



**Delegate Your Reading!**  
**30 Books to Delegate  
During This Crisis...**  
*...and the Next Crisis*

Book reviews by John Pearson - July 1, 2020

Insights from the Book Bucket!

**MASTERING THE MANAGEMENT BUCKETS WORKBOOK**

*Management Tools, Templates, and Tips from John Pearson,  
with commentary by Jason Pearson (2nd Edition, 2018)*

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**The core competency in the Book Bucket affirms:**

**“We believe leaders are readers!**

We create a culture that embraces a healthy appetite for leadership and management books, journals, articles and audio resources. We mentor team members with thoughtfully selected titles and chapters to help them leverage their strengths, grow in their faith and serve others with passion.

**We don't just talk about books—we actually read them!”**

**During this COVID-19 marathon,** I curated a list of “30 Books to Delegate During This Crisis...And the Next Crisis.” The nominees include some familiar, like *The Checklist Manifesto* and *How the Mighty Fall*, plus a few unexpected picks, such as *The Boys in the Boat* and *Leadership Prayers*. (See page 9 for ideas on how to delegate your reading.)

During this—and your next—crisis, are you relying on the limited experience of your in-house team, or are you going deep in your reading? Read and learn how other leaders have weathered the complexity of the convoluted crises of past years and generations.



**1. *Make Your Bed: Little Things That Can Change Your Life...and Maybe the World*, by Admiral William H. McRaven (U.S. Navy Retired)**

“If you want to change the world, start off by making your bed.” “Start Your Day With a Task Completed” is the first chapter of the life lessons book from the author's Navy SEAL training days. He learned the “make your bed” principle in those early days and became Commander of all U.S. Special Operations Forces as a Four-Star Admiral. (*OK, that got my attention—along with his stunning 37 years of serving our country.*)

→ [Read the review](#) and order the book.

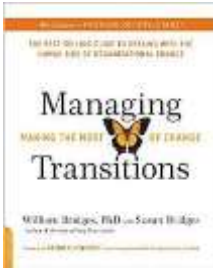


**2. *The ONE Thing: The Surprisingly Simple Truth Behind Extraordinary Results*, by Gary Keller with Jay Papasan**

The big idea: "What's the ONE Thing you can do this week such that by doing it everything else would be easier or unnecessary?"

**2016 Book-of-the-Year**

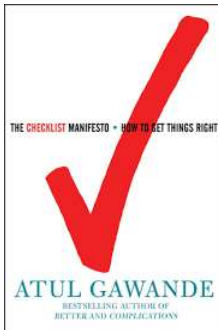
→ [Read the review](#) and order the book.



**3. *Managing Transitions: Making the Most of Change*, by William Bridges**

"Transition is the psychological process people go through to come to terms with the new situation. Change is external, transition is internal."

→ [Read the review](#) and order the book.



**4. *The Checklist Manifesto: How to Get Things Right*, by Atul Gawande**

The author quotes a study on "necessary fallibility." It cites two reasons we fail at stuff: a) ignorance and b) ineptitude. In the latter, "...the knowledge exists, yet we fail to apply it correctly."

→ [Read the review](#) and order the book.

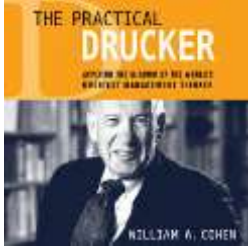


**5. *The First 90 Days: Critical Success Strategies for New Leaders at All Levels*, by Michael Watkins**

The author brilliantly categorizes four kinds of situations in organizations or departments. Which one did you inherit in your last transition: Start-up, Turn-Around, Realignment, or Sustaining Success (STARS)? Caution! A successful CEO of a Turn-Around may fail at Realignment.

**2010 Book-of-the-Year**

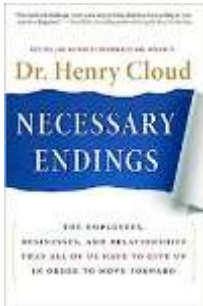
→ [Read the review](#) and order the book.



