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## Recommended reading

*There are plenty of bad leadership books out there, and David A. Davis ran across many of them in his quest for wisdom about leadership. He offers a list of books worth reading on the topic.*

by [David A. Davis](#)

October 12, 2010

David A. Davis, senior pastor of Nassau Presbyterian Church in Princeton, N.J., spent a sabbatical studying leadership. He found that while much of the books available are “unhelpful schlock,” there were also lessons to be gleaned from the exercise. Here’s his recommended reading list:

[Primal Leadership: Learning to Lead with Emotional Intelligence](#) by Daniel Goleman, Richard E. Boyatzis and Annie McKee -- A solid introduction to the growing literature about emotional intelligence. The vocabulary and categories are easily adaptable when reflecting on pastoral ministry.

[Leadership Can Be Taught: A Bold Approach for a Complex World](#) by Sharon Daloz Parks -- The author explores the teaching of leadership expert Ronald Heifetz. A glimpse into the questions, methods and themes that arise in one educator’s classroom.

[Why CEOs Fail: The 11 Behaviors That Can Derail your Climb to the Top -- and How to Manage Them](#) by David L. Dotlich and Peter C. Cairo -- A fascinating discussion based on the assumption that one can learn from failure. The list of derailments is relevant to case after case of failed pastoral relationships.

[Leading Change: The Argument for Values-Based Leadership](#) by James O’Toole -- O’Toole’s guiding image for leading from within the community is a painting by James Ensor called “Christ’s Entry into Brussels.” The painting itself is worth contemplating.

[Community: The Structure of Belonging](#) by Peter Block -- A

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David A. Davis decides to spend his sabbatical learning about leadership

and offers lessons from that immersion in a different world.

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popular read these days for leaders concerned about shaping communities.

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