

Blog Summaries: What are you reading

What are you reading 2?

Jeffrey Gitomer has created a great little series of books. His latest is Cha-Ching! so you can guess that it's about selling and success. It's worth reading as it covers the usual points in some fresh ways and he has an easy and engaging style.

A few things from his book:

most urgent things are preventable

...for a long time it had seemed to me that I was about to begin real Life. But there was always some obstacle in the way, something to be gotten through first, some unfinished business, time to be spent, a debt to be paid. At last it dawned on me that these obstacles were in fact Life.

What are you reading 1?

I enjoyed The Viking Manifesto. To be honest, the title and 'set-up' for the book is a little too construed.

However there's plenty of good stuff in there for all of us:

1. If there is something you would rather be doing, do it!

5. Some basics:

over-night success takes years

over-zealous time management destroys creativity and passion

the biggest is rarely the best

26. A good story is worth millions more than it used to be.

27. ZenPR:

...do something that is honest, honourable and interesting. Then don't tell anyone about it.

A good story can never be kept secret...

50. Don't leave luck to chance.

What are you reading?

Just finished Starbucked. There are several good books now about the Starbucks story, each with its own mixture of history and marketing. Taylor Clark does a good job in bringing some fresh angles.

In his book you'll learn:

- about the complex inter-relationship of the three coffee businesses which Schulz was involved with: Peets, Starbucks and Il Giornale
- how Starbucks does not damage Mom and Pop businesses: quite the reverse in fact
- the staggering number of calories in some of the Starbucks drinks
- the key drivers in Starbucks success
- the mistakes they have made over the years
- that the 'first' Starbucks in Pike market Seattle is not in fact the first
- the truth about Fair Trade coffee
- and whether caffeine is bad for you.

What are you reading?

Whilst travelling three great books: [The Ghost Map](#). A fantastic gripping read on a very nasty London epidemic. [The Dead Heart](#). Fast, pacy read which may put you off Australia for ever. And [Michael Gelb](#) with practical hints and tips on innovation using Edison as the natural backdrop.

What have you been reading?

You know that huge list of books they've given you to read on the MBA programme? Switch out one of the marketing suggestions for [Syrup](#). This is sharp and funny; it opens thus:

I want to be famous. Really famous.

I want to be so famous that movie stars hang out with me and talk about what a bummer their lives are...

I want it all. I want the American dream.

And how's he going to do it? A new black-can cola called Fukk. No, really. Plus along the way you'll get little gems of marketing case studies. Yes kick back, relax and enjoy the book and realise your marketing skills are being sharpened all the time.

And a **George Pelecanos**: [Drama City](#). Fantastic language: a real insider's view of the ghetto:

Lorenzo no longer did push-ups. They reminded him unpleasantly of the five hundred push-ups he had done for eight years every day in his cell.

But I would suggest you don't bother about **Thomas Perry** and **Silence**. What went wrong? I don't know. [Butcher Boy](#) was pacy, well-constructed and clear characters. Not so with this one. I'll be interested to read a review [here](#), eventually.

What are you reading?

Two great books. Firstly (non-fiction) [The Plenitude](#) by Rich Gold. This is an eccentric little book on creativity and related matters. Here are a couple of short excerpts:

"Rich Gold" came into being in Buffalo, New York, in 1963 when 13 year old Richard Goldstein, deciding to become a writer, clipped a few letters off the ends of his name to give it more zip. (not wanting to waste the left-over letters, he created an anagrammatic alter ego, Ned Sarti, who later published numerous works of pulp fiction.)"

"But here is the unexpected thing. People like products that come from vision"

The second (fiction) from George Pelecanos. Any that I have read so far have been great classic detective novels. What are you reading?



What are you reading?

Just finished Brazen Careerist by Penelope Trunk. Should you get a copy? Yes, if you are early in your career. Here are a few pointers from the book:

12. Tell a few stories.

Great point: make your experiences and skills more real by telling more stories at an interview

24. The difference between fear and excitement is breathing.

37. A long list of ways to dodge long hours.

Such as quality>quantity. Get a mentor. Know your boss's goals. Be brave.

