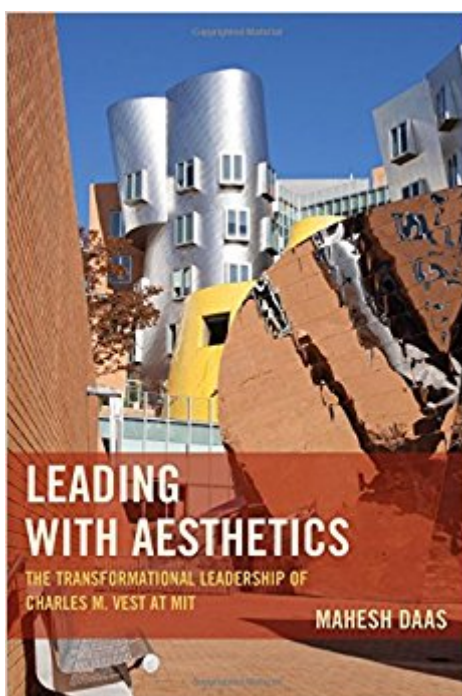


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# Leading With Aesthetics: The Transformational Leadership Of Charles M. Vest At MIT



## Synopsis

Leading with Aesthetics: The Transformational Leadership of Charles M. Vest at MIT examines the role of aesthetics, design, and architecture in organizational transformation and leadership, particularly in the context of academic institutions. Leadership has been thus far predominantly examined from the perspective of function (performance) and position in the organizational structure (such as a CEO or a president). Relatively little work has been done in studying leadership of academic institutions, let alone from the perspective of aesthetics, both of which this book aims to rectify. Although aesthetic dimension is important in any organizational context, it is particularly important for academic institutions. Leading with aesthetics would empower leaders in any organizational setting. Daas examines the aesthetic dimension of transformational leadership through an eclectic blend of lenses drawn from the fields of architecture, political science, organizational aesthetics, and organizational psychoanalysis. A detailed case study of the leadership of Charles Marsteller Vest (1941–2013), who served as the president of Massachusetts Institute of Technology for fourteen years between 1990 and 2004, illustrates the importance of the aesthetic dimension in leadership and organizational change.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Leading with Aesthetics is a tour de force of interdisciplinary scholarship, citing a remarkably wide variety of sources and plumbing multiple subjects with significant depth. The result is a very satisfying, multi-dimensional, multi-faceted exegesis of a topic that indeed seems to have been

given too little consideration in scholarly and actual evaluations of institutional leadership. (James Langley, Langley Innovations) *Leading with Aesthetics* offers a compelling and beautifully illustrated case for leaders to see their enterprise's outward design as subtly but powerfully conveying its inner purpose. Mahesh Daas has demonstrated that a single determined official can transform a hoary and misleading architecture into one that radiates its true mission. (Michael Useem, Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania and co-author of *Leadership Dispatches*) *Leading with Aesthetics* provides an interdisciplinary perspective of the importance of the aesthetic dimension in organizational change and leadership, richly illustrated by a book-length case study and analysis of Charles M. Vest, MIT's president, and his leadership team between 1990 and 2004. Relatively little work has been done in studying leadership of academic institutions, let alone from the perspective of aesthetics, both of which this book aims to rectify.

Mahesh Daas is dean of the School of Architecture, Design, and Planning at the University of Kansas, Lawrence, and Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture distinguished professor.

such a great book. This author is well versed.

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