

Book it: Best bets for board reading

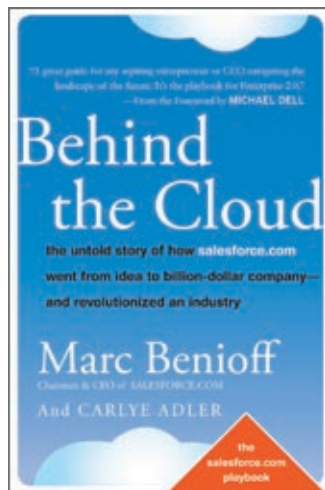
From a roundup of new books, leadership insights on executive truth telling, incentivizing the sales force, productivity advancements, and negotiation and presentation tactics.

A breakfast at Tiffany's

From **Behind the Cloud** by Marc Benioff. Copyright 2009 by the author. Published by Jossey-Bass (www.josseybass.com).

IT'S NECESSARY for every company to integrate *mahalo* — the Hawaiian spirit of gratitude and praise — into its corporate culture.

Conventional wisdom says that most salespeople are “coin operated,” so most companies use monetary incentives to motivate top salespeople. This is essential but insufficient, as material things are not really what brings anyone true happiness. When asked about their best year, salespeople rarely point to the year in which their W-2 was the highest; they point to a year in which they were challenged and recognized, and had fun. That's why we reward any salesperson who makes 100 percent of his or her quota (and a partner or a friend) with a fantastic experience — a three-day trip to Maui. Typically, 60 to 65 percent of our account executives qualify for this trip. Most companies reward only the top 10 to 20 percent of their sales reps, but that strategy doesn't yield a very high return. Morale for the top people is sky high, but it is brutally low for the 80 to 90 percent of people who are not recognized. By setting the bar within reach, we've found that morale soars all year — and people still strive to exceed expectations.



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To distinguish ourselves from other employers and to further encourage people to perform, we strive to offer experiences that are memorable. That's why we came up with Breakfast at Tiffany's. Every year in Hawaii, we take the very top sales producers and their guests by limo to the Four Seasons Resort Lana'i, where each gets a personal shopper and a sponsored shopping trip to Tiffany & Co., held before the store is open to the public. An Audrey Hepburn look-alike welcomes the top performers and serves champagne.

It's important to reward people because it's the right thing to do, but the benefits come back to the company. Involving spouses or partners produces great results! Keeping them happy keeps the employees happy. Free tickets to a ball game only go so far with an employee (or a client). If you really want to make a difference, give something meaningful to an employee's significant other or child. Things that have some emotional value attached to them are what encourage people the most.

Marc Benioff is the chairman and CEO of salesforce.com, which he co-founded in 1999 (www.salesforce.com/behindthecloud).

A corporate fear of too much truth

From **The Essential Bennis** by Warren Bennis. Copyright 2009 by the author. Published by Jossey-Bass (www.josseybass.com).

THE SENTRY BOXES of Corporate America are its boards of directors, and there is ample evidence that Enron's directors kept their eyes shut when they should have been perusing the company's books. But all the sound and fury about Enron, whose collapse has led to Congressional hearings and media outrage, obscures a more basic problem that is ubiquitous in corporate life today: organizational struc-

raise the bar and close the distance between the two of you. You'll never have to entertain the insulting first offer, because you anticipated it coming and simply skipped right over it. Knowledge of an impending lowball offer is so helpful, in fact, that I'm not above doing almost anything to find out what their first offer is going to be before they've actually made it.

Donald Dell is the founder of ProServ, a leading sports agency that has represented hundreds of star athletes. He was elected to the International Tennis Hall of Fame in 2009.

Does faking work in a personality test?

From *Senior Executive Assessment* by Dean Stamoulis. Copyright 2009 by the author. Published by Wiley-Blackwell (www.wiley.com).

THE POTENTIAL to “fake” or “distort” responses to personality tests or self-report questionnaires administered in senior executive assessment has received considerable research attention. The concern is that those who are in a selection situation have a great deal at stake when taking the measures involved in an assessment battery, and that as a result, they may skew their answers in a direction that causes them to appear more favorable or desirable in the eyes of those administering the assessment. This phenomenon led to the creation of “Social Desirability” scales, more commonly called “lie” scales, which are used to determine the extent to which a test-taker may be distorting his or her answers in a more culturally favorable direction.

The issue of faking has called the validity of personality measures into question, though at this juncture there seems to be little consensus over whether or not validity is ultimately affected. Some researchers believe that faking causes personality measures to be less effective,

while others contend that in spite of some faking patterns on some measures the results of the test itself are not ultimately affected.

The summary of my experience is that while there is probably more faking in selection situations than pure development assessment situations, for example, I find that the faking I do see in self-report questionnaires still tells me a great deal

about the assessee. This is because we all do not “fake good” in the same way. Even when candidates feel they know what the ideal candidate should look like in a selection situation, they still emphasize behaviors and traits that reflect who they are. For example, one candidate in a situation calling for a turnaround may emphasize interpersonal aggressiveness while another candidate may emphasize the importance of schedules and timelines.

Dean Stamoulis oversees the global practice for executive assessment at the Russell Reynolds Associates search consultancy (www.russellreynolds.com). He has also worked in the Management Development Center at IBM's world headquarters.

