

A Suggested Reading List for Camping Professionals:

- **“Good to Great”** by Jim Collins. You’ll never work for a boss that hasn’t read this, and you’ll seldom be to a conference where the terms from this book aren’t required to understand what the speakers are saying. “The right people on the bus; the flywheel effect; the stop-doing list; the humble leader; good is the enemy of great.” It all starts here.
- **“Purple Cow”** by Seth Godin; the most important marketing book of the last 30 years. No one should be allowed to spend ANY money on marketing until reading this fast and fascinating book. The fastest way to fill your camp.
- **“Selling the Invisible”** by Harry Beckwith; previously the most important marketing book of the last 30 years.
- My favorite Developmental Asset Book – **“Stopping at Every Lemonade Stand”** by James Vollbracht, is now less than \$2 “used” on Amazon. These stories on how to build assets in kids are so good they can be chapel devotions or in-service trainings for your summer staff orientation.
- **“Last Child in the Woods – Saving Our Children from Nature-Deficit Disorder”** by Richard Louv. There’s been LOTS of buzz about this book and it’s well deserved. If you ever needed ammunition as to why it’s important to protect camps, and why we need to keep kids outdoors, this is it. (only \$11 on Amazon).
- Two by Ken Blanchard: **“The One Minute Manager”** and **“Whale Done.”** If *your* bosses had followed these simple steps, you’d be a different person. Do it for *your* staff. Too often overlooked, Blanchard himself says these are his two best. Should be required for your unit leaders, too. (At Amazon in paperback used for \$6, cassette \$7; or ask your CEO if s/he’s got a copy on the shelf. Bet s/he does.)
- For personal growth, you can’t beat **“Seven Habits of Highly Effective People”** by Stephen Covey. I refer back to it often whenever I feel myself becoming ineffective or frustrated.

If you want to be able to tell parents you’re actually an expert in child development (which they think you are), then you MUST read:

- **“Raising Cain - Protecting the Emotional Life of Boys”** by Dan Kindlon; and
- **“Reviving Ophelia -- Saving the Selves of Adolescent Girls”** by Mary Pipher.
- **“Raise Your Child's Social IQ: Stepping Stones to People Skills for Kids”** by Cathi Cohen (Cathi has also done a version for camp counselors)
- **“Bullyproof Your Child for Life”** – by Joel Haber

With these as a background, everything Michael Brandwein has written will make even *more* sense to you; like...

- **“Learning Leadership”** and the accompanying DVD that illustrates some of his techniques “live.” The best book on staff training I’ve ever read is this manual he wrote for Y-USA. I’ve seen no better way to teach and supervise staff (or my own kids) than this. From www.acacamps.org or the Y Program Store at 800-747-0089

His other classics that should be required for every camp director include:

- **“Training Terrific Staff II”** provides you with everything your staff complain you DON’T do in your current staff training: how to be a really successful counselor with

kids, lots of interaction and participation, and MOST of it can be taught by your returning staff (making THEM even better leaders.) From www.michaelbrandwein.com

- **“Super Staff Supervision,”** also by Brandwein, gives your unit and program leaders the skills they need to really support your staff.

Better than books (because if you keep them on top of your toilet tank, you can finish one article every time you “sit a spell”!)

- **“Camp Business Magazine”** – Lots of great articles every month, and as a YMCA camping professional you’re entitled to get it FREE. But you have to subscribe at www.camp-business.com.
- **“Fast Company Magazine”** -- Subscribe for only \$10 per year, www.fastcompany.com or Amazon. There’s not an issue I don’t turn down *at least* 6 pages of articles with great ideas for use at camp.
- **“The Journal of Light Construction”** -- I’ve been encouraging camps for years to subscribe to this best source of authoritative information on construction and renovation. (And Lord knows we do enough of that!) The magazine is great because you can take it home with you and share it around. But the on-line version has advantages too. The biggest one being that for a \$59 **membership** fee you can search by topic every article from the past 20 years, plus read the current issue. (It renews automatically after that for only \$29 per year). Every time you repair something or build something, a quick click and print will give you the “right” way for you or your contractor to do the work. www.JLOnline.com

What are your suggestions? Send them (and why) to gary@garyforster.com