DA Commandant's Reading List F. Organization



1. A Question of Security: The British Defence Review in an Age of Austerity by Michael Codner and Professor Michael Clarke.

This book examines the ramifications of the spending cuts; the difficult decisions over which military equipment should be procured and which should not be; linkages with allies and partners and some of the moral and ethical challenges of modern security policy in an interconnected but unstable world. A Question of Security articulates the critical issues for all wishing to understand the defence problems.

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2. Planning Armageddon: British Economic Warfare and the First World War by Nicholas Lambert

Lambert's book is an exceptionally well-researched and detailed account of Britain's attempts to wage economic war on Germany during WW1. The international and inter-departmental wrangling on the major issues is revealed to be far more complex than has been previously described. Considerations for waging economic warfare today are revealed in this truly ground-breaking book. Lambert's interpretation entirely overturns the conventional understanding of British strategy in the early part of the First World War and underscores the importance in any analysis of strategic policy of understanding political and economic considerations

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3. A History of Military Thought: From the Enlightenment to the Cold War by Azar Gat

Gat provides a detailed and authoritative analysis of the key strategic thinkers who have shaped our understanding of warfare; most notably Jomini, Clausewitz, Mahan, Corbett and Fuller. He relates their writings to the wider political, socio-economic and technological developments in European history which shaped them, and provides a challenging, but essential, examination of their significance for contemporary military doctrine.

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4. The Black Swan: The Impact of the Highly Improbable by Nicholas Taleb

The notion that a small number of unpredictable yet extreme events or "Black Swans" have shaped our world challenges conventional thinking. Taleb argues, in an entertaining and at times challenging manner, that we should accept the Black Swan, leave Mediocristan behind and move to Extremistan where inequalities are such that a single event can have a disproportionate and extreme impact. Embracing the Black Swan is a fascinating premise that stimulates and provokes thought.

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5. The Starfish and the Spider: The Unstoppable Power of Leaderless Organisations by Ori Brafman and Rod Beckstrom.

'The Starfish and the Spider' offers an alternative perspective to the military's traditional concept of leadership and its approach to warfare. It challenges how bureaucratic and hierarchical organisations "fight" an asymmetric, decentralised and non-state opponent. Overall, a modern, absorbing and pertinent read about the intricacies of decentralised organisations.

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6. Leading Change: Why Transformational Efforts Fail by John Kotter

"Change is the only Constant" is a truism in modern Defence. Kotter's article concentrates on why transformational change programmes fail, and succeeds by being logical, simple and relevant. In his 8 key steps, Kotter shows how to lead change so that new behaviors become, "the way things are done around here".



7. The Management Book: How to Manage Your Team to Deliver Outstanding Results by Richard Newton

Clearly structured in 36 short sections, this practical book provides rapid, accessible advice on all the essential management challenges. Focusing on the manager's key role - managing teams to get things done, this book looks at the essential parts of management from unusual perspectives and different angles. It is structured with the busy manager in mind, so that you can dip into any section of the book and read it as an individual piece of advice or read it end-to-end to gain an overall picture of management.

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8. The Leader, The Teacher & You: leadership through the third generation by Lim Guan Seong

Part biography, part commentary, and part exposition, this book provides principles for everyday living and puts forth a fresh new take on the notion of leadership as, being other-centred so that we can all be the best that we can be!

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