politics, entertainment and the influence on their success from the participation in sports as kids and in college.

“College Sports Inc.” *by Murray Sperber.* While I am not a big Sperber fan because of some of his methods, this is a fascinating book about the battles between Athletic Departments and University Administration. It will raise your blood pressure if you are a skeptic about big time college athletics and it will make you blush if you think everything is good in every athletic department.



“Coaching” by *Ralph J. Sabock & Michael D. Sabock*. I admit that I have a bias here because Dr. Sabock grew up in the little neighborhood of Universal in Penn Hills Township just 5 minutes from where I lived as a kid. This is a book that every aspiring coach should read regardless of the level and age of kids you work with as a volunteer or paid coach. Reading this may help save your marriage and help you to toss fewer Tums to calm the stomach!

“Performance Appraisals that work” by *Corey Sandler & Janice Keefe*. Face it, if you are a manager you need help in writing and communicating staff appraisals. I have witnessed far too many managers and coaches over the years that were just awful at communicating what employees or athletes really needed to hear (I know, I was one of them for a very long time!). Crucial conversations are never easy and I think most people would rather hear the truth as long as it’s done professionally and in a dignified manner. When we give staff higher than deserved evaluations and likewise don’t properly recognize our staff who excel, the consequences are usually high.

Finally a book that I have recommended to many friends and colleagues recently:

“Caught Between a Dream and a Job” by *Delatorro McNeill II*. Don’t even pick the book up unless you are serious about seeing it through to the end and then acting upon what you have learned. It will force you to do some serious soul searching and challenge you to step outside your comfort zone to go after your dreams and to “do what you love” and the quality of life that will follow.

There are more but this is a good place to stop for now. I have read a few of these books more than once. Others I refer back to quotes and solutions and ideas.

In Lou Holtz’s book **“Winning Every Day”** he states, *“Where you are five years from now is directly related to the people you meet and the books you read”*.

Dream Big. Keep it Real. Get It Done!

