What work-related book are you reading?

How people obtain technical information was an interesting sidelight to this month’s survey. Many respondents say they don’t have time for books anymore and glean most of their technical information from industry magazines, including TLT. Others noted how the Internet has replaced traditional books as their primary information source. Frequently mentioned technical interest areas included pumps, composites, synthetics, steel and hydraulics. On the non-work-related reading list, biographies about Steve Jobs were mentioned—he remains an object of fascination after his death. In fact, biographies in general are high on our respondents’ reading lists. Unfortunately, the pressures of work and life have cut down on the time STLE members have to devote to study. Less than 40% say they have as much time as they’d like for technical reading.

Handbook of Lubrication & Tribology. Accepted applications and practices.

Don’t read many technical books. Mostly keep up through industry magazines like TLT and Lubes ‘N’ Greases.

Drive: The Surprising Truth About What Motivates Us by Daniel H. Pink. I took away this key concept: Incentives only work if you first feel properly compensated.

The Quest by Daniel Yergin. It deals with security and energy supply. Should be a must read for Barack Obama!

Mastering the Rockefeller Habits: What You Must Do to Increase the Value of Your Fast-Growth Firm—learning the effective management style to increase sales and productivity effectively!

In-Service Lubricant and Machine Analysis, Diagnostics and Prognostics by Allison M. Toms and Amy Fentress. A collection of selected technical papers relating to return-on-investment strategies.

Doing a lot of Internet searches for information that I may need. I find that many books on the subject of metalworking fluids are not current.

Various STLE and other publications to study for the CLS exam.

Microicide Handbook. Different biocides and fungicides work in different ways when attacking a bug-infested, water-based coolant system. Just because something says bacteriocide or fungicide doesn’t mean it has the same effectiveness as other similarly named products on the market.

Basic Handbook of Lubrication. There are many areas that are useful to me. Learning more about the actual equipment is quite useful since I mostly deal with the oil from the equipment.

TLT is my primary education source.

Handbook of Hydraulic Fluid Technology. The most enlightening concept I’ve come across so far is that seal compatibility charts may not accurately reflect the best fluid/seal material combination needed in a system.
The past is not the future.

I read books on various topics relating to lubricants and lubrication mechanism since at that time the Internet was not available. But nowadays lots of information is available online like Wikipedia, various journals (digital copies) such as TLT, Lubes ‘N’ Greases, OEM Lubes, Machinery Lubrication, etc.

Crude Oil Emulsions. Formulation difference in oilfield versus metalworking and how to better formulate them.


The Disappearing Spoon by Sam Kean recalls the entertaining history of the periodic table of elements. It’s given me an appreciation for how much blood, sweat and tears went into discovering the elements.

My most recent purchase is a copy of Best Practices for Compressed Air Systems. I used it to size an appropriate accumulator and supply line piping for an improvement that has saved thousands of dollars per year in power cost. I have little time for non-technical reading.

How to Think Like a CEO: The 22 Vital Traits You Need to Be the Person at the Top by D.A. Benton is my perennial favorite. It prods and inspires me to unceasingly strive to develop self-confidence, self-control and other executive behaviors.

I used it to size an appropriate accumulator and supply line piping for an improvement that has saved thousands of dollars per year in power cost. I have little time for non-technical reading.

Reference books and business training about getting things done right.

TLT.
What non-work related books are on your nightstand?

A history book about World War II. It’s my hobby reading.

There are many on my Nook. Currently I am reading the newest Tom Clancy book, Locked On.

Game of Thrones. Relaxation.

Death by China. The world is not a fair place, and selfishness is a concept that extends well beyond the individual.

The Bin Ladens, a biography of the family and its role in the Middle East.

A Life in Science by Steven Hawking. It’s Steven’s perspective on science and how it relates to reality.

Several at a time, one at work, one at home and one on travel. That way I always have one with me and cannot forget it. I get escapism and the chance to forget everything that is my real life for a short period of time. This is refreshing when I come back to reality.

Ringworld by Larry Niven. I am finding that this guy has great ideas and stories to tell, but he is a horrible writer.

Into the Wild by Jon Krakauer for the adventure.

Decision Points by G.W. Bush. Fun historical narrative.

Game of Thrones. I don’t know if I am getting anything very useful out of it, but it is quite entertaining.

The Complete Works of Sherlock Holmes by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. Costs less than a buck as an E-book. Sherlock’s observation skills are enviable.

You mean the book that is buried under that pile of laundry waiting to be folded? Hmm, oh yeah, that would be the Positive Discipline. It’s about the ability to be kind but firm when your three- and one-year-olds do something they find fun but you consider dangerous or not fun because you’ll be the one cleaning up the mess.

Slouching Towards Gomorrah by Judge Robert Bork. It’s a pretty good analysis of the approaching of doom, resulting from political liberalism, that is inherently built into our society.

Take Back Your Life. Effective use of Microsoft Outlook.

I’m reading Steve Jobs by Walter Isaacson. I’m benefitting by learning about this successful businessman and not-so-successful manager, warts and all. I’m also benefitting by absorbing this author’s very readable style and balanced approach to a complex subject.

The last non-fiction book I completed was about the Comanche. It read like fiction but was historical.

Scriptures.

The Game—Ken Dryden’s take on his time with the Montreal Canadiens hockey club. How cool hockey really is!

A Brief History of Thought. A perspective on philosophy and, thus, life.

I only read on airplanes.

Patience: A Little Book of Inner Strength.

Gulliver’s Travels (unabridged). I have never read it.
Steve Jobs, a biography written by Walter Isaacson. What am I getting out of it? Answer: (1.) a person with no electronics background whatsoever developed into a multibillionaire in the consumer electronics industry. (2.) His end-stage cancer was terrible. (3.) Strictly my impression, but Steve Jobs was a manic-depressive person.

The Silva Method for finding my way in 2012.

Willpower.

Several biography novels.

The Bible and How to Win Friends and Influence People.


Several non-fiction business histories. Enjoy these much more than fiction.

Unbroken by Laura Hillenbrand.

Conversations with God by Neale Donald Walsch. Exploring alternate concepts of God and how I can relate or incorporate it into my personal belief structure.

Science fiction.

Find and Use Your Inner Power by Emmet Fox. Spiritual inspiration, courage and strength.


Alan Carr’s Quit Smoking. So far, nothing yet, but I’m hopeful!

Flatterland by Ian Stewart. The book is reminding me why I do chemistry and not quantum physics.

Ted Bell’s War Lords. Great story about the threat to the Royal Family of the U.K. Just an enjoyable book to give me some separation in today’s tough economic times. Nothing more than escape!

Editor’s Note: Sounding Board is based on an e-mail survey of 13,000 TLT readers. Views expressed are those of the respondents and do not reflect the opinions of the Society of Tribologists and Lubrication Engineers. STLE does not vouch for the technical accuracy of opinions expressed in Sounding Board, nor does inclusion of a comment represent an endorsement of the technology by STLE.