

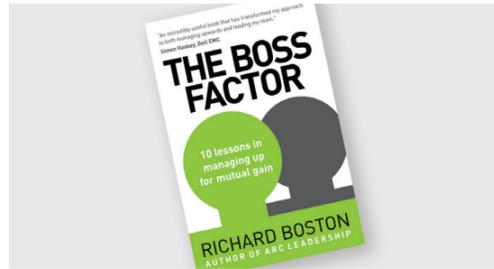
BOOK REVIEWS

Our EA members tell you whether these top titles are worth a read

BOOK REVIEWER



DEBE COE



The Boss Factor

by Richard Boston

I've been a PA for 29 years and tasks that once were challenging and encouraged my career development have become mundane, leaving me feeling a little stale. I was hoping this book would give me a fresh view of my career, what I want from a job and where I want it to take me.

I've read leadership books before and they can be quite tedious and a little pretentious but this broke that stereotype – it was an engaging read that really made me think deeply about my own focus, attitude and needs. Richard starts by explaining his leadership theory and the essential qualities of any successful relationship – ARC (authentic, responsible, courageous). This message runs through each of the 10 lessons, which can be read concurrently or as standalone chapters; each offering insights and examples to help you relate.

The book is primarily concerned with managing-up and encourages you to look closely at what you want from your organisation, what you expect from a boss and how you operate yourself. But it's also valuable if you're already a leader – each lesson offers tips on using the theory to develop those you lead.

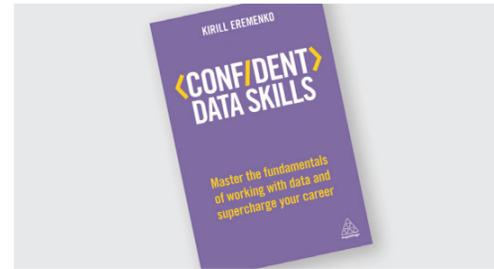
I didn't realise how much of an influence I could be on my boss and those around me. I also learned that having the confidence to challenge my boss and question the norm is the only way I'll be able to align my vision with theirs and that of the company and, therefore, achieve success. And I realised there may be hidden factors as to why people make the decisions that they do.

Debe is EA to the group chairman at Hammonds

BOOK REVIEWER



SASHA COVINGTON



Confident Data Skills

by Kirill Eremenko

I thought this may be a hard read with lots of complicated coding and data jargon – but I was pleasantly surprised. This book was interesting, informative and pitched to all levels, from students to CEOs who want to understand how best to work with data as a business tool.

Organisations now have access to massive amounts of data and it's influencing the way we operate. The author says that to be successful we must leverage this data to make effective business decisions. You'll learn how artificial intelligence is driving organisational changes and discover the key challenges businesses face when trying to analyse massive data sets.

The book goes through the steps involved in the data science journey – but it's definitely not a coding book and, in fact, this is exactly what the author has steered away from. It's very personable and easy-to-follow with lots of interesting in-depth case studies, including *Netflix*, *LinkedIn*, *Goodreads* and *Deep Blue* – these demonstrate how data (when successfully used) can inspire and change a company's direction and/or structure. And there's an interesting chapter on data breaches and cyber security, which explains how theft of data from an outside source can bring an organisation to its knees in seconds.

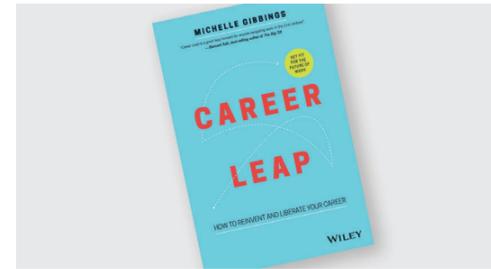
By the end of the book you'll have a great in-depth knowledge of the world of data, how to present your findings and how best you can use this information for your career and the company you work in.

Sasha is business and operations manager at JLL

BOOK REVIEWER



MARY IRWIN



Career Leap

by Michelle Gibbins

I'm almost finished my Bachelor of Behaviour Studies Degree and I'm ready to start transitioning into a new challenge. So, I used *Career Leap* to focus my attention – and what I got was a step-by-step guide to self-discovery and economic evaluation that exceeded my expectations.

If you're looking for a magic wand to find you the perfect job, the book isn't right for you – but if you want guidance on finding your motivation, risk appetite and deciding your next career move, it'll certainly help focus your vision.

It looks at where you are now, what motivates you, where your passion lies and how much you're prepared to change or risk for your job. It then helps you consider where you want to aim and refers to the practical considerations – from networking and upskilling to financial security and automation threat. There are online quizzes too, and I was surprised to find 25 per cent of my role could be done by a robot.

Once you've narrowed down where you want to go, Michelle guides you on a strategic path of what to consider and how to develop your network and professional image before leaping.

I'd highly recommend this book to any EA considering their next career move. If you're willing to take the time to honestly review your position and what you want to achieve, there's no limit to how far you could leap. My biggest takeaway was that I have behaviours that can be self-limiting professionally, so I can focus on modification now.

Mary is an EA at Southern Grampians Shire Council

BOOK REVIEWER



RACHAEL BONETTI



Customers the Day after Tomorrow

by Steven Van Belleghem

The book is a must-read for anyone in business. It's a window into the future; a state of play for the present and a view of the efficient, exceptional and personalised customer experience the future will deliver. It's a great starting base to learn more about customers of the future, how to start to future-proof a digital strategy and embrace artificial intelligence (AI), and where to concentrate efforts for efficiency by using AI.

Putting the customer at the centre of everything is no longer optional and customers right now are the most empowered we've ever seen – they expect immediate responses, for you to know who they are and what they like. Some companies do this terrifically and deliver the wow moments with every transaction but some left behind.

Here, Steven Van Belleghem weaves together case studies and research from hundreds of innovative, household name brands, demonstrating simply how the Internet of Things, AI, automation, personalisation, big data and data security play out in our lives each and every day. He takes seemingly esoteric concepts and makes them easily digestible.

As an EA working in a global business with a huge digital footprint, I found the AI and automation chapters interesting and relevant to the strategy, challenges and cost-efficiency opportunities of my workplace.

It's a big read, but a fascinating one and it's worth persevering.

Rachael is EA to the people director at BUPA