39. You only need \$40,000 a year to be happy.

"the problem with money is that no matter how much we have, we think we need more"

The book contains 45 well-worth-considering points

What are you reading?

Just finished Vince Poscente's book The Age of Speed. Should you get it? Probably not. It's high on anecdotes, but low on solutions. So, to gain you a little time here are some snippets you may enjoy. To order, go here.

Poscente became hooked on speed when a Singapore fortune-teller told him he would be dead by age 40.

"Research suggests that allowing frequent e-mail interrupts causes a drop in performance equivalent to losing 10 IQ points; 2.5 times the drop seen after smoking pot"

Chase Bank reduced ATM cash withdrawal speed from 42s to 24s; it was a successful differentiator for them.

If you want to be faster you actually need to become more open to ideas and opportunities.

What are you reading?

I have mentioned **Eric Maisel** a few times on this blog and the more I read him, the more I believe he is one of the best writers and contributors to helping us with our personal creativity. One book of his is Ten Zen Seconds. This contains twelve incantations for purpose, power and calm. What on Earth does that mean, you ask? Let Eric explain:

"The basis of Ten Zen Seconds is using a single deep breath as a container for a specific thought. I am adapting a word from the world of magic-incantation-to describe these breathe-and-thought bundles. An incantation is a ritual recitation of a verbal charm meant to produce a magical effect"

Sound interesting? It is. If you are serious about your creativity, you may want to explore it a little more.



What are you reading?

If you are a Bob Dylan fan you may well enjoy [Like a Rolling Stone](#) by Greil Marcus; this is an in-depth study of Dylan's creation of one of his most important works. I know: I did say if you were a fan.

Chapter 1

Everyone remembers where they were when Kennedy was shot. I wonder how many people remember where they were when they first heard Bob Dylan's voice. It's so *unexpected*...

What are you reading?

What would your library-of books, that is-say about you? And don't say you haven't started one yet. [This](#) will inspire you.

What are you reading?

I've been travelling extensively and not all has gone smoothly; apologies in particular to those who have missed their daily dose of **Personal Reinvention!** Normal service is being resumed! All delays though give you a fantastic opportunity to catch up on reading and I finally read Seth Godin's new book. The following fact would probably surprise him: because it was so short I kept NOT reading it, knowing that it was one book I could always rely on if I had a bit of time while delayed at airports. Seth probably designed it so that its shortness meant it would immediately be read. The customer remains perverse at all times!

And the book ('The Dip', by the way)? Yes, do read it. And here are the essentials:

1. QUIT the wrong stuff.
2. STICK with the right stuff.
3. HAVE GUTS to do one or the other.

The crunch part of course is what is the wrong stuff and what is the right stuff? I'm not sure Seth Godin entirely answers that tough question, but then I'm not sure any of us can. What is important is that **the mindset which gets us sticking is different to the one which gets us quitting**; the ability to switch mindset and know when one more phone call is needed or 'enough is enough' is the true essential skill to develop. In summary I'd say the essence of success is less stickability and more switchability.

What are you reading?

Here's a book to pick up at the airport: **Work Like You're Showing Off** by Joe Calloway (US)(UK).

There are plenty of personal development books out there; this one is worth reading for two good reasons: firstly it will remind you of all of the basics which are so easily forgotten and secondly the book is written with such PASSION, it really gets you working on the ideas. Here are some thoughts from the book you may like:

"You only live once, but if you work it right, once is enough"

"If you don't have what you want, it's probably because you haven't yet let go of something that is in your way"



“Amateurs work until they get it right. Professionals work until they can’t get it wrong”

“To be extraordinary at what you do and do it with understated clarity is, to me, the ultimate in showing off”

On the other hand, don’t read this: **Career Distinction** by Arruda and Dixson. I had high hopes; it’s on an important topic: personal branding. But it’s dull, dull, dull. Read the original on this topic by [Tom Peters: Brand You](#).

What are you reading?

McQueen by Christopher Sandford. Not only an insight into the mind of the ‘King of Cool’ but some great ‘low-down’ on classic films such as *The Great Escape* and *Bullitt*.

What are you reading?

