

Reader Views

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Leading People the Black Belt Way: Conquering the Five Core Problems Facing Leaders Today

By Timothy H. Warneka

Asogomi Publishing Company (2006)

Reviewed by Joanne Benham for Reader Views (3/06)

What do King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table, Aikido and Charles Dickens' 'The Christmas Carol' have in common? Good question! According to author Timothy Warneka, they teach you true leadership qualities and he makes a compelling argument for this in his book, "Leading People the Black Belt Way."

It's hard to describe this book in a few paragraphs, so I'll try and give the highlights. Warneka starts his book with a 42 page introduction, laying out his ideas and thought processes as he was writing the book. The book is then divided into four sections, named for the various levels of achievement in Aikido, ranging from White Belt, where you are taught to plan your strategy through to Black Belt, where you go back and review everything you've learned and start over. In other words, to be an effective leader, you must constantly change, not allowing yourself to get molded into one set of behaviors, always willing to adapt to meet changing needs.

Each section is then divided into chapters, expanding on the central theme of that section. Interspersed throughout the book are quotes from people such as, Buddha, Nelson Mandela, Morihei Ueshiba (who developed Aikido) and physicist Stephen Hawking as well as excerpts from Zen and Taoist writings.

I have to tell you that this book took me a long time to read. Warneka has 29 pages of Bibliography and Endnotes in his book. I found myself checking the Bibliography about references made in the main book and then getting interested in *those* references and looking them up on the Internet. I also got caught up with the Asian Martial Arts stories which begin each chapter and kept sneaking ahead to read the next one.

Underlying everything is a sound business plan to help you achieve true leadership, laid out in a consistent, easy to read and follow blueprint. I thoroughly enjoyed reading this book.