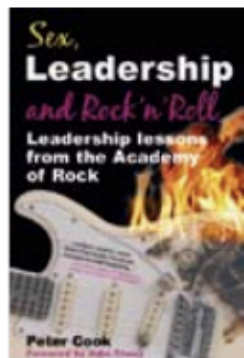


Book Review

Sex, Leadership and Rock'n'Roll

Peter Cook, Crown House Publishing 2006 ISBN: 978-184590016-8



An intriguing title, so what does OUBS MBA Alumni Peter Cook's latest book "Sex, Leadership and Rock'n'Roll" offer us, and how does this book differ from the many already published?

There are forests of books on 'leadership'

from the dry academic treatise to the guru 'one true way' titles. Many of these can give us some tips on how to be better managers or understand so-called 'leadership competencies'. The question is: can they help us to be today's leaders rather than yesterday's managers?

Now that the received wisdom of leadership has moved from the 'great man' approach of the last century to the idea of 21st century leadership as 'who I am rather than what I am' – leadership as a way of being rather than doing – it behoves us to think more creatively about leadership of self, teams and organisations. We know that we learn effectively through metaphor and fun and the title tempts us into a more creative way of thinking about how we lead effectively to deal with the complexity of modern business life.

So this is where the Sex, Leadership and Rock'n'Roll comes in, and it is deadly serious

about ways of dealing with the real challenges for leaders and managers. Organised in three sections sex is about business relationships (the people and business partners), drugs is about motivation and leadership while rock'n'roll is about high performance. The book is designed to offer the referenced links between the traditional leadership literature and what Cook calls the 'Academy of Rock' metaphor though music to bring this alive in an everyday context. As such the blend of the mainstream literature is brought alive with quotes from an eclectic mix of Einstein, The Beatles, Gareth Morgan, Nelson Mandela, Madonna, Tom Peters, David Bowie etc.

To make things even more accessible, he includes key points sprinkled liberally throughout as practical tips on making a positive difference. In addition the mix of visual and written styles along with the soundtrack from the music titles acts as a springboard to help bring together the intellectual and emotional aspects of business so we can take a whole-brained, strategic approach to personal and business performance.

Who wouldn't like the book?

- The style may not be for everyone, particularly those who live in a world where leadership is positional or feel things should be as they were in the past.

- Purists with a closed mindset about the one right way to do things.

Why read the book?

- It is an engaging read about issues in leading and managing which made me laugh in parts as the messages hit home. For Dilbert fans, this book is a must.
 - To enthuse yourself about practical possibilities in raising your game for you, your team and your organisation
 - While several of the areas will be familiar to those who have done an MBA or other management development programmes, this is about the implementation rather than the theory
 - It takes a fresh (accelerated learning) approach which gives permission to deal with the real issues facing people in organisations these days
- So, in summary, for those who are prepared to take a 21st century approach to running organisations and their part of an organisation, why wouldn't you want to read it?

**Submitted by Steve Gorton,
Regional Chair for Yorkshire**

If you would like to provide a book review for Ambition we would like to hear from you.

Please contact Natalie Clark on n.clark@mbaworld.com