

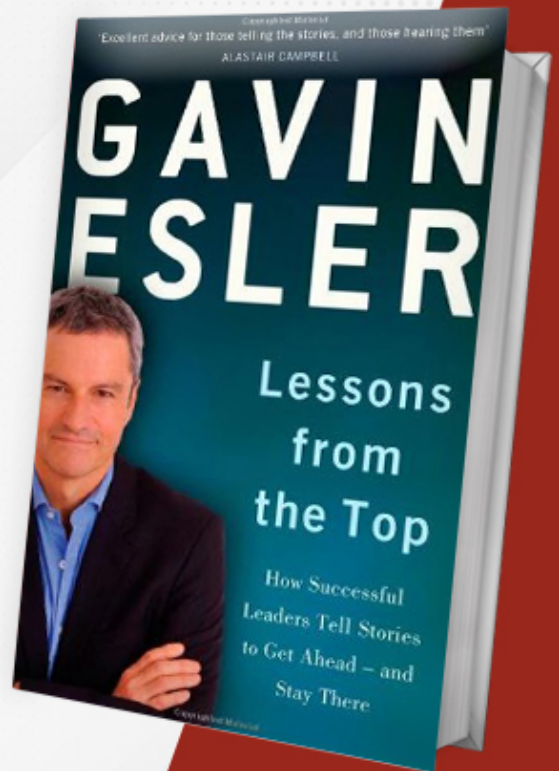
LESSONS FROM THE TOP

by Glenn Williams

Book Review

Lessons From the Top: How Successful Leaders Tell Stories to Get Ahead - and Stay There

A REVIEW BY:
Glenn Williams, CEO, LCP Global



A leader's journey is so much more than a collection of experiences or a series of events. It is part of a much larger story or narrative.

Presented the right way, a leader's story not only has the potential to inspire others; it has the ability to provide meaning and context to the present and the future.

In *Lessons from the Top: How Successful Leaders Tell Stories to Get Ahead*, Esler has accumulated and examined the narratives of top global leaders – Winston Churchill, Nelson Mandela, Margaret Thatcher, Richard Branson, Bill Clinton, and George W. Bush among them.

He analyzes how their stories have been told, and in some cases, embellished and revised. He describes what spin doctors look for in trying to reverse negative public opinion, and how the failure of leaders to carefully craft a meaningful narrative can result in missed opportunities.

“History, as we have observed, is the storytelling of the victors...As for the losers, well, they are considered guilty of all kinds of misjudgments, but sometimes, as we will see, things could have turned out very differently if they had simply been better storytellers.”¹

Leadership stories means control. It is a way of shaping how you want others to behave or think about you. Esler shares some gems: He discusses a memorable way to answer others when they want more information— the 3-5 words that powerfully connect you with your audience: Who am I? Who are we? And what is our common purpose? He calls this the earwig.² He also highlights the importance of being proactive by leveraging lessons learnt from mistakes.³

On a final note, he recommends incorporating a STAR moment – Give them ‘Something They Always Remember’. I love the story he tells of Microsoft's founder Bill Gates opening a jar of ‘infected’ mosquitoes to a group of potential donors!⁴

References

¹ Gavin Esler, *Lessons From the Top: How Successful Leaders Tell Stories to Get Ahead - and Stay There* (London: Profile Books Ltd, 2012), 197.

² *Ibid.*, 20.

³ *Ibid.*, 251.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 126.

See how you can use the LCP[®] Approach to sustain momentum with your coaching clients

[Download LCP's white paper](#)
