

## Sutton Impact

# From Wooden to Rockne: Books to fascinate the linchpin in you

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It's that time of year for vacations or stay-cations, when we all have a little bit more time and hope to catch up on the reading that we have been wanting to do. To that end, here is my annual book recommendation column, assisted by my son Dan of the Richmond, Va.-based Martin Agency.

### ■ **"Wooden: A Lifetime of Observations and Reflections On and Off the Court"**

**John Wooden with Steve Jamison**

Since the death last month of the iconic coach Wooden, a great deal of attention has been devoted to the approach he took to basketball applied from the way he lived his life.

The book is a collection of short essays covering topics like success, preparation, motivation, roles and leadership. While the wisdom is primarily Wooden, he has also integrated quotations from Abraham Lincoln, Amos Alonzo Stagg and Vince Lombardi, among others. The format also includes examples of how this wisdom was applied and used in the development of UCLA players such as Lew Alcindor (Kareem Abdul-Jabbar), Bill Walton and others. In one section titled "Is Winning the Only Thing?" Wooden disputes the importance of winning as attributed to Lombardi by stating, "I believe making the total effort is everything, and that's all I ever wanted and all I ever asked for myself or my players."

Lots of great material here for sales managers to share with staff to build a team and to motivate them.

### ■ **"Fascinate: Your 7 Triggers to Persuasion and Captivation"**

**Sally Hogshead**

This was my favorite book that I read this year. Hogshead, a brand consultant and speaker who has worked with companies including Starbucks and Microsoft, defines fascination as the most powerful way to influence decision-making. Fascination begins with seven universal triggers: lust, mystique, alarm, prestige, power, vice and trust. The book jacket promises (and the book delivers) explanations that reveal how the Salem witch trials began with the same fixations as those in "Sex and the City"; how a 1636 frenzy over Dutch tulip bulbs mirrors the 2006 real estate bubble; and why a billion-dollar "Just Say No" campaign actually increased drug use among teens by activating the same forbidden fruit syndrome as a Victoria's Secret catalog.

Intrigued? Reading those words on the book jacket (after being told about the book by Dan) prompted one of the quickest purchases I have made. I wasn't disappointed, and you won't be either. One of my favorite triaers. mvstiaue — defined by



P.T. Barnum as curiosity and skepticism — is described by the author as eye-catching enough to get noticed, yet complex enough to stay interesting; revealing enough to pique curiosity, yet shadowy enough to prompt questions. *Mystique* flirts with us, provoking our imagination, hinting at the possibilities and inviting us to move closer while eluding our grasp.



If you are a marketing/advertising type, this book will be a page-turner, and your imagination will necessitate a notebook or highlighter nearby.

### ■ **“Linchpin: Are You Indispensable?”** **Seth Godin**

This book by Godin, one of the most frequently recommended authors, is a must read for managers and leaders as well as those aspiring to assume those roles.

According to Godin, linchpins are people who “invent, lead (regardless of title), connect others, make things happen and create order out of chaos.” If you have ever read Jim Collins’ classic work “Good to Great,” then you understand that linchpins are the essential catalysts in moving from good to great and, in all probability, are either the bus drivers or the navigators on the organizational bus in the Collins analogy.

According to Godin, each of us has a part of the brain he refers to as the lizard brain, or the resistance. In this case, he is referring to resistance to change and resistance to think or act outside of established order, hierarchy and tradition. He feels that our resistance to act differently might be rooted in our childhood, playing such games as Candyland, which in his terms is indoctrination in agenda-following: pick a card and do what it says. Linchpins have the ability to read a situation and embark on a path that they feel is the best solution regardless of whether or not there are rules or precedents that may be followed.

In Godin’s world, Steve Jobs is an iconic linchpin. Great suggestions here about how to overcome certain background elements and become a linchpin.

### ■ **“Different: Escaping the Competitive Herd”** **Youngme Moon**

Moon’s basic premise is that to succeed in a world where conformity reigns, you must be the exception and even an outlier with a unique selling, marketing or communication position. Apple, Crispin, Porter & Bogusky, Google, Mini Cooper and similar companies or brands are the real players that are different, not only in what they produce, but also how they think, communicate, position, package, and deliver their products and services. These companies relish the role of nonconformist and seek people who, like the linchpins described in Godin’s book, search for new ways to do things and ways to look different in order to continue pushing the organization in new and different ways.

Moon suggests that we should embrace being perceived as different rather than fear being the outlier, an idea that many of us embrace but few of us practice.

### ■ **“Salesman from the Sidelines”** **McCready Huston**

My final book recommendation, likely more for collectors given the book’s price and short supply, is a biography depicting legendary Notre Dame coach Knute Rockne in his role as national sales manager and sales trainer for Studebaker. Similar to Wooden, Rockne was able to take what he did every day

as a coach and translate it into a motivational and instructional program for sales managers and sales staff in the automotive industry.

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