More from Stephen King (see yesterday) on writing and Life:

On becoming a writer

“If you want to be a writer, you must do two things above all others: read a lot and write a lot. There’s no way around these two things that I’m aware of, no shortcut”

On handling rejection

“When I got the rejection slip...I pounded a nail into the wall... and stuck the slip on the nail. Then I sat on my bed and listened to Fats sing I’m ready”

On putting in the time

“During my final weeks at Lisbon High, my schedule looked like this:

up at 0700

off to school at 0730

last bell at 2pm

punch in at work at 2.58

bag loose fabric for 8 hours

get home around 1145 pm

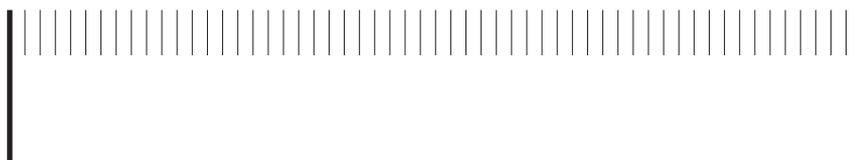
eat bowl of cereal

fall into bed

wake up: do it all again”

What are you reading?

It’s not a new book and I’m really glad I came across it: [On Writing](#) by Stephen King. Yes, that Stephen King. I’ll admit his chosen genre is probably the one I never read, but this book-part autobiography and part guide-book to writing-is excellent.



Here are some snippets:

On writing a book.

“I remember an immense feeling of possibility at the idea as if I had been ushered into a vast building filled with closed doors and had been given leave to open any I liked. There were more doors than one person could open in a life-time, I thought (and still think).”

On influence and getting down to work

“But TV came relatively late to the King household and I’m glad. I am, when you stop to think of it, a member of a fairly select group: the final handful of American novelists who learned to read and write before they learned to eat a daily helping of video bullshit. This might not be important. On the other hand, if you just started out as a writer you could do worse than strip your television’s electric plug-wire, wrap a spike around it, and then stick it back into the wall. See what blows and how far. Just an idea.”

On ideas

“Your job isn’t to find these ideas but to recognise them when they show up.”

Few more snippets tomorrow, while you are waiting for your personal copy to arrive.

What are you reading?

I know many of you love checking out the reading lists of other people: here’s a great [one](#). Scan the comments, too for extra ideas.

Remember:

1. Always have a book on the go.
2. Always have an audio-book CD or podcast in the car to listen to during part of work journeys.

What are you reading?

[Peter James](#) and [Michael Connelly](#) both have new thrillers out with their main heroes: Roy Grace and Harry Bosch respectively. Peter James gets better; this is his third Roy Grace novel. Michael Connelly is perhaps not on absolute top form (this is an extended short story), but, hey, fans are just delighted to see that Bosch is back.

What are you reading?

“We have everything we need to be happy, but we aren’t happy. Something’s missing. I looked around. The only thing I positively knew was gone was the books I’d burned in ten or twelve years. So I thought books might help.”

[Fahrenheit 451](#), Ray Bradbury

Read more. Read more widely. And read [Fahrenheit 451](#) if you haven’t read it: take it on your holiday
What are you reading?



What are you reading?

Here's a good and straight-forward read: Bit Literacy by Mark Hurst (UK/US). It's time-management but absolutely locked into the world in which we all now live: e-mail centric. This is refereshingly different to most time management books which still suggest a world from the 1950s and then add a chapter 'dealing with e-mail'. Mark also has his own mini task-management system which is available at Gootodo.com.

What are you reading?

Regular readers of this blog will know that I am enjoying a newly discovered author: Don Winslow. I've just finished California Fire and Life. Great read. Here's an aside for you which won't spoil the plot:

"Jack hasn't been inside a clothing store in about twelve years.

He owns three ties, five Lands 'End white button-down shirts, two pairs of Lands' End khaki trousers, two Lands' End guaranteed-not-to wrinkle-even-if-you-run-it- through-your-car- engine blue blazers (a rotation deal: one in the dry cleaners, one on his back) and one pair of Lands' End moccasins. Sunday night he does laundry

Washes the five shirts and two pairs of trousers and hangs them out to unwrinkle. Pre-knots the three ties and he's ready for the work week, which means that he's in the water a little before dawn, surfs until 0630, showers at the beach, changes into his work clothes, loops the tie around his neck, gets into the car, puts in a tape and races to the office."