**6. *The Practical Drucker: Applying the Wisdom of the World's Greatest Management Thinker*, by William A. Cohen**

This is classic Drucker: “What everyone knows is usually wrong.” And this: “Better not to do [market research] at all than to do it wrong!”

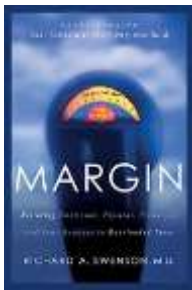
→ [Read the review](#) and order the book.



**7. *Necessary Endings: The Employees, Businesses, and Relationships That All of Us Have to Give Up in Order to Move Forward*, by Dr. Henry Cloud**

Necessary endings “are the reason you are not married to your prom date nor still working in your first job.” Chapter 7 is a must-read: “The Wise, the Foolish, and the Evil: Identifying Which Kinds of People Deserve Your Trust.” **2011 Book-of-the-Year**

→ [Read the review](#) and order the book.



**8. *Margin: Restoring Emotional, Physical, Financial, and Time Reserves to Overloaded Lives*, by Richard A Swenson, M.D.**

“Marginless is the disease of the new millennium; margin is the cure.” The margin doctor suggests you record this message on your phone, “Please wait for the beep and hang up.”

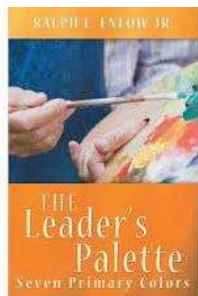
→ [Read the review](#) and order the book.



**9. *Operation Mincemeat: How a Dead Man and a Bizarre Plan Fooled the Nazis and Assured an Allied Victory*, by Ben Macintyre**

In our current “war” on COVID-19, read this amazing narrative of a war machine bureaucracy that—due to detailed planning—gets it done. The author targets the “twin frailties” of wishfulness and yesmanship.

→ [Read the review](#) and order the book.



**10. *The Leader's Palette: Seven Primary Colors*, by Ralph E. Enlow, Jr.**

Jammed with leadership wisdom! “You can’t make up in training what you lack in selection.” And this: “But good planning is not the accumulation of everyone’s aspirations. Ultimately, a plan represents the elimination of options.”

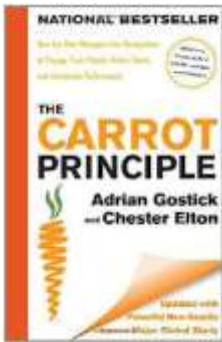
→ [Read the review](#) and order the book.



## 11. *Leadership Prayers*, by Richard Kriegbaum

“Leaders pray to maintain the right relationship with God. From that relationship between the human spirit and the Spirit of God comes the divine perspective, insight, direction, and courage the leader must have to serve well. To keep from blundering into either hubris or despair requires a special sense of vision and balance that comes in a unique way from the Spirit of God through prayer.”

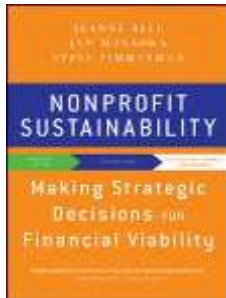
→ [Read the review](#) and order the book.



## 12. *The Carrot Principle: How the Best Managers Use Recognition to Engage Their People, Retain Talent, and Accelerate Performance*, by Adrian Gostick and Chester Elton.

Purpose-based recognition, say the authors, involves meaningful recognition (not cash) in four areas: goal-setting, communication, trust and accountability. Their research shows that inspired moments of recognition act as “accelerators” for creating more effective and more profitable companies.

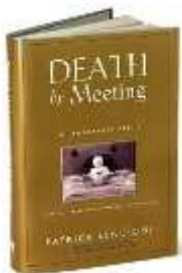
→ [Read the review](#) and order the book.



## 13. *Nonprofit Sustainability: Making Strategic Decisions for Financial Viability*, by Jeanne Bell, Jan Masaoka and Steve Zimmerman

“The Dual Bottom Line” matrix map addresses mission impact and financial sustainability—with four easy-to-remember icons: Stars, Hearts, Money Tree, and Stop Sign.

