

## On making a personal connection

*Leadership Presence, Belle Linda Halpern and Kathy Lubar*

In the past decade, Belle Linda Halpern and Kathy Lubar have helped tens of thousands of executives to become more inspiring by applying the skills they learned as professional actors. Their innovative approach brings the techniques of the stage into the boardroom, giving leaders the tools they need to connect authentically and dynamically with the hearts and minds of those they lead. If you care about developing and honing the skills that make you indispensable to your colleagues and your company, you can't afford to miss the valuable lessons of *Leadership Presence*.

## On the power of being present

*Flow: The Psychology of Optimal Experience, Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi*

An immensely readable book about that experience we all have (albeit too rarely) of being in the sweet spot of life. He explores what creates those moments when concentration is powerfully focused and we are on top of our game, feeling strong, self-confident, and in effortless control. It is relevant to any activity, particularly delivering presentations that rise to greatness when “in the flow.”

*Thinking Body, Dancing Mind: Tao Sports for Extraordinary Performance in Athletics, Business and Life, Chungliang Al Huang and Jerry Lynch*

In this book, Tai Chi expert Chungliang Al Huang and professional and Olympic sports psychologist Jerry Lynch discuss how you can apply the Tao principles widely used by athletes for excellent performance at work and in your personal relationships. It is particularly good concerning techniques for breathing, focusing, visualizing, and relaxing.

*Peace is Every Step, Thich Nhat Hanh*

The Vietnamese Buddhist monk and Nobel Peace Prize nominee shares his best practices for being present in challenging situations, dealing with stress, and keeping balance in the face of difficult emotions such as anger.

## On relationship building

*Working with Emotional Intelligence, Daniel Goleman*

Self-awareness, self-confidence, and self-control; commitment and integrity; the ability to communicate and influence, to initiate and accept change—Goleman demonstrates that these competencies are at a premium in today's job market. The higher up the leadership ladder you go, the more vital all aspects of emotional intelligence become, often determining who is hired and who is fired, who is passed over and who promoted.

*Difficult Conversations: How to Discuss What Matters Most, Douglas Stone, Bruce Patton, Sheila Heen*

*Difficult Conversations* walks you through a proven, concrete, step-by-step approach for understanding and conducting tough conversations. It shows you how to get ready, start the conversations in ways that reduce defensiveness, and keep them on a constructive track regardless of how the other person responds.

# On acting and being expressive

## *Voice and the Actor, Cicely Berry*

Written by the voice director of The Royal Shakespeare Company, this book is based on the conviction that almost everyone has the equipment for powerful speaking but most of us are inhibited by upbringing and society from freeing our voices. Filled with exercises, explanations, and illustrations, this book is an excellent companion for the person who is doing voice work.

## *The Actor and the Text, Cicely Berry*

Also from Ms. Berry, this excellent book uses many examples—mostly from Shakespeare—of how the actor's voice and movement are matched to the meaning of the text. Fairly advanced, this book is only for those wishing to pursue the topic in depth.

## *PowerSpeak, Dorothy Leeds*

This is a good book for reviewing basic principles of public speaking. A quick read.

## *The Right to Speak: Working With the Voice, Patsy Rodenburg*

A very accessible book on voice training by one of the most respected voice coaches in the theater. The book is particularly good in discussing the social and developmental sources of bad voice habits. She also has a good understanding of the particular problems women experience in their early years that lead to difficulties with the voice.

## *Audition, Michael Shurtleff*

Michael Shurtleff is a famous Broadway and Hollywood casting director. This book contains numerous practical tips on acting, designed to help aspiring actors audition well. Many of the topics, however, apply equally well to speakers and presenters. For example, there are sections on how to tell a story using humor, pace, and many more skills that you would find applicable to delivering presentations.

## *The Actor and His Body, Lit Pick*

The focus of this little book is on relaxing and freeing the body so that it is prepared to relate ideas and words to dramatic movement. It should give anyone who tends toward stiffness a better feeling for the fluidity and rhythms of movement.

## *Year of the King: An Actor's Diary and Sketchbook, Antony Sher*

The journal of a great actor and member of the Royal Shakespeare Company covering the year he spent preparing a performance of Richard III. From the *London Sunday Times* review by Simon Callow: "This is a most wonderfully authentic account of the experience of creating performance." Great reading.