

There are many ways to learn about all things intranet. On the job is the most common way, with learning from peers in close second place. There is now an expanding number of books that are useful for intranet teams. In this article we outline some recommended reading.

General

Every intranet team's bookshelf needs to start with these two books.

Don't make me think by Steve Krug

Essential reading for anyone involved in online solutions. This book clearly demonstrates a common sense approach to effective design. Examples are visual and easy to understand.

What every intranet team should know by James Robertson (Step Two Designs)

This is the definitive quick reference guide for intranet teams, succinctly covering key topics from strategy to design.

Consider owning several copies of these books to share with content publishers or authors.

Usability

Usability is a very involved field that takes many different paths. These books effectively outline the key methods.

Observing the user experience by Mike Kuniavsky

Aimed at practitioners, this book provides a complete toolbox of techniques to build usable solutions.

Information Architecture for the World Wide Web by Louis Rosenfeld and Peter Morville

The definitive guide on information architecture, known as the 'polar bear' book in reference to the cover. This is a heavy tome that is not easy to read, but covers all the complexity of designing effective information architecture structures for complex sites.

Leadership

There is a wealth of excellent leadership books available. These two succinct volumes use storytelling to illustrate the key points about leading a team and training others.

Tools of Leadership by Max Landsberg

Focuses on how to create vision, inspiration and momentum.

Tao of Coaching by Max Landsburg

Outlines the techniques for feedback, coaching and building skills.

Effective change management is essential for intranet teams. Staff can react badly and resist any changes that are not introduced well. **John Kotter** is the person to go to for practical insights, his books include, **Leading Change**, **Our Iceberg is Melting**, **A Sense of Urgency**, and **The Heart of Change**.

Annual reports

In the intranet space there are three annual reports that help teams keep up to date with what other intranets are doing.

Intranet Innovation Awards by Step Two Designs

Showcases the current state and future direction of intranets, highlighting innovative ideas that solve business problems and save millions.

Intranet Design Annual by Nielsen Norman Group

Includes winners from an annual worldwide competition.

Since 2006 Jane McConnell's annual report on **Global Intranet Trends** has set the benchmark on tools, resourcing and management buy-in for intranets. This report provides some powerful figures that can be used in business cases.

Writing

There are many publications that cover effective writing for the web. One of the most concise and useful is **Write me a web page, Elsie!** by Rachel McAlpine.

This is another good book to share with content publisher and authors.

Summary

Reading all these books is not going to magically transform an intranet. However they will provide insights and give you the tools to deliver the best intranet possible for staff.