

# The Gurus' Beach Reads

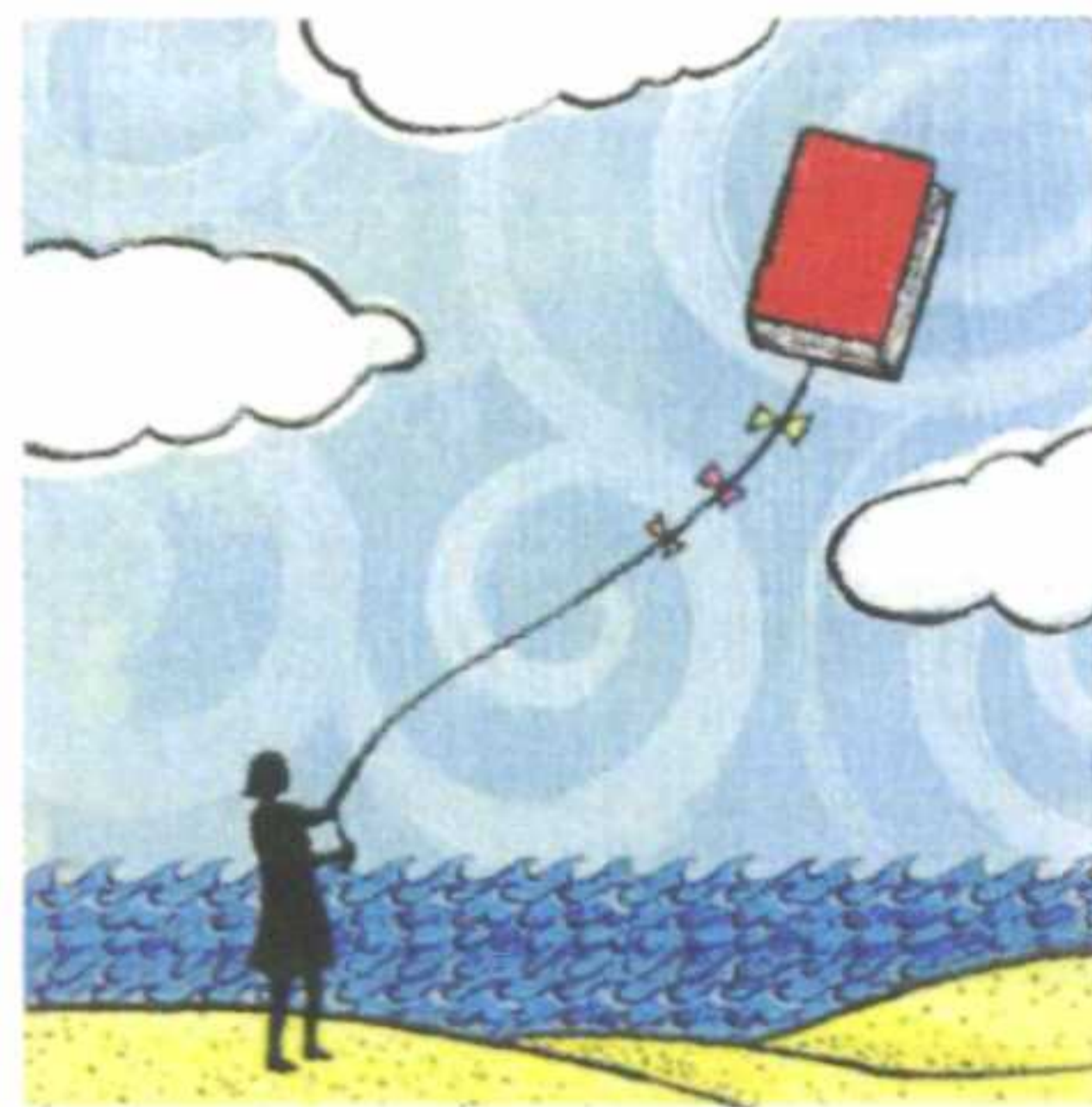
Small business experts recommend books for entrepreneurs

BY AMY BARRETT

## Beatrice Mitchell

Co-founder, Sperry Mitchell, an investment bank specializing in mergers and acquisitions

“*Asking: A 59-Minute Guide to Everything Board Members, Volunteers, and Staff Must Know to Secure the Gift*, by Jerold Panas, is about how to ask for money. But it’s a great book about how to sell. Entrepreneurs have to get their names out there, and that means doing the things a good salesman does—calling 8 million times, getting the appointment. And it has good hints, such as what to do when someone says no.”



## Amar Bhide

Lawrence D. Glaubinger  
Professor of Business,  
Columbia University

“Most entrepreneurs don’t start with breakthrough ideas. They have to persuade others that their slightly better idea is worth taking a chance on. Robert B. Cialdini’s brilliant exposition of

the theory and practice of persuasion in *Influence: The Psychology of Persuasion* is aimed at protecting gullible consumers. But I think it has terrific insights for entrepreneurs who want to persuade.”

## Kathy Marshack

Psychologist and family business coach

“*You Just Don’t Understand: Women and Men in Conversation* by Deborah Tannen is about male and female communication, an area that is typically overlooked in business. Understanding gender differences is important for all entrepreneurs,

whether they are dealing with vendors, customers, or employees. And in a family business, relationships are even more intimate, and things can explode.”

## Tom First

Co-founder, Nantucket Nectars

“Steven Callahan, who wrote *Adrift: Seventy-Six Days Lost at Sea*, ends up

on a life raft after his boat capsizes and becomes very creative about how he gets fresh water and food. This guy has to trust his instincts, and in starting a business you need to learn to trust yourself. In the early days of Nantucket Nectars, when [partner] Tommy [Scott] and I started to get a win or two and trust ourselves, it had a snowball effect. That confidence helps you in business.”

## Tom Kippola

Venture partner, Voyager Capital, and managing director of consultant Chasm Group

“*Marketing High Technology* by William H. Davidow came out in 1986, and I still strongly recommend it to entrepreneurs. Often entrepreneurs will acknowledge that focus and sustainable competitive advantage are important. But when faced with meeting quarterly revenue targets, they will let short-term numbers dictate what they do. So they may expand too quickly and build revenue, but at a cost to their focus and sustainable advantage.”