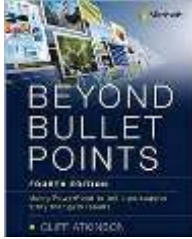
→ [Read the review](#) and order the book.



## 14. *Death by Meeting: A Leadership Fable...About Solving the Most Painful Problem in Business*, by Patrick Lencioni

Four kinds of meetings: 1) Daily Check-in, 2) Weekly Tactical, 3) Monthly Strategic and 4) Quarterly Off-site Review.

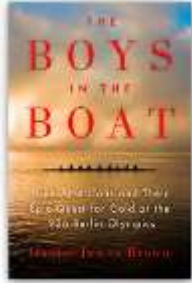
→ [Read the review](#) and order the book.



**15. *Beyond Bullet Points: Using Microsoft Office PowerPoint...to Create Presentations That Inform, Motivate and Inspire*, by Cliff Atkinson**

Breaking News! Everyone's bored with your PPs! Why the first five slides of a PP presentation are the most important.

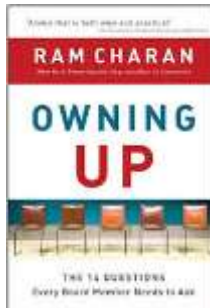
→ [Read the review](#) and order the book.



**16. *The Boys in the Boat: Nine Americans and Their Epic Quest for Gold at the 1936 Berlin Olympics*, by Daniel James Brown**

Memorable line: "If you don't like some fellow in the boat, Joe, you have to learn to like him. It has to matter to you whether he wins the race, not just whether you do."

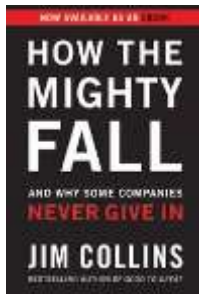
→ [Read the review](#) and order the book.



**17. *Owning Up: The 14 Questions Every Board Member Needs to Ask*, by Ram Charan**

So timely! Question 2: "Are We Addressing the Risks That Could Send Our Company Over the Cliff?" Charan notes, "The financial crisis of 2008 laid bare a long buried truth: that many boards do not really own the strategy of their company." ([Follow the 14-part blog here.](#))

→ [Read the review](#) and order the book.

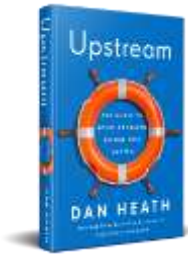


**18. *How The Mighty Fall: And Why Some Companies Never Give In*, by Jim Collins**

"Organizational decline is largely self-inflicted, and recovery largely within our control." Collins identifies five stages of decline:

- Stage 1: Hubris Born of Success
- Stage 2: Undisciplined Pursuit of More
- Stage 3: Denial of Risk and Peril
- Stage 4: Grasping for Salvation
- Stage 5: Capitulation to Irrelevance or Death

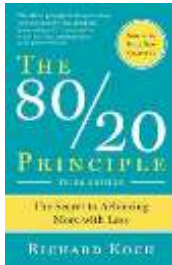
→ [Read the review](#) and order the book.



**19. *Upstream: The Quest to Solve Problems Before They Happen*, by Dan Heath**

The big idea: solve problems before they happen. Customer complaints, crimes (and get this!)—chronic illnesses are preventable.

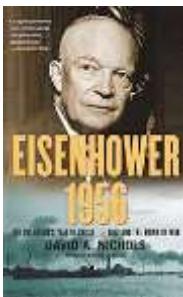
→ [Read the review](#) and order the book.



**20. *The 80/20 Principle: The Secret to Achieving More With Less*, by Richard Koch**

Two of the author's "Top 10 Highest-Value Uses of Time" include "things that you can get other people to do for you with relatively little effort on your part," and "things for which it is now or never."

→ [Read the review](#) and order the book.



**21. *Eisenhower 1956: The President's Year of Crisis—Suez and the Brink of War*, by David A. Nichols**

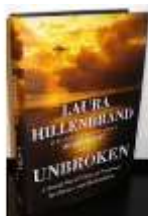
After a heart attack in 1955, the "doctors told him to take it easy—and in that we get a humorous picture of Ike. He wrote a friend that he had been ordered 'to avoid all situations that tend to bring about such reactions as irritation, frustration, anxiety, fear and, above all anger.' So he had snapped at the doctors, 'Just what do you think the presidency is?'"

