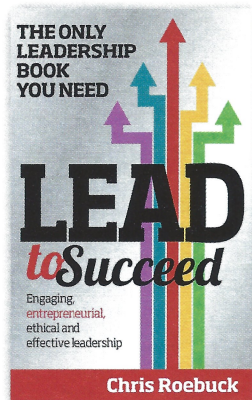# A blueprint for leadership

Despite a wealth of titles on the subject, DAVID D'SOUZA, director of Oddbody Consulting, finds an admirable determination to become a leadership authority in this up-to-date and comprehensive guide

Lead to Succeed: The Only Leadership Book You Need
Author Chris Roebuck
Publisher Wordscapes
Cost £12.98
Stars ★★★★½

Given the proliferation of titles on leadership it is a genuinely grand ambition to even attempt to become the essential text, yet this wide ranging and ambitious release goes a long way to meeting that challenge. The claims about financial benefits of the approach may seem too good to be true, but as a modern guide for leading people and organisations this is a genuinely impressive addition to a crowded sector.

Drawing upon a wealth of research and his own wide ranging experience, Roebuck's well structured and pragmatic work outlines the principles and tools most needed to transform personal and organisational performance.

The aim is to achieve 'Mach 2' leadership, the term that he uses to describe being at 'the leading edge of what is possible'. The book uses research to illustrate the challenges before clearly setting out well-considered, practical approaches to enhancing organisational and individual performance.

The examples sprinkled throughout the text are useful and for the most part appropriate, however, utilising the management of UBS in the run up to the financial crisis as proof of the value of good leadership seems a slightly bloody-minded choice. Despite an explanation of the UBS selection it feels strange to read a book on building great organisations and end up with pre-financial crisis banking as an exemplar.

It is testament to the quality of thinking and writing in *Lead to Succeed* that no section seems laboured or shallow, the breadth of content is remarkably varied without ever losing a sense of purpose or pace. The author admits that there wasn't enough space for more emphasis on the role of HR and career development, which is disappointing but understandable. All the key messages are there for those new to leadership, aspiring to leadership or just wanting to improve.

Overall, *Lead to Succeed* is an easy recommendation to anyone leading teams or seeking to positively influence their company's business performance.

And why not try these?

The Rise of the Humans
Authors Dave Coplin
Publisher Harriman House
Cost £9.99
Stars ★★★★★

This is the book that spawned the word 'infobesity'. Meaning confusion and decreased productivity due to being bombarded by information in the workplace. Thankfully there's a lot more to this book than catchy buzzwords.

Author Dave Coplin explores the way we should be harnessing technology in the workplace, not fighting against it.

There is an awful lot to take in here, just as in the modern workplace itself. By going all the way back to the industrial revolution and the way technology was feared as much then as it is now, it pits man's uneasy relationship with machine in a very useful historical context.

If there is one group of people who need to read this book it is HR professionals. It offers real insight into the way technology and data can be put to the most effective use in the workplace, an area where HR is traditionally weak.

This is a must-read for anyone who feels technology is useful in the workplace, but is worried by the balance of power between human and digital. By ensuring we are not only users of technology, but masters of it, Coplin shows us how to add real value to our relationships with machines.

The Culture Map
Author Erin Meyer
Publisher PublicAffairs
Cost £17.99
Stars ★★★★★

With business becoming ever more global, there are a raft of books available on dealing with cultural differences. If you only read one, make it INSEAD professor Erin Meyer's.

Skillfully blending real-life examples, many of which well-travelled readers will recognise, with an analytical framework, Meyer teaches you how to plot your own 'culture map' for your team or organisation.

She uses eight scales, covering areas like trusting, leading and communicating, and shows where various countries sit on these. By plotting a map, you can see why Japanese and Chinese team members clash, or why the Russians think the Danes are weak leaders, and Meyer offers extensive, practical tips for overcoming the barriers.

What brings this book to life are the numerous examples Meyer has encountered, both in her own life as an American living in Paris, and in her experience as running the Managing Virtual Teams module at INSEAD.

If nothing else, read this book to find out if you are a peach or a coconut.