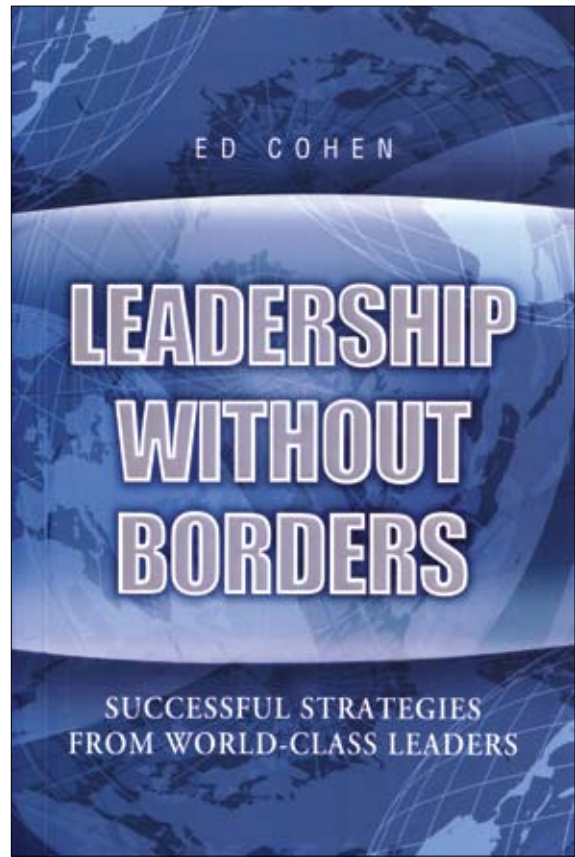


## SURVIVING THE CULTURE SHOCK

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 Leadership Without Borders: Successful  
 Strategies From World-Class Leaders  
 .....

By Ed Cohen  
 (Wiley, 283 pp. \$24.95 paperback)

Reviewed by Rex Davenport



As an editor and a writer, I have had the opportunity to work with Ed Cohen on several articles. I always learned something new as a result of that process. Likewise, I have spoken to him at conferences. **Cohen always seems above the buzz and ahead of the curve.**

So, in the early pages of his book, *Leadership Without Borders*, I was just a bit surprised to see him write, “The leadership techniques I had used successfully in my home country weren’t working for me in this new part of the world.”

Cohen, formerly the strategic leader for Booz Allen Hamilton’s corporate university, was hired to lead Satyam’s School of Leadership. The consulting

and information technology services company has 35,000 associates around the globe and sales in excess of \$1 billion. Satyam was in the final stages of creating a 240,000-square-foot, cutting-edge learning facility in Hyderabad, India, when Cohen came on board.

“I had never lived overseas or worked for a non-American company,” Cohen writes, “and things weren’t working for me in this part of the world.” He

explains that while he struggled with his own learning curve, he realized that many others were in the same position.

Cohen set out on a learning path not only to find solutions for himself, but also for those who needed to build a solid professional foundation in a global business climate that has little room for error, and where time is a costly luxury. His efforts included a global survey of executives to identify challenges they face as leaders and the critical factors associated with leadership. (The survey was conducted jointly with ASTD.) Additionally, more than 50 leaders who have worked in more than 60 different countries were interviewed. Finally, Cohen says he sought “advice and counsel” from successful global leaders, which formed many of the insights in his book.

The structure of the book becomes compelling, almost like a novel in a few places, when the author intersperses moments from his life and career into the exposition. Cohen’s interviews with leaders from around the globe are distilled into short information boxes that present that executive’s “global leadership highlights.” He expands on that information from both historic and contemporary perspectives. A few of the names of the executives will be familiar to people in the workplace learning community, but many will be new to most readers. I can almost see Cohen writing a follow-up workbook that would use each executive’s “highlights” as an exercise or group discussion point.

Perhaps my favorite list of highlights comes from Umesh Kumar Dhoot, an executive with Indian Oil:

- Read the fine print of the culture.
- Involve locals in the decision-making process.
- Adopt a positive, resilient attitude.
- Be open to feedback.
- Develop strong communication skills.

While those concepts would seem to be standard operating procedure for most American executives, they mean something else outside of the United States. Understanding that distinction, as Cohen discovers, makes a world of difference.

