Randall S. Peterson shortlists eight inspiring reads on leadership.

“These works are not musings; they are the collective leadership lessons from case studies and life experiences of some of the most influential thinkers on leadership spanning history.”
What is leadership without action? Robert Terry’s book provides a practical set of methodologies for leaders to reference and enhance their everyday actions. He summarises 4,000 years of leadership history in seven broad frames: traits, situations, hierarchy, power, ethics, vision, and courage.
Servant Leadership by Robert Greenleaf (1977)

Robert Greenleaf had great faith that servant-leader organisations could change the world. He recognised that organisations, as well as individuals could be servant-leaders, putting the needs of others first. This book is the truest call for putting ethics at the heart of leadership.
Strategy isn’t a matter of list-making, it is the preparation to react swiftly and appropriately to any given situation. This ancient Chinese military manual has been the source of inspiration for notable leaders from Napoleon and General MacArthur to Marc Benioff and Bill Belichick.
Machiavellianism is one of our darkest personality traits. Though no person would profess a desire for a ‘Machiavellian’ boss, one with disregard for morality, with a focus on self-interest and personal gain, the Italian philosopher’s controversial treatise remains a timeless reference for understanding such leaders.

The Prince by Niccolò Machiavelli (1532)
Courage, positivity and decisiveness: three traits of any hero. This against-all-odds survival tale of explorer Sir Ernest Shackleton and his crew is an enduring leadership allegory. The 1914 Antarctic voyage leader is said to have almost singlehandedly saved the lives of his entire crew.
Never Give In! The Best of Winston Churchill’s Speeches by Winston S Churchill (2003)

We shall fight on the beaches… We shall fight in the fields, and in the streets, we shall fight in the hills. We shall never surrender!” With no speechwriters or spin-doctors, this collection of speeches is an incredible reminder of Churchill’s ability to inspire in crisis.
If you could bottle and sell emotional intelligence, some say you’d have a winning formula. In this analytical take on managerial success, the psychologist credited with popularising the concept of ‘emotional intelligence’ applies his theory to leadership.
Leaders today must make a decision: to surround themselves with ambitious, strong-willed personalities prepared to disagree with each other or employ more submissive teams. Lincoln chose to be challenged. And social sciences research spanning 50 years supports his view.
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