Hey: are you that efficient?

What are you reading?

Great thriller by exciting new author. If you are of a nervous disposition best not read late at night... [Sharp Objects](#) by Gillian Flynn. I look forward to her next novel.

Thursday, November 29, 2007

What are you reading?

New good authors are always exciting. This is a thriller, but it is **so** well written. The atmosphere created and the characters are more important than the plot.

Peter Temple: [The Broken Shore](#), for a more reflective airport read



What are you Reading?

Four books collected on my recent travels: two to consider, two to avoid! Let's get those out of the way.

The Road He Travelled: the revealing biography of M. Scott Peck is a disappointment. Peck's first book- The Road Less Travelled- is of course a personal development classic. It's the one to read, the only one you really need. It's serious, with depth. It's a great book. I remember it was tremendously helpful with my thinking and own personal growth. But this biography only scratches, telling us mostly what we have picked as we continued to read Scott's later work: that he had major flaws, great weaknesses and didn't walk his talk. No, this subject deserves better.

Clear Blogging equally needs to be more than it currently is. My own view is that there are three needs in this area at the moment: (1) The mechanics of blogging i.e. how do you do it (2) How to write & create material and (3) Trends and directions for blogging. No book should attempt (3); it will be immediately out of dates, as is shown in this book. (2) is best met by the mainstream 'how to write' books plus some additional tips on keep it short etc. And to my mind (1) is still best met by Blogging for Dummies; a great little book.

On to two definitely to read. On the lighter side, Ian Rankin is in great form in Blood Hunt. This is NOT Inspector Rebus and all the better for that. And then there is My Job went to India. Get it if you are a techie. Buy it for anyone in your team who is a techie. Good, balanced and makes the point.

What are you reading?

Especially if you are on the technical side, I think you will enjoy this book. Don't be put off by the title: it's not just cliches on out-sourcing. Matt does a nice summary here if you are un-sure. See his Sunday entry.

What are you reading?

I know many of you really enjoy the 100 word stories. If so you might appreciate dailylit.com: a way of reading the classics but in bite-sized chunks.

What are you reading?

Two great books. Firstly Mismatch; why our world no longer fits our bodies. No surprise on the basic premise of course, but plenty of depth on where it's leading us and some possible strategies for getting out of the mess. Intelligently written: no hyperbole and plenty of good research data. Very readable.

And if you are interested in modern history you will love The Cold War. Brilliantly written. More thriller than history text.

Read more. Always have a book on the go.



What are you Reading?

While Paul Simon continues to produce great music-his latest concert (Live@WXPN) is now available for download-Art Garfunkel has been reading. Check this out for a [serious reading list](#).

What are you Reading?

Whilst travelling last week I picked up four great books. I've given their amazon.com references as not all are out here in the UK yet.

I know a lot of people who were helped by Julia Cameron's early books, me included. Her latest-[Finding Water](#)-is as good as ever if you are looking for a structured, in-depth way to improve your creativity and remove blockers.

More fun is [The Intellectual Devotional](#). Essentially, read a page a day and develop your brain. Monday is History, Tuesday is Literature, Wednesday the Arts, Thursday Science, Friday Music, Saturday Philosophy and Sunday Religion. It's good.

Then [Change or Die](#) tackles that ever tricky issue: we know we need to change, we want to change. But we don't. Much more primary research than usual. Very helpful.

And [Hard Optimism](#) is about positive thinking, but for those with a cynical bent and wanting a bit more hard evidence and some reasons for bothering to work at it. Nicely designed and layed out, too.

Read more!

What are you Reading?

If you are a fan of satire, good writing and sheer cleverness then you will enjoy Craig Brown's [The Tony Years](#). Not only is this a great read and immensely funny at times it is also a great way to see NLP in action if you are following this week's tutorial: notice how Craig Brown uses generalisations/deletions and distortions to create very realistic political speeches...

