

Hopefully Helpful Reading Suggestions

Roy C. Ballentine, ChFC, CFP®, Executive Chairman & Founder

Let's face it. Many business books should have been produced as short articles rather than 200 page books, or not written at all. But, there are a few gems. Here we mention some of our favorites.

The 7 Habits Of Highly Effective People, by Stephen R. Covey

This is not just another of those “self-help” books that promise a quick fix to whatever might be holding the reader back. What sets this book apart is its focus on *character* development and character traits. As Covey explains in the introduction, many of the concepts elucidated here are universal principles that have endured for thousands of years. Many of the principles were captured in the writings of Aristotle. I happened to read *The Meditations of Marcus Aurelius* at the same time I was rereading *The 7 Habits* for the third time. The similarities are striking, yet the two writers are separated by more than 2000 years.

How Will You Measure Your Life?, by Clayton M. Christensen

Is there any more important question than the one posed by the title of this book? This book grew out of Christensen's realization that too many Harvard Business School graduates were winding up estranged from their spouses and children, in trouble with the SEC, or in jail. Christensen suggests that each of us should adopt a strategy for living our life:

“A strategy – whether in companies or life – is created through hundreds of everyday decisions about how you spend your time, energy, and money. With every moment of your time, every decision about how to spend your energy and your money, you are making a statement about what really matters to you. You can talk all you want about having a clear purpose and strategy to your life, but ultimately this means nothing if you are not investing the resources you have in a way that is consistent with your strategy. In the end, a strategy is nothing but good intentions unless its effectively implemented.

“...if the decisions you make about here you invest your blood, sweat and tears are not consistent with the person you aspire to be, you'll never become that person.”

Leadership and Self-Deception by The Arbinger Institute

When a friend introduced me to this book, my initial reaction was, “What do leadership and self-

deception have to do with one another?” The question intrigued me. I believe this book is one of the most important leadership books ever written. Vital information is conveyed in the form of a story about an executive who lands a coveted position at Zagrum Company and receives a much-needed crash course in leadership from his new boss. During his first few weeks on the job, the new executive learns about “the box,” self-deception, and how to get out of “the box.”

The Culture Code, by Daniel Coyle

This book offers a hugely insightful and informative analysis of effective and ineffective teamwork. It is loaded with practical suggestions, none of which involve rope courses or catching your office teammates as they backwards from high platforms.

Much of this book focuses on what Coyle calls the “vulnerability loop.” Leaders must be willing to display their own vulnerability as a way of signaling that the leader intends to create a safe environment for other group members to expose their own vulnerability, so that all can support one another. Groups whose members feel safe perform better. They demonstrate greater learning ability and adaptability. Conversely, groups whose leaders behave as if they have all the answers and direct the behavior of other group members generally perform poorly.

Conversational Intelligence, by Judith Glaser

Each conversation is an opportunity to increase trust and effectiveness in our relationships with others. Would it be good to have a plan to accomplish that outcome? Would it be helpful to understand how to positively influence your neurochemistry, even in the moment when you feel your temper rising during a discussion?

This book makes an excellent companion to *The 7 Habits*, particularly Habit 4 – “Think Win-Win and Habit 5 – “Seek First To Understand, Then To Be Understood.” It adds value by explaining the neuroscience behind our emotional reactions during a discussion, and by providing many examples of constructive exercises for individuals and small groups to enhance their effectiveness.

Wait! What?, by James E. Ryan

This short book by the Dean of Harvard University’s Graduate School of Education is a funny and fun course in the value of asking five simple questions, plus the “bonus question.” The five questions are:

- “Wait, what?” – which is at the root of all understanding
- “I wonder....” – the heart of all curiosity
- “Couldn’t we at least....” – the beginning of all progress
- “How can I help?” – the base of all good relationships
- “What truly matters?” – helps get to the heart of the matter

You’ll have to read the book to learn about the “bonus question.”

Monkey Business, by William Oncken, III

The main ideas in this book can be found in a Harvard Business Review article titled “Managing Management’s Time.” That article remains one of HBR’s most popular articles. A “monkey” is the next step in any transaction between a manager and a subordinate. Think about how often managers say, “OK. I will review this and get back to you.” That is a “monkey” that is jumping from the back of the subordinate onto the back of the manager. Oncken uses the monkey metaphor as a clever and engaging way to teach management concepts, and to teach managers how to better manage *themselves*.

Roy C. Ballentine, ChFC, CFP®, Executive Chairman & Founder



Roy is the Executive Chairman and Founder of the firm. Roy dedicates his time to thought leadership, strategic oversight of client engagements, and coaching and training our team members. Roy graduated from Yale University with a B.A. and an M.S. He is a Chartered Financial Consultant (ChFC) and a CERTIFIED FINANCIAL PLANNER™ practitioner. He has practiced as a fee-only financial advisor since 1984. Roy has served for many years on the Board of Trustees of Brewster Academy, a private secondary school located in the heart of Wolfeboro, NH. He is currently serving as the Chairman of the Board and a member of the Investment Committee. Roy also serves as a Trustee of the Wolfeboro Area Children’s Center in Wolfeboro, NH, and is a member of the Board of Directors of Big Brothers Big Sisters of New Hampshire, Families in Transition of New Hampshire and of the Wolfeboro Area Recreation Association. Roy is an enthusiastic sailor, skier, and mountaineer. He has participated in several first ski descents of mountains above the Arctic Circle and has hiked, skied, and climbed extensively in the western US and Canada. He and his wife Sandy have two children and live in Wolfeboro, NH.

This report is the confidential work product of Ballentine Partners. Unauthorized distribution of this material is strictly prohibited. The information in this report is deemed to be reliable. Some of the conclusions in this report are intended to be generalizations. The specific circumstances of an individual’s situation may require advice that is different from that reflected in this report. Furthermore, the advice reflected in this report is based on our opinion, and our opinion may change as new information becomes available. Nothing in this presentation should be construed as an offer to sell or a solicitation of an offer to buy any securities. You should read the prospectus or offering memo before making any investment. You are solely responsible for any decision to invest in a private offering. The investment recommendations contained in this document may not prove to be profitable, and the actual performance of any investment may not be as favorable as the expectations that are expressed in this document. There is no guarantee that the past performance of any investment will continue in the future.