

Malcolm Gladwell—an Unlikely Business Leader

This month's book review is Malcolm Gladwell's, *The Tipping Point*. I first read this book last year and was pleased to see that the December issue of *Fast Company* devoted their cover and quite a bit of ink to Malcolm Gladwell. He is an interesting business guru, the kind that emerges occasionally—someone who has no business experience whatsoever. In fact, the book that cemented his legend is not a business book at all, but has ignited a firestorm of excitement in the business world. As reported in the article, Gladwell's background is as a journalist, first a reporter (business, science, medicine, New York bureau chief) and now a generalist staff writer for *The New Yorker*.

Gladwell is controversial. I especially love the *Fast Company* reporter's account of how an article he published in 2002, "The Talent Myth: Are Smart People Overrated?" pretty much tore down the "star" talent system developed by McKinsey and utilized at Enron. As most of you know, I'm in favor of tapping and developing the brilliance of existing talent in companies, not importing outside "superstars" from competition to save the day. So, besides the book, I have become a Gladwell fan, as I've watched him starting to challenge existing business practices.