10 Books Every New Medical Practice Manager Should Read

Daniel Pink recently published a list of 10 books every new manager should read. I'd like to spin his list into my own 10 books that I recommend for all new healthcare managers.

Dan's pick #1: ['Drive' by Daniel H. Pink](#)

I agree with his description:

> *In this best-selling business book, Pink explains why, contrary to popular belief, extrinsic incentives like money [aren't the best way to motivate high performance](#). Instead, employers should focus on cultivating in their workers a*

sense of autonomy, mastery, and purpose in order to help them succeed.

I have always felt that as a manager, my job is to make sure employees succeed, not look for the ways in which they fail.

Dan's Pick #2: 'The One Thing You Need to Know' by Marcus Buckingham

I've not read this book, but I would replace it with my all-time recommendation **'The One Minute Manager' by Ken Blanchard.** I have given this book to scores of people that I've worked with over the years and I recommend it because it introduces you to the seminal concept of

  "Praise immediately in public, critique later in private."

I do agree on capitalizing on individual's greatest strengths, but especially in small offices, one does not have the ability to craft jobs or tasks that play to one's individual strengths. You can certainly search for those strengths during the recruiting phase, understanding what qualities often are reflected in those that are good at the front desk, in the exam room, etc.

Dan's Pick #3: **'Thinking, Fast and Slow' by Daniel Kahneman**

I had never heard of this book, but now I am anxious to read it. It sounds like it covers things I had to learn along the way, the hard way. Pink says:

  Kahneman, a psychologist who won the Nobel Prize in economics, breaks down all of human thought into two systems: the fast and intuitive "System 1" and the slow and deliberate

Dan's Pick #4: 'Act Like a Leader, Think Like a Leader' by Herminia Ibarra

Right away I have to say that I was turned off by the notion that you can be too authentic at work,. Authenticity can be much more of a problem for women than for men. Dan says:

> *For example, Ibarra, a professor at business school INSEAD, suggests leaders act first and then think, so that they learn from experimentation and direct experience. There's even an entire chapter devoted to the dangers of [being too authentic at work](#).*

Being authentic doesn't mean wearing your emotions on your sleeve, or making all employees best friends. It does mean being the same person at work that you are at home. See my blog post **["Should (Female Leaders Cry at Work?"](#)**

Try **['Lean In: Women, Work and the Will to Lead' by Sheryl Sandberg.](#)** Even if you're a man.

Dan's Pick #5: ['How to Win Friends and Influence People' by Dale Carnegie](#)

Couldn't agree more! This is a classic and there's a reason it's a classic — it is a book that not just all healthcare managers should read, it's a book that all humans should read. In case you can't find the time or justification to read

HTWF&IP, my mother-in-law's homespun synopsis of the book is "You enter a room and say hello to everybody." Got it?

Dan's Pick #6: 'Mindset' by Carol Dweck

This is another book that had not crossed my path before, but one that sounds similar to #2, only applied to oneself. I would substitute **'Blink: The Power of Thinking Without Thinking' by Malcolm Gladwell** for a slightly different take on listening to oneself to bolster confidence and self-learning. Actually, I recommend every one of Malcolm Gladwell's books for a good read with powerful insights.

Dan's Pick #7: 'Meditations' by Marcus Aurelius and Gregory Hays

To bring things into the 21st century, I suggest **'Good Boss, Bad Boss: How to Be the Best…and Learn from the Worst'**. Author Bob Sutton is a hero of mine, if only because he had the chutzpah to write **'The No Asshole Rule'**, which I live by in my business. One of the foundations of my consulting firm is that I don't work with mean people. I've had to fire a few (clients) along the way, but not many.

Dan's Pick #8: 'Things Fall Apart' by Chinua Achebe

If you didn't cover this book in graduate school, or didn't go to graduate school, pick up **'Crossing the Quality Chasm: A New Health System for the 21st Century'**. It's the book that changed the way we all look at healthcare and it's good background reading for where we are today.

Dan's Pick #9: 'Now, Discover Your Strengths' by Marcus Buckingham and Donald O. Clifton

Seems similar to Pick #2.

Dan's Pick #10: ['Good to Great' by Jim Collins](#)

Yes, and yes.

READERS: What books would you recommend to a new manager in healthcare?