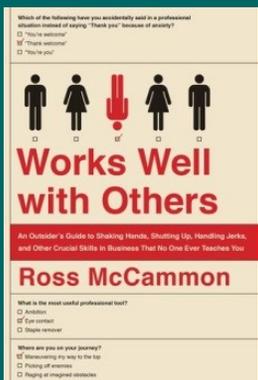
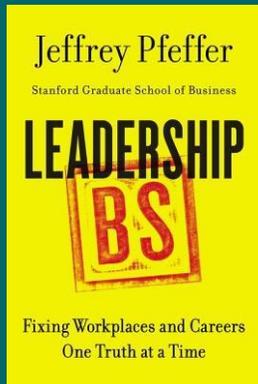
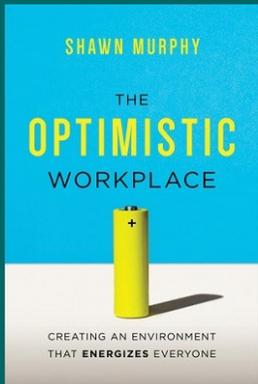


### Recent Books



## Workplace Book Clubs and Discussion Groups

### The State Library has Resources to Help Encourage Employee Engagement

Looking for a unique way to encourage employee engagement? Consider a book discussion group! Why should employees come together to discuss a book? Workplace book clubs or discussion groups impart important ideas that can apply to the office, careers and personal life. Books inspire us to consider what's possible, and encourage brainstorming ideas to bring to the table. Sharing ideas builds rapport and allows employees to understand one another on a deeper level. This gained knowledge strengthens teamwork and productivity.

*Burton M. Goldfield, CEO of TriNet, states: "If you don't understand what colleagues in other departments do, you may start to devalue their worth, which is when you start to build walls. It takes a major change of pace, like a book club, to break down those walls."<sup>1</sup>*

Staring at a computer screen all day can make anyone fatigued. Employees perform better when they break up their daily tasks and routines. A book club or discussion group provides a break from the physical and mental strain of the daily grind. Employees return to their tasks at hand feeling refreshed and energized, which would make anyone more productive.<sup>2</sup>

Ideas for what to read can come from professional organizations or journals related to your field. Employees do not need to read a whole book at one time to discuss. Just choose a chapter a week, or focus on a relevant journal article for everyone to read and discuss.

Dwanna S. Bagner has this to say about the book club at the Department of Commerce: "The Book Club at Commerce is a new and exciting initiative that was developed this year to engage and educate employees on different perspectives of leadership and personal and professional development. While we have only read two (2) books thus far, my experience has been positive. Not

only have we built a new relationship with the State Library of Ohio, but we have been provided an opportunity to interact with other employees within the Agency who bring new and diverse views to the group. While I didn't think that I would have the time to add one more item to my daily to-dos, I found that putting aside a little time each day to read a book that I would not normally read on my own, has been refreshing! Overall, I believe that the employees who have participated in the book discussions enjoyed the experience of using their lunch breaks for something productive and have in turn shared information with those in their work sections which will hopefully expand our numbers in the future."

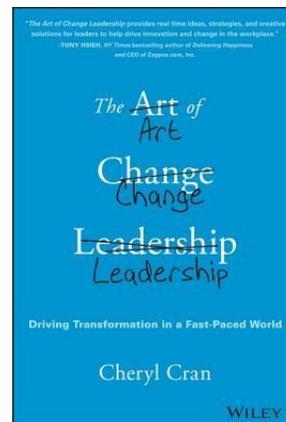
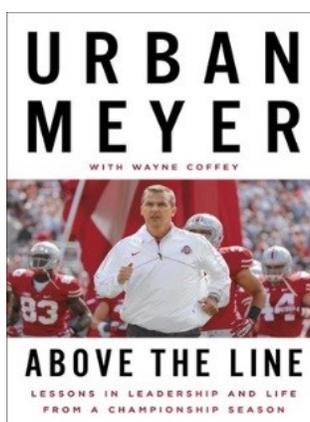
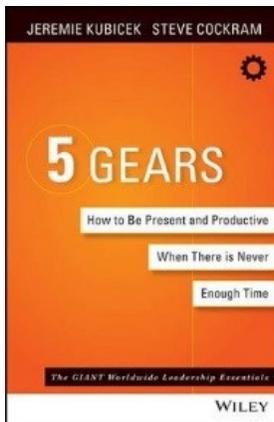
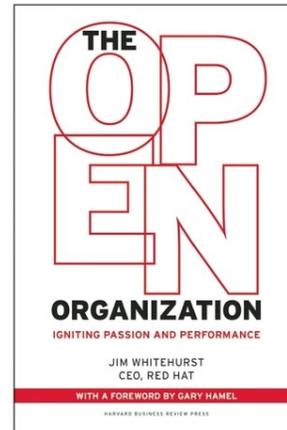
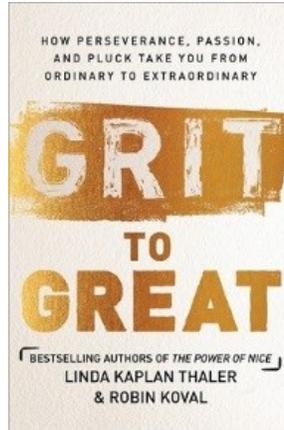
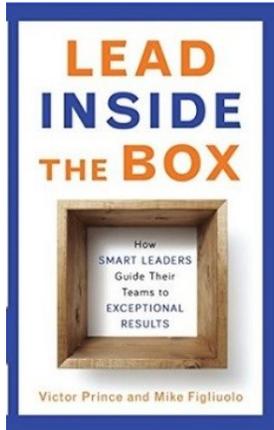
Discussion groups can be a positive way to integrate new employees into the team. We take or granted the difficulty of joining a new work team when many staffers have been with an agency for a number of years.

Alex Rider commented: "As a new employee with the Department of Commerce, I was searching for a productive way to meet and engage with co-workers in the Department. The opportunity of joining the Commerce Book Club provided a platform for thoughtful conversations on diverse relevant topics and a unique networking experience among the participating employees. It is refreshing to share opinions with my peers, and learn new ideas from writers such as Malcolm Gladwell, author of our second suggested title, *Outliers: The Story of Success*. I am looking forward to our next discussion."

If you would like to learn more about forming your own discussion group in your department or agency or would like suggestions for content for a book club, please contact Judith Cosgray, State Government Outreach Consultant at [jcosgray@library.ohio.gov](mailto:jcosgray@library.ohio.gov) or 614-995-9359

<sup>1</sup><http://www.payscale.com/career-news/2014/07/5-reasons-to-start-a-book-club-at-work>

<sup>2</sup><http://www.brazen.com/blog/archive/on-the-job/does-your-workplace-have-a-book-club/>



## Ask a Librarian

**Question:** I need the vote count on an old ballot measure. Where can I find that information?

**Answer:** Ballotpedia.org is the online encyclopedia of American politics and elections. Ballotpedia's goal is to inform people about politics by providing accurate and objective information about politics at all levels of government. Ballotpedia's articles are written by their professional staff and a small group of guest editors. All content written by guest editors is reviewed and fact-checked by Ballotpedia's staff.

Ballotpedia covers local, state and federal politics. The content includes information on government officials and the offices they hold, political issues and public policy, elections, candidates, and the influencers of politics. All Ballotpedia content must be neutral, accurate, and verifiable. Ballotpedia currently has over 210,000 encyclopedic articles.

Info obtained from  
<http://ballotpedia.org/Ballotpedia:About>

**A Smarter Ohio**

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