A very different book is [Boyd](#) by Robert Coram. If you are interesetd in pragmatic leadership in turbulent times read it. With tips along the way for presentations, overcoming blockers and sheer drive and energy.

Always have a book on the go.



What are you Reading?

I enjoyed [Fast Company's Greatest Hits](#): a fascinating collection of some pivotal ideas from a collection of thought leaders. Many-such as Tom Peters: The Brand Called You-have caused a fundamental shift in the way we think. With others-such as Wide Awake on the Night Shift-it is frightening to think they were ever given any credibility.

Jim Collins-of Good to Great fame of course, does a balanced, thoughtful introduction and expresses five main premises which I would like to repeat here (bold=his words; italic=my comments):

Premise 1: Work is not a means to an end; it is an end in itself.

Absolutely. If you are not doing work you care about, you will find it non-sustainable. But do remember, not only can you look for work about which you are passionate, you can create work about which you are passionate and you can look for the intrinsic worth in any task.

Premise 2: If your competition scorecard is money, you will always lose.

I will leave this one to Jim Collins: there are two ways to be wealthy. One is to have a huge amount of money. The other is to have simple needs. What is your answer to 'How much is enough?'

Premise 3: Business is a mechanism for social change: for good and ill.

Increasingly we will see the desire from ordinary workers in ordinary organisations to make that social change a positive one-whether it is reducing poverty, or making environmental changes. This is very good news for the New Year.

Premise 4: Entrepreneurship is a life concept, not just a business concept.

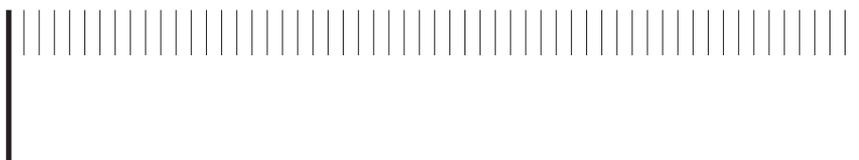
I teach on several MBA programmes. This idea is fundamental to much of my teaching: we are intended to be entrepreneurs. Create something. And you can create that within an organisation, too.

Premise 5: Performance is the fundamental requirement.

Ultimately no re-positioning or other 'weasel talk' will hide the fact we must deliver.

Which brings me to a little manifesto from [Execupundit.com](#) entitled 'Nobody Cares'. Read it in full on his site (find it in previous posts). Here are some excellent thoughts from him:

1. Unless you are working in a coal mine, an emergency ward, or their equivalent, spare us the sad stories about your tough job. The biggest risk most of us face in the course of a day is a paper cut.
4. Although your job title may be the same, the job that you were hired to do three years ago is probably not the job you have now. When you are just coasting and not thinking several steps ahead of your responsibilities you are in Dinosaur territory and a meteor is coming.
10. If you plan on showing them what you are capable of only after you get promoted, you need to reverse your thinking



What are you Reading?

Most of us would like to be more creative. It feels good to be creative; it is very satisfying and probably inherently human to be so: but HOW to be so? So many of the classic books on creativity are not really that creative: they fail to get to the heart of the matter. So it is refreshing to come across Out of Our Minds by Sir Ken Robinson.

The book is full of insight. Here is just one, which should appropriately frighten many CEOs!

It's not a personal process. Creativity flourishes in a place where original thinking and innovation are encouraged and stimulated. If ideas are not encouraged, or when encouraged they are ignored, the creative impulse does one of two things. It goes out, or it goes maverick. It deserts the organisation or it subverts it. Creativity can work for you or against you.

Wise words.

What are you Reading?

John Maeda's book The Laws of Simplicity is a lovely book. Here are some points from the book which particularly struck me:

LAW 4: Learn. Knowledge makes everything simpler. It is good to have that so clearly articulated. And for me the process is an evolution from (1) simplistic (we don't really know what we don't know and we have assumptions and we judge) to (2) complex (we are finding it all a little over-whelming) to (3) simple we 'see the light'; we find the simplicity the far side of complexity.