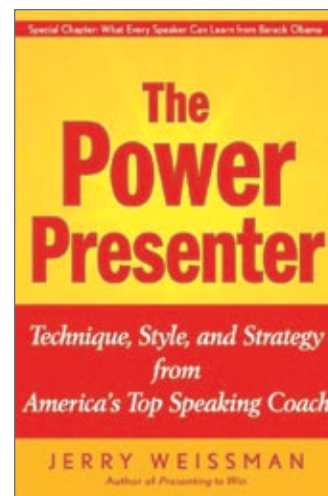
Presentation trigger: The Roman column

From *The Power Presenter* by Jerry Weissman. Copyright 2009 by Power Presentations Ltd. Published by John Wiley & Sons Inc. (www.wiley.com).

IF YOU VISIT ROME TODAY and tour the ruins of the great Forum, you are likely to hear your guide describe the glory days of the Roman Empire, around 100 B.C. You are also likely to hear the guide talk about the classic Roman orators who spoke in the Forum for hours on end without any notes. Paper had not yet been invented. To help them remember what to say, the orators used the stately marble columns of the Forum as prompts. As Cicero and his colleagues strode around delivering their rhetoric, they would stop at individual columns to discourse on particular themes. Each column represented the focal point for a cluster of subordinate or related ideas.

Two millennia later, the Roman column concept has taken on a life of its own. If you do an Internet search for “Roman room memory,” you will find more than a quarter of a million entries describing variations of Cicero's method; most of them propose using pieces of furniture in a room as reminders of specific points in a sequence.

Will Poole, a corporate vice president in Microsoft's Unlimited Potential Group, encountered another disciple of Cicero. When I introduced the Roman column concept to Will, it reminded him of an incident in India where he was being taken



on a tour of a temple. Will asked his guide a question about an area of the temple they had just left, but the guide replied that he couldn't answer that question unless he returned to that area.

While the Roman orators and Will Poole's guide used columns or Indian temple objects as memory triggers, the Roman column concept can serve as your aide to distill your story into a few succinct primary themes. These mnemonics will lighten your mental — and, in turn, adrenal — load. The object of your brainstorming is to develop the Roman columns of your own story, about five or six in all is optimal.

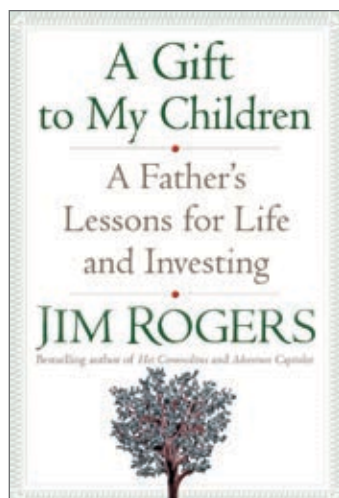
Jerry Weissman, a leading corporate presentations coach, is founder of Power Presentations Ltd. (www.powerltd.com).

A trend that will change everything

From *A Gift to My Children* by Jim Rogers. Copyright 2009 by Beeland Interests Inc. Published by Random House (www.atrandom.com).

TRADITIONALLY, women in Asia have been treated differently from men. In many countries, a girl's family had to pay a dowry when she married as a further inducement to find her a husband. Like women everywhere, Asian women have long suffered a lack of equal opportunity in society; they have been treated unfairly in pay and promotion in the workplace. But this is all going to change. In China, Korea, India, and other Asian countries, where the priority has been placed on the birth of boys, girls are now in short supply. Soon the typical Asian man will experience great difficulty in finding a wife. For instance, in South Korea, there are 120 twenty-year-old boys for every 100 twenty-year-old girls, while in China, the birthrate is 119 boys for every 100 girls. As all these girls become women, they'll be able to demand more freedom. The ramifications from this will be enormous: Professions, education, politics, everything will change. I am so pleased to have two daughters!

Jim Rogers is a renowned private investor, author of several books on investing, and a popular commentator on the markets (www.jimrogers.com). He recently moved to Singapore with his wife and daughters.



A wall that must be broken through

From *Reinvent Your Enterprise* by Jack Bergstrand. Copyright 2009 by Brand Velocity Inc. Published by Brand Velocity Inc. (www.brandvelocity.com).

TODAY, the majority of U.S. workers are employed in the services sector, and knowledge has become our most important product. According to the United States Chamber of Commerce, 75 percent of our workforce consists of managerial, professional, service, sales, and office workers. With our fast computers, sophisticated software, and high-speed networks, many hoped that knowledge work productivity would grow naturally and rapidly. Unfortunately, it hasn't. Instead, we have gotten stuck and the productivity paradox has been the result.

It's now clear that the speed of information and the productivity of knowledge work are two different things. The troubling fact is that we are a nation full of knowledge workers, and we have not been able to productively manage these organizational resources. The same techniques that work effectively for manual work have proven to be ineffective with knowledge work. Due to this disconnect, it doesn't matter how many computers we throw at the problem.

Peter Drucker warned managers, consultants, academics, and government officials for decades that we were in danger. He made it clear that for the prosperity of the developed world to continue — let alone grow — we need to systematically break through the knowledge work productivity wall. We have made massive investments in technology for decades but the math ultimately doesn't work, and pushing the old scientific management system harder isn't sufficient. A better management system is required.

Just as our ancestors successfully broke through the productivity constraints of hunting versus farming and farming versus manufacturing, we now need to do the same with knowledge work. Manufacturing achieved a 50-fold increase in productivity in the 20th century. What can we do for an encore?

Jack Bergstrand, founder of Brand Velocity Inc., is an expert in enterprise reinvention and knowledge work productivity management (www.reinventyoureenterprise.com). He formerly ran the global information technology function for Coca-Cola Co.

