

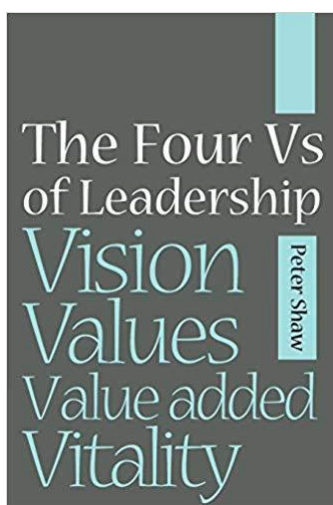


*The Centre for Army Leadership (CAL) is the British Army's custodian of leadership debate, thinking and doctrine. It seeks to stimulate discussion about leadership and so further the institution's knowledge of best practice and experience.*

*Book Reviews are written by and for serving soldiers and officers, summarising a wide range of notable leadership-related books.*

## *The Four Vs of Leadership: Vision, Values, Value-Added, Vitality* by Peter Shaw

Reviewed by SSgt Matt Albrighton AGC (RMP)



*Peter Shaw draws his expertise in leadership from his wide-ranging experience in the field. As a senior civil servant, a reader in the Church of England, a successful coach and a popular teacher of leadership and management, he brings together a diverse set of skills to create his authentic, optimistic advice.*

Shaw offers a useful insight using a different approach to coaching and leadership from some empirical work in the field. *The Four Vs of Leadership* is an unusual book in some respects as it does not conform to the usual range or design of leadership and management books. Despite its title, it does not seek to propose any simplistic formula for success. The Four Vs are well explained under their individual headings; “Vision”, “Values”, “Value-added” and “Vitality” and are suggested for use as a framework for thinking about your own philosophy and approach to leading others. On initial reading you would begin to form the idea that it is written with a focus on spirituality, but the reader would be encouraged to read on, as this is very brief and the author does not intend to impart any religious or spiritual position for his audience.

The book, whilst on first impression may appear a little unorthodox, lends itself more to the genre of coaching rather than management, evidenced by the vast field experience which Shaw explains and frequently alludes to, utilising a ‘what works’ approach for the reader’s benefit. He also reflects on his experiences as a senior civil servant and how some of his positive ideology encouraged growth. Shaw provides a caveat for readers to maintain an open-mindedness approach with the Four Vs and its application. He also emphasises that his book is not the panacea for gold standard coaching or leadership, but rather a tool to be made easily accessible to refer to when planning or delivering coaching, mentoring or leading, as well as its usefulness for personal reflection.

The Four Vs are explained exceptional well and have no hidden or cryptic messages, leaving the reader quite satisfied that the model and approaches laid out in the book are clear and well written. Shaw explains in his book that the Four Vs are intended for use as often as possible with a strong emphasis on self-reflection. The book will also allow for personal development in terms of enhancing team leadership and nurturing effective leadership skills.

Shaw subtly reminds the reader of the responsibilities placed upon the effective leader and in some respects reflects elements of the British Army’s Values and Standards. The Four Vs are meaningful and they hold useful ethical benefits for any leader to embed in their day-to-day working and private lives. Shaw has provided a valuable insight for personal development in leadership, building on individual resilience and how the effective leader can, in turn, provide excellent coaching.

Peter Shaw

*The Four Vs of Leadership: Vision, Values, Value-Added, Vitality*

John Wiley & Sons, 2006

*The views expressed in **Book Reviews** are solely those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the official thinking of the British Army or the Ministry of Defence. Get our Book Reviews at [www.army.mod.uk/who-we-are/our-schools-and-colleges/centre-for-army-leadership/centre-for-army-leadership-support-documents](http://www.army.mod.uk/who-we-are/our-schools-and-colleges/centre-for-army-leadership/centre-for-army-leadership-support-documents) or at this QR code:*

