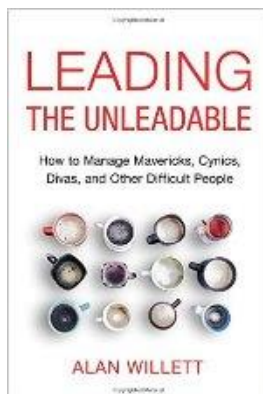


## PM WORLD BOOK REVIEW



Book Title: ***Leading the Unleaddable: How to Manage Mavericks, Cynics, Divas and Other Difficult People***

Author: **Alan Willett**

Publisher: American Management Association

List Price: \$17.95                      Format: Soft Back; 225 pages

Publication Date: 2017              ISBN: 9780814437606

Reviewer: **Dyane Johnson Holt, PMP**

Review Date: February 2018

---

### Introduction

Leading and managing people is my area of expertise as a senior level Human Capital Management leader. I was intrigued by “*Leading the Unleaddable: How to Manage Mavericks, Cynics, Divas, and Other Difficult People*” as a seeker of solutions to best leverage research and industry insights to design and execute business driven HR programs. Alan Willett’s book is an outstanding demonstration of how to improve behaviors in the workplace without losing sight of the mission or the people who support the mission. Alan’s brilliant transforming processes will help drive you to great management of problem people. The book is broken down into 4 parts that hold a wealth of simple, yet deep dives into management excellence: The Call to Exceptional Leadership; The Leader in Action: Spotting Trouble, Dealing with Trouble; The Leader in Action: Preventing Trouble; and Leading Leaders.

### Overview of Book’s Structure

*Leading the Unleaddable* is a well written and structured how to guide. As a consultant, Alan wrote the book from his experiences having participated on either side of the maverick, cynic, slacker or diva role. Many examples are included in the book that captivate the readers interest. He gently walks you through real life situations and engaging conversations. Each chapter of the book is packed full of workable methods, steps and or keys leading to actionable outcomes and culminates with “Reflection Points”.

Alan is experienced in leadership development and organizational-culture change. He holds a wealth of knowledge allowing the reader to gain broad insight from his experiences to expand their leadership capabilities. For me as a leader, I hold Alan’s book in high regard as a ready resource of actionable intelligence as I not only lead and manage people but also share the wealth of knowledge gained from the reading.

## Highlights

Whatever you lead it is all about people. Understanding that leadership is larger than a troublesome employee is critical to successful leading. Leading is about you as an exceptional leader having the right mindset and making a choice to lead. It is about the mission of the organization and the effectiveness of the people who are under leadership. Leveraging research, industry insight and best practice is critical to driving successful results in business programs.

### Highlights: What I liked!

Alan has taken time to break down his experiences to help leaders effectively lead. What better way than to lead by example and demonstrate how to get needed results. 'Accepting the Call of Exceptional Leadership' is a read for all leaders. A willingness to shift in mindset will result in effective leadership outcomes. Mindset shifts are critical pathways to leading; troublesome people can be positive indicators to success.

Alan takes the emotion out of the process leaving the leader to see through the fog of managing human capital and projects. If I had to pick a favorite chapter, it would be 'Leader, Lead Thyself: Exceptional Self-Leadership'. Too often leaders forget to take care of themselves. Any step along the critical path of managing people and projects requires energy and commitment—take control of your own leadership.

### Who might benefit from the Book?

Anyone who leads in any capacity would benefit from this book. The book is targeted to managers; however, there is no limit on who can garner excellence from this book. As a situational awareness resource, anyone can put into practice the concepts, workable methods, steps and or keys to be exceptional in leading people and projects.

### Conclusion

*"Leading the Unleaded: How to Manage Mavericks, Cynics, Divas, and Other Difficult People"* is a true inspirational and motivational book. It helps you to step back and think through situations of leading people and projects. The methodical approaches to leading are repeatable paths to exceptional leadership. Having taken a full view of the leadership processes and by offering insight from that experience, Alan Willett has written a readable work of excellence that will guide you to lead anyone who seems unleaded. This book exudes expertise and insight that allows for compassionate leadership with mission driven results.

For more about this book, go to:

<http://www.amacombooks.org/book.cfm?isbn=9780814437605>

*Editor's note: This book review was the result of a partnership between the publisher, PM World and the [PMI Silver Spring Chapter](#). Authors and publishers provide the books to PM World; books are delivered to the PMI Silver Spring Chapter, where they are offered free to PMI members to review; book reviews are published in the PM World Journal and PM World Library. PMI Silver Spring Chapter members can keep the books as well as claim PDUs for PMP recertification when their reviews are published. Chapter members are generally mid-career professionals, the audience for most project management books. If you are an author or publisher of a project management-related book, and would like the book reviewed through this program, please contact [editor@peworldjournal.net](mailto:editor@peworldjournal.net).*

---

## About the Reviewer



**Dyane Johnson Holt**

Washington, D.C. USA



**Dyane Holt**, SPHR, SHRM-SCP, PMP is a senior Human Capital Management leader with over 20+ years' experience bringing value to organizations through strategic management of HR practices and programs. Her industry focus is government contracting, not-for-profits, and professional employer organizations. Dyane has served in the capacity of Vice President, Human Resources, Executive Strategic HR Business Partner, program manager and trusted advisor to executive leaders. Dyane is classified as an HR guru amongst her cohorts. With her understanding of business drivers, she has successfully worked with business leaders of a highly cyclical businesses. Included in her contributions are proposal, program and contract management and the strategic management of Human Capital.

Born and raised in the USA, Dyane is a native Washingtonian. Dyane is passionate about giving back to her areas of expertise and she believes in the development of people and the advancement of business missions.

She can be contacted at [dljholt2@gmail.com](mailto:djiholt2@gmail.com)