

Report on Business: Managing  
**Common Knowledge tops year's best**  
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As I look back at the management and business books I read this year, two stand out as exceptional because they illuminated -- in a clear, instructive manner -- important issues that don't typically draw a lot of attention.

1. The edge, and my nod for best management book of the year, goes to **Common Knowledge (Harvard Business School Press)** by George Washington University's Nancy Dixon, who presents research on how top companies transfer knowledge between various arms of their operations. She sets out five different formats for such sharing and offered many intriguing examples, from best practices in one plant being adopted at other plants to a work group in one office improving its own operations by having members learn from each other.

2. The runner-up is **Business Portfolio Management (John Wiley and Sons)** by Michael Allen of Navigant Consulting, who argues that companies are failing to generate a portfolio of strategic opportunities. Mr. Allen outlines a framework for a dialogue process between senior and line managers that would generate and evaluate those opportunities.