LAW 10: The One. Simplicity is about subtracting the obvious, and adding the meaningful. What an elegant definition! But such a definition would work well for a celebratory meal (ensure you have the candles, but don't worry about which salt and pepper pots), for a lecture (what is the very essence of the matter which will help the students?, rather than 'wizzy' powerpoint slides) or your career (what is your passion?, rather than the status of your grade).

And finally a quote from John Maeda:

“technology and Life only become complex if you let it be so”

John Maeda also has an elegant site to be found at: The Laws of Simplicity.



What are you Reading?

Do read The Speed of Trust by Stephen M R Covey (son of 7 Habits, Stephen R Covey). I loved the original 7 Habits, but had been ignoring recent 'add-ons', especially the very disappointing '8th Habit'. But quality thinking and writing is back with this book. As always the Covey approach is to drill down with immense detail. In the original 7 Habits this worked because of the nice balance of stories, and Stephen M R has managed a return to that style. Definitely worth reading. All business is essentially about trust.

But avoid The New Solution Selling. Selling does not, simply not, need to be this complicated. Less hyped and more 'ordinary', but much more practical is Robin Fielder's book.

Always be reading.

What are you reading?

Not this book, I hope.

Many books are hyped. All authors have their weaker books. But Everything you Need to Feel Good by Candace Pert is dreadful.

Her last book, Molecules of Emotion was excellent and she has been a pioneer in encouraging us to realise that mind and body and spirit simply cannot be separated. The blurb for her latest promises so much, but simply fails to deliver. It is a very personal journal which should never have been published.

I believe Tom Peters once said: '*you are only as good as your last gig*'.

What are you reading?

Radical Careering by Sally Hogshead is attractively produced and snappily written. **Here are some thoughts from Sally** you might like:

Quality of Work. Quality of Life. Quality of Compensation. *Pick one.*

Forget what your business card says, *you are an entrepreneur.*

Luck may or may not be on your side, but action is 100% within your control.

Being in a crap job isn't your fault. *Staying in a crap job is.*

Portable equity is the only form of job security today.

Money follows great work, not the other way around.

Don't focus on the job to the detriment of your career.

Build don't maintain.

Figure out what is stoppng you, *then deal with it.*

She has a good web-site also.

What's your take-away? What's your action?



What are you reading?

I enjoyed [TRIBAL KNOWLEDGE](#): business wisdom brewed from the grounds of Starbucks corporate culture. This has been an amazingly successful organisation: what can we learn? Here are some great points from the book: **Make things which are common, uncommon again.** *E.g common coffee? No longer: with Starbucks it's special again.*

Don't do OR, do AND. *Not good quality or poor value. What about good quality and great value?*

Tell the real story: don't make up one-they won't believe it. Do you believe the KFC story? Thought not.

There are only three strategies to drive sales: (1) get new customers to buy (2) get current customers to buy more (3) raise prices.

Remarkable things get remarked about. That's real word of mouth.

The Starbucks internal mantra: be nice and be clean.

Hi touch is more important than hi tech.

Don't 'leave home': don't lose sight of your core strengths.

What are you reading?

I did enjoy Gladstone's [The Tipping Point](#). One of those great business books where the message is in the title. I was disappointed though with [Blink!](#) And a lovely antidote has been written by Michael LeGault: [Think!](#) If you haven't read either of them, perhaps you could read [Think!](#) and [Blink!](#) side-by-side.

Lucy Kellaway's article in The FT is so often disappointingly negative. Her apparent natural cynicism is turned to good use though in the extremely funny [Who Moved My BlackBerry?](#)

And have you watched [Martin Scorsese's Bob Dylan: No Direction Home?](#) Watch it. Learn how to be self-referenced and regularly re-invent.

What are you reading?

Here's a book which I know will be useful to that interesting group who have too many passions to pick just one. One of the challenges when you get serious about thinking about your career and for that matter the broader reaches of your personal life, many of us do find we have more than one passion. But so many courses and books assume just one. Hence [The Renaissance Soul](#) by Margaret Lobenstine. Plenty of re-assuring and sensible advice for those who have so many passions...

If you enjoy books about culture/Apple and have a fascination with the [iPOD](#) then Steven Levy's [The Perfect Thing](#) is a great read.

