



**Tom Ramage recommends**  
**The Singularity Is Near: When Humans Transcend Biology**

I have read both of Ray Kurzweil's books — *The Age of the Spiritual Machine* and this one. I am fascinated by the science behind predictions resulting from accelerating progress in the exploration of computer science/artificial intelligence, genetics, nanotechnology, and robotics.

The "singularity" (a reference to the theoretical limitlessness of expansion) is an event that is expected to occur because of accelerating trends in terms of miniaturization and computational power. Eventually, smallness and speed reach a point of development with implications that are astounding. Whether you buy into the theory or not, **it is an interesting glimpse into a potential future that may not be too far away.**

Tom Ramage  
President  
Parkland College

---



**Wade Hampton recommends**  
**The Four Obsessions of an Extraordinary Executive**

The book I would recommend is *The Four Obsessions of an Extraordinary Executive* written by Patrick Lencioni. I found it to be quite applicable to my role as the CEO of the YMCA. The book **focuses on four clear disciplines needed to run an organization at peak performance.** The writer wraps the story around the competition of two CEOs and what drives one to success and the other to envy.

Wade Hampton  
Resource Director, YMCA of the USA National Office  
Former CEO, Champaign County YMCA

---



**Shirley Faughn recommends**  
**What Got You Here Won't Get You There**

As an executive coach and management consultant I was intrigued to read this book by Marshall Goldsmith, arguably one of the most respected executive coaches in the world. Insightful and thought provoking, it addresses twenty fundamental behaviors that hold successful leaders back. It also offers practical solutions that can be implemented immediately. For example, the idea of writing thank you notes to all those in your life, past and present, who



### Armondo de Marcos recommends **Rich Dad, Poor Dad**

I began reading this book for several reasons. The most important one involves two lovely girls to whom I am step-dad. When it was time to start giving them an allowance, I wanted to be able to give them a good head start on being responsible with their money. That was several years ago and although it was a challenge then, they thank me for it now. **Every parent/guardian who gives their children money should read this book and have them read it when they are old enough.**

Armondo de Marcos  
President/CEO  
Champaign County Black Chamber of Commerce

---



### Judy Fraser recommends **The Legend of Bagger Vance**

"If someone asked me what my hobby is or what I like to do in my 'downtime,' my answer would always be...reading. My appetite for books is voracious — and my palate is varied, from fiction to nonfiction, professional, motivational, self-improvement...I love it all. But, I felt I needed to expand 'my horizon' so I took up the sport of golf, originally because of my husband's love for it. I found it to be challenging, perplexing, and frustrating but always with a hint of pleasure in achievement.

A friend of mine lent me a book that she said I had to read, *The Legend of Bagger Vance*, by Steven Pressfield. What **an impressive book, certainly about the intricacies of golf, but in many respects...life.** According to the legendary Bagger Vance, 'We all have an authentic swing (or self) that is ours alone. In golf as in life we chip away at what is inauthentic allowing our pure swing (or self) to be revealed.' The search for this authentic swing parallels the search for who we really are, how we view life, how we react and interact...what we become. 'Discipline, wisdom, and love are the ingredients or the path that leads to success in golf and life.'

I found so many parallels and really learned more about myself than I did of golf. I don't know if I have the perseverance or the ability to overcome the despair of golf, but I do know I will always try to pursue my best 'self.'"

Judy Fraser  
Weather Forecaster  
WCIA 3

---



### Tracy Parsons recommends *Sacred Hoops*

Right now I am in the process of reading two books, *The Audacity of Hope* by Barack Obama and *Transformation Soup* by Sark. Both of these books are terrific at encouraging you to do self-evaluation. The types of books I like to read are those that are motivational for personal reflection and growth.

The business book I would like to suggest is *Sacred Hoops* by professional basketball coach Phil Jackson. In my work at the Urban League of Champaign County, leadership and the ability to lead others is critical to my success. I lead and manage over 50 employees but also have the challenge of working to uplift our constituents as well as provide leadership toward our communities' recognition that all of our citizens must be full participants in our social and economic opportunities. *Sacred Hoops* is an excellent book that chronicles Coach Jackson's approach to team and leadership building. Jackson's message is that **each individual has a specific role and responsibility in building the concept of one or the team. He states that by learning the strengths and talents of each person you build from there for success.** I try to follow this model in my management of staff and role in the community.

Tracy Parsons

---



### Steve Carter recommends *Why Some Companies Emerge Stronger and Better from a Crisis*

While working on the City of Champaign emergency plan, I wondered how the private sector was responding to crises. My search quickly led me to Ian Mitroff, the leading expert on crisis management in the private sector, and his new book. He argues that **corporate America is basically unprepared for the wide variety of crises which seem to be occurring with increasing frequency.** But, you do not have to be a victim of a Katrina-level disaster to benefit from his seven essential lessons for surviving a disaster. This book is aimed at helping leaders of any organization prepare themselves and their organizations to successfully survive a crisis, large or small. Don't assume it won't happen to you! Are you ready?

Steve Carter  
City Manager  
City of Champaign

---

the first non-musical record ever to sell over 1,000,000 copies. If I had to rank **the two most powerful books I have ever read**, the order would be as follows: 1. *The Bible*; 2. *The Strangest Secret*.

John W. Wright  
Managing Partner  
Wright Financial Group, Inc.  
Northwestern Mutual Financial Network  
[www.simpletruths.com/johnwright](http://www.simpletruths.com/johnwright)

[Champaign Public Library: Home](#) | [Jobs](#) | [Site Map](#) | [E-mail News Signup](#)

LAST UPDATED:  
4/29/2010

*Website Maintained by SUMO Webworks LSTA Funding*