

# BOOK ENDS



## SPEED READ

**Gerry Brown, chairman of NovaQuest Capital Management and author of *The Independent Director*, gives the lowdown on his favourite book of the moment**

### HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE THE ETHICAL LEADER?

It focuses on the importance of improving ethical leadership in today's world. Ethical behaviour not only drives long-term business success and underpins the profit/growth this requires, but delivers great inclusion inside the organisation and outside in the community.

### WHAT DID YOU ALREADY KNOW ABOUT THE TOPIC?

I've studied some aspects of ethical leadership in business,

especially the role of the independent director. I've also commissioned Henley Business School to research governance in the NHS, university, charity and sports sectors. I'll use this original research as background for my book on the independent director in society.

### DID ANYTHING IN THIS BOOK CHALLENGE YOUR THINKING? IF SO, WHAT?

Witzel really challenges one's thinking, even if you think you know a lot already. I was especially impressed with the chapter on the importance of value and trust to consumers and thinking, for example, on what's happening in social media and with companies such as Amazon, Apple, Facebook and Google.

### WHAT IS YOUR MAIN TAKEAWAY?

Scandals are happening almost every day, if not in business, then in other aspects of life! Witzel reviews the existing literature, using some philosophy and, with an enormous range of practical case study examples, shows how

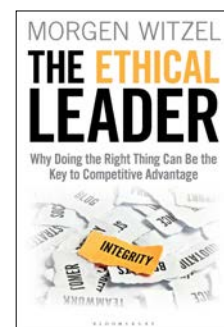
ethical leadership should lead to value creation no matter where and when.

### DO YOU THINK YOU'LL APPLY ANY OF THE BOOK'S PRINCIPLES IN YOUR OWN WORK?

It reinforces what I do and need to do as chairman of a private equity fund to protect the interests of shareholders versus partners in the context of our wider community responsibilities.

### WHO SHOULD READ THIS BOOK?

It is a must-read for leaders of any organisation anywhere... including the US president.

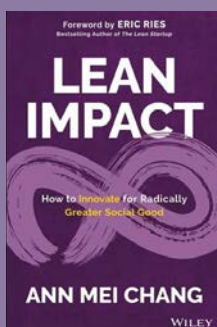


*The Ethical Leader*  
Morgen Witzel,  
Bloomsbury £27

## BOOKMARKED

*Lean Impact: How to Innovate for Radically Greater Social Good*

Ann Mei Chang  
Wiley



After spending two decades working as a software engineer for the likes of Apple and Google, Ann Mei Chang turned her interest in social impact into a second career with international development agency USAID and then her own company. Having had feet in differing camps, Chang was able to marry a "Silicon Valley appetite for innovation" with "scientific rigor and business-like focus" for her book *Lean Impact*.

Her philosophy follows on from the work of her contemporary Eric Ries and his book *The Lean Startup*.

*Lean Impact* is likely to appeal to entrepreneurs who want to focus away from a pure interest in generating shareholder value. Chang's book is packed with examples of business that have been built on foundations of providing innovative solutions to social problems - those she considers being "an advance party of pioneers". She puts the case

for audacious goals and relentless drive being more important than the act of altruism itself - "love the problem more than your solution".

Chang breaks down her methodology to build a case for creating a feedback loop of validation: list assumptions, create hypotheses and relentlessly test. She talks about the problems of focusing on short-term deliverables and how to forge a path to a plausible business, while also being mindful of potential negative impacts and unintended consequences. Being close to the intended users of your products helps with the iterative process.

Social impact entrepreneurs would do well, Chang says, to create a minimum viable product. She shares scenarios in which various such products might be tested, and gives examples of 'engines for growth' and funding for socially aware enterprises once the fine-tuning is complete. ●