

The Power of Who

BY BOB BEAUDINE

Greetings to all leaders! This quarter I'm reviewing a book that has been on my personal reading list for quite a while, The Power of Who, by Bob Beaudine. The premise of the book is that you already know everyone you need to achieve your goals! It's not that you should avoid finding new people and opportunities to have the job of your dreams; rather, in most cases, you already have all the connections you need. What is missing is the cultivation of those relationships (your "who") and the sharing of your desired accomplishments (the "what") with your network. It's not that the "who" you know will get you the job. Instead, it's the "who" that really knows you and is invested in you that will open doors and opportunities. I believe that we all know the power of mentors and networks. One of the greatest benefits of USAFP is the network of friends and colleagues that inspire and challenge us to be our best. What this book offers is very practical advice and examples of how we can utilize those relationships to follow our passions.

Mr. Beaudine is a professional executive search agent involved with the hiring of top level executives for business and sports franchises. The book begins by exploring the core reasons behind why we choose to serve in the roles we have for our careers. Have you dedicated enough time and energy into deeply thinking about what you want to accomplish and how

to get there? Furthermore, have you shared those thoughts with the people closest to you? Throughout the book, the author repeatedly emphasizes the need for all of us to talk with those closest to us about what we want to achieve. All too often we reach out to unknown people and organizations for advice and assistance. There's nothing wrong with this approach, but how much more powerful is it to connect with those that really know us and their network of relationships. In the civilian world, promising job opportunities receive hundreds to thousands of applications that look all too similar. If you were the chief of Human Resources and a trusted friend recommended a specific application, how much greater the odds of that person being asked to interview? Most of us are hesitant to tap into this deep and rich resource; but why?

"People hire people, not resumes"
—Bob Beaudine

In the book, Mr. Beaudine discusses a candidate interviewing for a high profile job for which he was fully competent to perform. However, during the interview, he completely blew it. Except, he made a personal connection with each of the members and because of that, and the recommendations of his "who" that secured him the interview initially, was still offered the job. The reality is that personal connections, and the reputations of those that

recommended him, overcame the poor performance of the interview. Never underestimate the power of the people most interested in seeing you succeed.

Mr. Beaudine then develops a model of "100/40". These are the 100 true friends and acquaintances that care about you and offer value to you in your lifelong pursuit. This is your "who". He recommends that we identify these people and then spend time investing in them. Not as a false pretense to get something in return, but because they are the ones who will be willing to separate the wheat from the chaff, be honest in their assessment of you and your plans, and are the ones that you are most willing to assist.

"You Already Know Everyone You Need To Know." —Bob Beaudine

The embedded figure represents his model for those 100 individuals (not that the number is exact but that the different levels have different and important distinctions) who are most interested in your success.

Specifically, the inner circle is comprised of your 1 best friend, your 3 most important friends, and the "12" people that know you and care about you the most. This is the group that will help guide, advise, and challenge you on what you're doing and why you're doing it. In essence, these are the ones you need to listen to the most. They have no other

reason to engage with you other than to help you succeed.

Likewise, the “40” refers to the “what” you want to accomplish. These are the things you really want to accomplish in your position, career, and life. By thinking deeply about this and then listing these items (and again, not that 40 has any specific significance), we focus our attention, energy, and network of allies on those items. Our careers are long, but limited, and without focusing on what we truly want to accomplish, we miss opportunities and are distracted by things that don’t really matter. The number 40 seems a bit large, especially in context of the book Essentialism we reviewed recently; however, the principle is still valuable. If you never identify “what” you want to accomplish, how can any of us ever achieve our true goals?

This book is focused on the civilian marketplace, but has just as an important role for those of us in

uniform. Not only will we each make the transition out of the military, but even in our bureaucratic system, networks and connections have immense power. Using the “Power of Who” allows you to connect with the organization or opportunity you want to pursue. Mentors and leaders create connections within the location you want and provide realistic expectations. These trusted agents can connect you with military assignment officers and consultants to increase the likelihood of you achieving your goal. Never underestimate the power of your network! On a personal note, when I left residency, I wanted to serve in a high-speed operational unit like the 82nd Airborne Division. By reaching out to my network, my “who” (namely Erin Edgar and Cory Costello) connected me with the Division Surgeon and I was ultimately selected for the job. It wasn’t because of my network I got the position; but my

“who” provided me the opportunity and endorsement to be evaluated for the position. As a corollary, we each have a responsibility to develop, cultivate, and invest in our networks. Just as a field is less abundant without fertilization and care, so is our web of colleagues and friends. It doesn’t take much time and effort; but it does require prioritization. Simply pick-up the phone or send a message to keep the connection strong **and** be sure to do the same for others.

Throughout my career I have been incredibly fortunate to have made life-long connections and relationships with immensely talented leaders, mentors, and friends. What I have learned to appreciate and have been reminded in reading this book is the time and energy they invested in me. Whether it be an unsolicited email to say hello or the offer to call a peer on my behalf, I’ve been unworthily benefitted by this network, my “who”. Truthfully speaking, I’m sure there have been countless times this network took actions on my behalf without me ever knowing. To all of them, I’m eternally grateful. Never under estimate the power of your “who” and remember how you are the “who” to others. None of us can do this alone; don’t be afraid to ask your “who” to help!

A final note in closing; we hope that you all enjoy and benefit from these book summaries and that they add to your professional knowledge and assist you in your current and future positions. If you have any recommendations for us or want to join us in writing these summaries, please contact me (matthew.n.fandre.mil@mail.mil), John (scubadoc99@icloud.com), or Tim (timothy.l.switaj.mil@mail.mil)

