

Title:

Management Gurus

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Summary:

This article is designed to introduce relatively unknown management gurus, and their ideas, to managers and professionals in all sectors, but is aimed particularly at providing reading suggestions for those who are studying management development courses or professional qualifications, by distance learning or in the classroom, in order to develop their careers.

Keywords:

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Article Body:

It highlights the sources of inspiration and guidance that are available from management and leadership gurus born in the East, who have individually and collectively made as great a contribution as the more well-known, more commercially promoted, American gurus. Many of the Western gurus have based their theories and models on the original ideas of the leading thinkers from India, China, Eastern Europe, and Central Asia. Also, as we shall see here, some of the so-called Western gurus were in fact from Central or Eastern Asia or the Pacific Basin. This article gives an insight into just a few of this influential group of original thinkers.

Mistakenly considered by many to be one of the American gurus, Ansoff was in fact born in Russia but moved to the USA with his family when he was 18. There he studied and later obtained a PhD in Mathematics, worked for the Rand Corporation and then the Lockheed Aircraft Corporation, before moving into academia in the USA and Europe. Ansoff is best known for establishing strategy as a management discipline, and for laying the foundations of modern strategic planning techniques. His approach was, in his time, criticised for being too focused on analytical and planning techniques, but is now highly regarded as appropriate for the fast-changing, complex business world of today.

Hu-Chan is an international management consultant, executive coach, speaker, and leadership development educator. Specialising in coaching in cross-cultural leadership, she has become a leader herself in the new discipline of executive

coaching. Through her individual and team coaching activities, Ms Hu-Chan has influenced the strategies of major corporations and public sector bodies, in North and South America, Australia, and Asia.

Born in India, Ghoshal forged a reputation as a brilliant thinker whilst studying at MIT and Harvard, and then teaching at MIT, INSEAD, and the London Business School. In partnership with Christopher Bartlett of Harvard he first came to prominence as a leading thinker on international strategy and then developed this further to stress the importance of innovation and the empowerment of people as the key to creating a moral and value-creating organisation. Ghoshal was considered to be one of the leading thinkers in the field of how business must focus on relationship building and innovation, rather than operational efficiencies, to be successful. Revered in India, Europe, and the United States, Ghoshal played a major role in shaping the behaviour of the first tranche of today's global companies.

His own name would not be recognised by hardly any member of the general public, his company IKEA is a name recognised by most. Kamprad is also known in the world of academia and business as having established a model for successful entrepreneurship. He took his personal values, developed from the harsh upbringing in his native Smaland in Sweden, and turned these into a set of concepts that laid down how he wanted his company to be managed and how he wanted his workers to behave. Called A Furniture Dealer's Testament, it is a list of simple but powerful statements that can be applied to most entrepreneurial projects.

Kartajaya is the founder of Indonesia's leading consulting firm, and past president of the World Marketing Association. His thinking on marketing management is now incorporated into most masters level marketing courses. Kartajaya has worked in writing partnership with Philip Kotler, one of the most respected marketing gurus, focusing on the application of marketing concepts and principles in the Asian markets. One of his major lines of thinking is that to stay as the market leader, the organisation must act as if it is not the leader, and must constantly challenge for the lead, even though they have temporarily technically achieved that.

Best known for his innovative work in speech recognition technology for Microsoft and establishing Google's document management and research centre in Beijing, Lee has been an influential figure in the advancement of China's position in science and technology. He has written on the benefits of combining the ancient wisdoms and culture of the East with the established management and leadership approaches of the West, and the advantages to organisations in building a culture of learning, personal empowerment and development of their

people. He argues that both of these approaches will create balance in the organisation, in line with the Middle Way, one of the principles of the teachings of Confucius. Interestingly, he also talks about the importance of viewing failure as a positive learning experience, a concept that is still alien to many elements of Western society including the business world.

Also known as William Ding, Lei is the founder and head of Netease.com, the Chinese portal that focuses on on-line gaming and pc to phone messaging. Lei, still in his 30s, is one of the new wave of young Asian entrepreneurs who are leading the development of internet based businesses. His ideas on how to manage in the internet environment are fast becoming the template which most organisations in this field are adopting.

Mayo spent his early academic life in his native Australia, where he forged a reputation as a leading thinker in the areas of logic, ethics, and psychology. In his forties he moved to America where he eventually taught at Harvard as a professor of industrial research. Mayo is now acclaimed as the father of the Human Relations school of management, being the first major voice advocating a move away from the scientific management approach towards a more humanistic one. He is also credited with being the first to recognise that flexible, responsive, learning organisations were likely to be more successful in an increasingly fast-changing business world.

Morita left the security of his family's sake business to start a small electronics company so that he could continue what had been until then his amateur enthusiast interest in electronics. He formed a company called Tokyo Tshsushin Kyogu, later to be changed to Sony. Pursuing a policy of risk, innovation, creativity, and intuition, Morita built Sony into one of the modern world's industrial giants. It was Morita, through the success of Sony, who put Japanese innovation into the world's consciousness. At the same time, Morita has contributed enormously to the world of management and leadership, through the lessons learned from the success of Sony.

One of Japan's most respected management gurus, Nonaka is the Dean of the School of Knowledge Science at the Japan Advanced Institute of Science and Technology. Developing earlier thinking by Drucker and others, his ideas on knowledge-creation and innovation generating processes in organisations has helped to consolidate the establishment of Knowledge Management as our newest major management discipline. Few organisations have embraced every aspect of Nonaka's vision, but those that have are reaping huge benefits from building the active management of knowledge into their strategies and structures.

Ohmae has pioneered modern approaches to strategic management, focusing on the

role of the strategist, the three key players of organisation, customer, and competition, and how to gain strategic advantage. His background is diverse, covering gaining a PhD in Nuclear Engineering, leading the Tokyo branch of McKinsey Consulting, acting as an advisor to the Japanese Prime Minister, and being an accomplished clarinet player. Ohmae's ideas have had a major impact on the way in which leading managers think and behave today. His emphasis on strategists needing to be intuitive, innovative, and creative are now the norm, and are required reading for managers and leaders in industry and in politics.

Taguchi's importance is in his development of the Quality Management approach introduced into Japan by Deming and Juran, and pushing the quality control activity backwards into the supplier and design stages, so establishing one of the foundation stones of what we practice as Quality Assurance. He also proposed a more holistic approach to quality improvement, and in doing so made a major contribution to what eventually became known as Kaizen, or Continuous Improvement.

Now recognised as the source of much of today's leadership and strategic management thinking, Sun Tzu was a military general in China at the time of Confucius. His writings, known as The Art Of War (Sun Tzu Ping Fa) are a compilation of his reflections on the strategies and leadership behaviour that underlie success in war. Translated into to relate to today's business world, Sun Tzu's thoughts on strategy, information and intelligence, tactics, competition and competitiveness, communication, and leadership and management, have enormous relevance and are followed by some of our most successful leaders.

There are many worthy management and leadership figures. Some are giants of business, some are academics, some come from the world of battle and war. In the West we tend to turn towards the European and North American gurus, perhaps because many of them also become expert in the art of self-promotion, perhaps because our natural tendency is to look to our own. However, there have been, are now, and will be, equally valuable contributions from other parts of the world. Here we have looked at some from the East. They are great thinkers who we can learn much from. We should not ignore them.