I give *Leadership Without Borders* three and a half cups of coffee.

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**Rex Davenport** is the former editor of *T+D* and the current editor of *Learning Executives Briefing*; [rdavenport@astd.org](mailto:rdavenport@astd.org).

**The book becomes compelling, almost like a novel in a few places, when the author intersperses moments from his life and career.**



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## BOOKS //

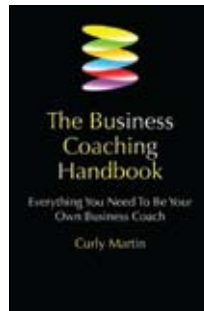
### Hot Off the Presses

**T+D EDITORS EXAMINE THREE MORE FRESH FALL TITLES.**

**The Business Coaching Handbook: Everything You Need to Be Your Own Business Coach**

By **Curly Martin**  
(Crown House, 227 pp., \$27.95)

*The Business Coaching Handbook* reveals what business coaching is, how to assess the shape of your business, and what steps you need to put in place to build it successfully. Encompassing a wide range of topics—from marketing and time management to outsourcing and succession planning—the book gives step-by-step instructions on how to improve your business.



This how-to manual is for entrepreneurs who have recently started their own businesses or who have been operating their companies for a few years and want to take them to the next level. Each chapter includes diagnostic questions that are designed to make readers think about their businesses and ways they can improve them. The chapters are sprinkled with exercises to help do that effectively.

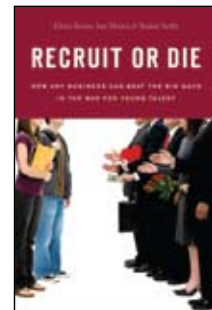
This book also includes new ideas and methodologies to help entrepreneurs overcome common business challenges.

*Paula Ketter*

**Recruit or Die: How Any Business Can Beat the Big Guys in the War for Young Talent**

By **Chris Resto, Ian Ybarra, and Ramit Sethi**  
(Penguin Group, 288 pp., \$24.95)

A decade ago, free pizza was all recruiters on college campuses needed to lure candidates. Now, college students—members of the much-touted Generation Y—are used to real competition for their attention. The millennials, after all, grew up with marketing pitches by Nintendo and Sega, McDonald's and Burger King, Nike and Reebok, and they expect future employers to dazzle them with equally glamorous marketing gimmicks.



While top recruiters such as Google, Microsoft, McKinsey, and Goldman Sachs benefit from well-known brands and gargantuan recruiting funds, even employers with shoestring budgets can attract the best and the brightest of the Facebook generation. Employers, the authors claim, can either take the “when I was your age” approach and dismiss Gen Y's outlandish expectations as delusions of entitlement, or they can appeal to these candidates' sky-high aspirations with examples of career development and on-the-job challenges.

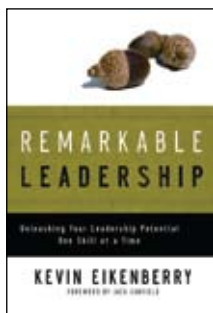
In an entertaining format, they present practical ways to understand the motivational psychology of young jobseekers, and suggest tactics to beat the competition in all stages of the competitive college recruiting process.

*Jenni Jarventaus*

Remarkable Leadership:  
Unleashing Your Leadership  
Potential One Skill at a Time

By Kevin Eikenberry  
(Jossey-Bass, 274 pp., \$27.95)

In the business world, there is no shortage of advice about the qualities of an effective leader. Similarly, the words "remarkable" and "leader" appear in some form in all but two of the book's 16 chapters. Despite that lack of subtlety, the author relates dozens of experiences of exemplary leadership he encountered. Plowing through his collection of anecdotes, readers learn that the best leaders take the extra step in myriad ways from meeting customers in person to including more people in the decision-making process.



Eikenberry uses some original phrasing to describe ongoing problems. For example, a bright new employee walks into a brainstorming session with several ideas only to be shot down with "cold water comments" such as "that won't work here."

Most organizations preach the value of succession planning, but their leaders often fail to delegate important tasks, withhold information, and take credit for the work of the team. Like other gurus, Eikenberry encourages leaders to be counterintuitive and act against conventional wisdom. Managers should consider selecting the underperformer for coaching instead of the rising star.

Michael Laff

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