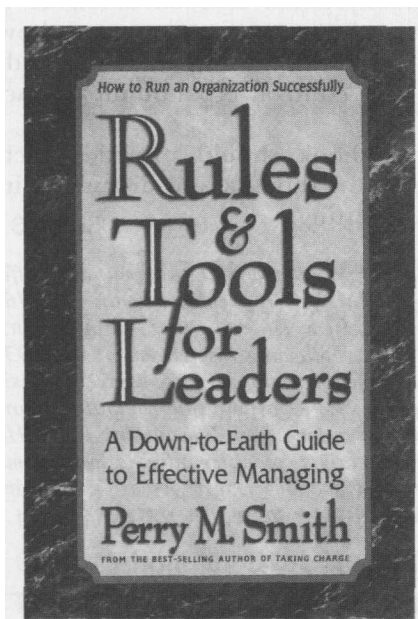


Leadership Resource

reviewed by Capt James F. Murphy, USMCR

RULES & TOOLS FOR LEADERS. By Perry M. Smith. Avery Publishing Group, 1998, 296 pp., \$13.95. (Member \$11.15)



Rules & Tools for Leaders, by Perry M. Smith, is an invaluable resource for the head of any organization. This book should be kept in the cargo pocket or desk drawer of most Marine leaders.

As a retired Air Force major general, Perry Smith has a vast reservoir of experience from which to draw his lessons on leadership. Further, he has coupled his personal experiences with a few years of observing and advising major corporations and businesses on management.

The book's chief asset is its practicality. It is extremely well orga-

nized, opening with a short chapter defining leadership, and moving on to important lessons about taking over a billet and "the vital nature of transition."

Smith goes on to cover the necessity of maintaining high institutional and personal standards, establishing a common sense of mission priority, and the use of counseling. The chapters are peppered intermittently with great quotations from the likes of Adm

"This worthy tome should appeal to Marines since all its lessons are geared toward mission attainment."

James Stockdale, Diogenes, and Theodore Roosevelt.

Perhaps the greatest strength of *Rules & Tools for Leaders* lies in the appendices. Smith ends his work with a few sections composed of leadership checklists, case studies of leadership problems, and leadership education sources. The book is worth buying for the checklists alone, as they are an invaluable reference source for the busy leader.

Fundamentally, this worthy tome should appeal to Marines

since all its lessons are geared toward mission attainment. The overriding purpose of each of Smith's points is to make the unit or organization work well.

However, this book was not written specifically for military leaders, so a few of the points are rather basic. Some of us might become impatient by passages on decisiveness, taking care of your people, or by being told simply that "leaders count." When I read those pas-

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sages, I could almost hear my sergeant instructor of old intoning "No freakin' kiddin', genius."

Generally, Marines would agree that it is always worthwhile to review the cornerstones of the art of leadership. This book is a great tool for any Marine who wants to take a rigorous look at his leadership skills and determine how to improve them.

Overall, the author has compiled an extremely readable and usable manual on managing and leading an organization. It would be well worth the time taken to read *Rules & Tools for Leaders*.

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Quote to Ponder:

"Leadership is not synonymous with authority. It is, to a very considerable extent, a value that is entrusted to superiors by associates or subordinate leaders. It embodies an emotional, often a spiritual investment—a gift of trust."

—From *Rules & Tools for Leaders*