→ [Read the review](#) and order the book.



**22. *Harvard Business Review on Managing Through a Downturn* (8 articles) includes an interview with Eric Schmidt, "Leading Through Rough Times," on orchestrating turn-arounds—plus how to address "pervasive bellyaching!"**

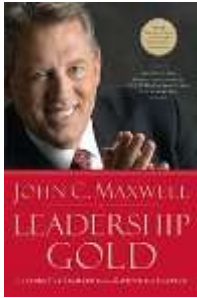
→ [Read the review](#) and order the book.



**23. *Unbroken: A World War II Story of Survival, Resilience, and Redemption*, by Laura Hillenbrand**

Read why I'm suggesting you ding yourself \$50 for every boring meeting you lead!

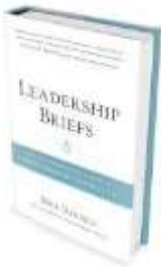
→ [Read the review](#) and order the book.



**24. *Leadership Gold: Lessons I've Learned from a Lifetime of Leading*, by John C. Maxwell.**

Must-read chapter: "The Secret to a Good Meeting Is the Meeting Before the Meeting." He preaches: "If you can't have the meeting before the meeting, don't have the meeting." Another great chapter: "Your Biggest Mistake Is Not Asking What Mistake You're Making."

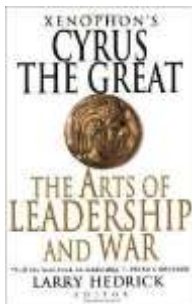
→ [Read the review](#) and order the book.



**25. *Leadership Briefs: Shaping Organizational Culture to Stretch Leadership Capacity*, by Dick Daniels**

Under six "Graceful Reminders" in Chapter 11 he warns about "the danger of the 15%. Some people can be right 85% of the time. It is a powerful gift. The danger is when they assume they are right 100% of the time. They become relationally dangerous 15% of the time when they are wrong but think they are correct." **2015 Book-of-the-Year**

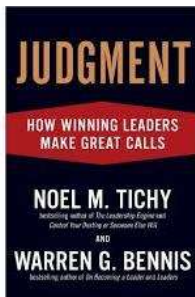
→ [Read the review](#) and order the book.



**26. *Xenophon's Cyrus the Great: The Arts of Leadership and War*, by Xenophon (Larry Hedrick, Editor)**

"Let us remember our forefathers," Cyrus the Great preached to his warriors, "but let us no longer exaggerate their virtues." This is Peter Drucker's pick for the "best book on leadership." **2014 Book-of-the-Year**

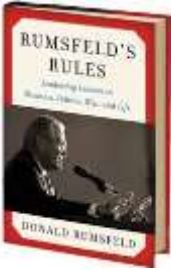
→ [Read the review](#) and order the book.



**27. *Judgment: How Winning Leaders Make Great Calls*, by Noel M. Tichy and Warren G. Bennis**

Judgment, preach the authors, is "the essence of effective leadership." It involves three domains: people, strategy and crisis. (Interestingly, those are three of my 20 management buckets: the People Bucket, the Strategy Bucket and the Crisis Bucket.) They call judgment the proverbial elephant on the table—because it's rarely addressed. "Without a deeper and more compelling understanding of how leaders exercise judgment, the study of leadership can never be complete."

→ [Read the review](#) and order the book.



**28.** *Rumsfeld's Rules: Leadership Lessons in Business, Politics, War, and Life*, by Donald Rumsfeld.

Two of his 400 rules: "If you expect people to be in on the landing, include them for the takeoff." And... "The first consideration for meetings is whether to call one at all."

→ [Read the review](#) and order the book.



**29.** *The Power of Moments: Why Certain Experiences Have Extraordinary Impact*, by Chip Heath and Dan Heath

Are you re-opening soon? Welcoming back your staff, students, or church members? Great insights on creating a "moment!" **2017 Book-of-the-Year**

→ [Read the review](#) and order the book.