And budding **bloggers** out there who are wondering where to start? As always the [Dummies](#) series is brilliant.

Remember the goal with reading is not that you have to read it all in a week, but that you **are** reading.



What are you reading?

If you cook, I'm sure you are a fan of Nigel Slater. Having now lived with his [The Kitchen Diaries](#) for almost a year: they are fantastic. He is one of the best writers as well as consistently keeping his recipes essential and simple.

Charles Handy is one of those rare UK thought leaders. I've been disappointed with his recent books: they seem to have been publisher-driven re-packaging of earlier works. [The New Philanthropists](#) though is just what is needed. Momentum is at last gathering in this important area. [In my own area](#) when I am discussing Personal Compass I find an increasing desire to debate Compass Point 6: contribution. Watch this space: this is going to be important.

I'm speaking at a conference in January 2007 and will be alongside the authors of [Funky Business](#) a once cult business book. I tracked down my old copy and re-read my marked-up pages. It's still surprisingly relevant: the sign of a good book.

So, some great texts to add to your reading. And if you thought you weren't a cook, I promise that Nigel will get you inspired. By the way, **great hair-cuts those (funky business) guys from Sweden have got.**

What are you reading?

It has been said ([Edward De Bono](#), I believe, amongst others) that **a sign of intelligence is the ability to hold two opposing ideas in your head at the same time.** So: a chance to tease and stretch your intelligence with two excellent books. Those who attend my seminars will know that for those who are serious about reducing stress and improving work-life balance I often recommend the work of Deepak Chopra. Chopra is a prolific author in the field of mind-body medicine, spirituality and world peace. If you wish to try his work you should certainly read [Perfect Health](#) and [The Seven Spiritual Laws of Success](#). His latest book is [Power, Freedom and Grace](#) and is a wide-ranging book which will really enable you to clarify your thinking on such fundamental topics as who am I? and what do I want? Read it!

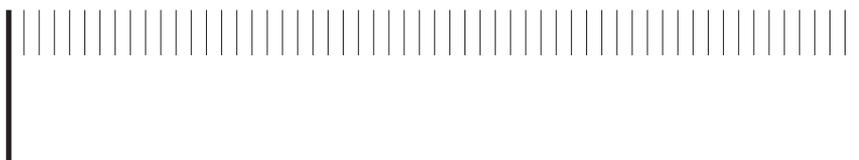
Then there is Richard Dawkins. Another clear thinker who rose to prominence with the stunning [The Selfish Gene](#). Dawkins more recently has become a passionate writer and speaker on the question of God. In particular, why do we believe in him? Expand your brain and read [The Selfish Gene](#) and then his latest: [The God Delusion](#)

And then I strongly encourage you to discuss both books at your next Learning Group session.

What are you reading?

Two great books for you to read: [The Long Tail](#) by Chris Anderson. Not only is the book excellent on introducing and expounding an important idea-that much of what could never be viably sold in the Old World of Work because sales were too low is now very much a commercial opportunity with the internet as a channel-but also because the book was created via his blog. [Which](#) I also encourage you to visit. And the other? -aah the fantastic [Michael Connelly](#) whose latest Harry Bosch novel, [Echo Park](#), is as excellent as ever. And if you haven't yet discovered Connelly your problems for several long flights to come are solved.

By the way, Seth Godins's latest, [Small is the New Big](#), is entirely Riffs and Rants from his blog.



What are you reading?

What are you reading at the moment? Here are three suggestions. [The Medici Effect](#) by Frans Johansson: for most of us the quest to be more creative is a continuous one. Much of the current work is very similar, but this book contains a fresh perspective: look for ideas, insights at the intersections of markets/fields/times. [Something Beginning With](#) by [Sarah Salway](#). A lovely, charming book. Probably more for the girls. But not a girlie book. Look out for Sarah's new book. And either of Paul Arden's books. Personal development as it should be: inspiring and to the point. Keep reading: it inspires, it creates, it allow you to reflect. Always have a book on the go. Perhaps one fiction, one non-fiction. Build your wisdom. Build your **personal brand**.