**30.** *Practicing the Present: The Neglected Art of Living in the Now*, by John Koessler

"Although their aim is to inspire, most vision statements are tedious in reality. My heart doesn't beat any faster when I read them. They don't make me say, 'Yes, I want to be a part of that!' When I read them, all I see is 'blah, blah, blah, Jesus.'"

→ [Read the review](#) and order the book.

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**ORGANIZE YOUR LIFELONG LEARNING WITH THE 20 BUCKETS  
(CRITICAL COMPETENCIES) IN 3 ARENAS: Cause, Community, and Corporation**



*Mastering the Management Buckets: 20 Critical Competencies for Leading Your Business or Nonprofit*, by John Pearson

"*Mastering the Management Buckets* is a fresh reminder of the complexity of the leadership challenge—yet John's book also delivers practical management insights for our leaders and our in-the-trenches people." (Richard E. Stearns, Former President, World Vision U.S.)

→ [Read more reviews](#) and order the book.



## Leaders Are Readers (and Listeners!): Delegate Your Reading!

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- ❑ 1. Each month, give your direct reports one book to read.
- ❑ 2. Ask for a 5- to 10-minute "book review" from one person each week.
- ❑ 3. Your team will be inspired, motivated and will learn something from reading 4 books x 11 months = 44 books per year!
- ❑ 4. Then...file the book on your staff resource shelf with your marked-up copies so your managers can mentor their people with niche chapters.
- ❑ 5. For more ideas, see the [Book Bucket](#) chapter in *Mastering the Management Buckets*.

**"NOT EVERYTHING  
YOU READ ON THE  
INTERNET IS TRUE."  
-ABRAHAM LINCOLN**

**"My best friend is a person who will  
give me a book I have not read."**

Abraham Lincoln

### Visit the [Book Bucket](#) to download three book lists:

- ❑ **List #1:** Books by Management Buckets Categories\*
- ❑ **List #2:** Chronological List of 425 Issues of *Your Weekly Staff Meeting* (400+ books)\*
- ❑ **List #3:** John Pearson's Top-100 Book List (updated every 2 years)

\*Updated Dec. 31, 2019. Watch for the annual update each year.

### BOOKS/BUCKETS/BLOGS

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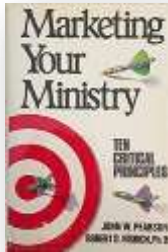
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## BOOKS AND WORKBOOKS BY JOHN PEARSON

Order at [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com)



**1990**  
**Marketing Your Ministry:  
Ten Critical Principles**  
John Pearson and  
Robert D. Hisrich, Ph.D.



**2008**  
**Mastering the  
Management  
Buckets**  
John Pearson



**2017**  
**Mastering the  
Management  
Buckets  
Workbook**  
**Second Edition: 2018**  
John Pearson



**2017**  
**Lessons From the  
Nonprofit Boardroom**  
**Second Edition: 2018**  
Dan Busby  
and John Pearson

### NEW IN 2019



**2019**  
**Lessons From the Church  
Boardroom: 40 Insights for  
Exceptional Governance**  
Dan Busby  
and John Pearson



**2019**  
**ECFA Tools and Templates for  
Effective Board Governance:  
Time-Saving Solutions  
for Your Board**  
Dan Busby  
and John Pearson



**2019**  
**Lessons From the Nonprofit  
Boardroom: Effectiveness,  
Excellence, Elephants!**  
Dan Busby  
and John Pearson

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“Vision without execution  
is delusion.”

Peter Drucker



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*Your Weekly Staff Meeting* is emailed free one to three times a month to subscribers, the frequency of which is based on an algorithm of book length, naps duration, and client deadlines.

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## John Pearson's "Ideal Bookcase"

[Click here.](#)

Fill in your list here...

### My All-Time Top-10 Book List

TITLE	AUTHOR	DELEGATE READING TO:	NOTES:
1)			
2)			
3)			
4)			
5)			
6)			
7)			
8)			
9)			
10)			

\*[Click here](#) to see "My Ideal Bookshelf" recommendations from six leaders/readers.