

Transcript for The Career Accelerator podcast, Episode #2: How Can You Embrace A Mindset Of Service?

Welcome to THE CAREER ACCELERATOR, the podcast where you will find tips and tools to deliver results through others. Hello. The episode for today is HOW YOU CAN EMBRACE A MINDSET OF SERVICE. I'm your host, coach Percy Cannon.

In our last episode, you learned about the importance of letting go of the mindset of an individual contributor, where you had to rely mostly on yourself to deliver your goals. I invited you to instead achieve results through others by adopting a mindset of service. How? By focusing always on “What’s in it for them”, them being the people within your organization with whom you interact the most: Your direct reports, your peers from other departments and your boss. I explained that this focus on WHAT’S IN IT FOR THEM was the key skill that I had observed in successful Corporate Managers throughout my four decades in the corporate world, first as an executive and now as an independent coach.

In today’s episode you will learn one way to maximize the odds of embracing a service mindset as part of your corporate manager role.

What happens if the service mindset doesn’t come naturally to you? Can you learn to adopt it? The good news is yes, you can learn this approach. The not-so-good news is that choosing to adopt a service mindset is not a decision you can make lightly.

Start by asking yourself two questions:

1. What kind of a manager do you want to be? And,
2. How does your managerial practice connect with the bigger vision of your WHY, of what you want your life legacy to be?

I have found that living a life of service at work requires that I truly believe in its benefits. It requires that I have both the discipline and humility to adopt it as part of my “Why” in my personal mission statement. In my book, newsletters and talks with clients, I share the journey I followed to become a believer in the professional and personal benefits of adopting a service mindset.

My intention today is to provide you with a set of tips and tools from which you can pick whatever you find applicable to your own life journey. I want to help you enjoy the benefits of becoming a service-oriented person, and, in particular, becoming a service-oriented corporate manager.

There are three lessons learned throughout my life journey that I want to share with you today:

1. **My first lesson is to have clarity on your WHY in life:** 3 decades ago, in my early years in the corporate world, I was fortunate to attend a seminar on “The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People”, facilitated by Stephen Covey’s consultants. This was a life-changing event that led to a point of inflection in my life. Why? Because it was the impetus for writing my first formal Personal Mission Statement. Up until then I had made several New Year’s Resolutions, which usually lasted a few weeks and were then discarded. One of the exercises used for the 7-Habits

workshop was to imagine attending your funeral. Yes, you heard me right. Please bear with me and imagine you are at your funeral. Assuming you are not driving or doing a task that requires your full visual attention right now, can I ask you to pause for a moment?

Can you please close your eyes and try to visualize your funeral in your mind?

- Who do you see giving your Eulogy?
- Who else do you see present?
- What will be said about you in your Eulogy?
- What do you want to be remembered by?
- And what do you want to have accomplished by then?

You can open your eyes now. What ideas and images crossed your mind? I hope you discovered something worth becoming part of your WHY.

In my case, this exercise caused me to seriously envision what I wanted to do with my life, such as:

- What were the top values I wanted to live by?
- What were my different personal and professional roles, and
- Which long- and short-term goals I wanted to set for each role.

This is where the seed of service to others, planted by my father's example, which I will share in a moment, accelerated its relevance in my life. It guided me on how I wanted to interact with my Direct Reports, peers and bosses.

2. **The second lesson I want to share with you is to search for a role model who has a clear service orientation**, and to learn from him or her. It was a decade ago when my Mom asked me to give my Dad's eulogy. Being requested to speak about someone you so love and admire can be a challenge, as much as a joy. I still remember scanning the large number of people attending my dad's funeral. There were several familiar faces, but also a surprising number of people whom I didn't recall ever meeting. Out of the long list of great lessons I had learned from my father, I chose to share how he lived a life of service, usually without expecting or asking for anything in return.

Afterwards, several people approached me to share their personal stories of how my Dad had helped them at some point in their life. Even after all these years I can't deny I miss my father. However, I am certain he's rejoicing in heaven knowing that his legacy continues to inspire me every day. And that, following his example, I want a life of service to become part of my legacy.

I was fortunate to have a father who taught me, since my childhood, and mostly by example, what it looks like to live a life of service. Do you have somebody in your life who displays a service orientation? It can be a relative or acquaintance. It can be an executive or manager from work. It can also be a public figure you admire. Choose this role model and commit yourself to learning from him or her. Be proactive. Develop a plan to adopt their service orientation into

your corporate manager role. Being a visual person myself, I have a picture of my Dad displayed on my desk, right next to my computer. As I said before, he inspires me to live a life of service.

3. **And third, be ready to make some difficult choices in your life.** A couple of decades after writing my first Personal Mission Statement, and around the time of my father's passing, I asked myself the following question: **How can I make the rest of my life... the best of my life®?** I was approaching the half-century mark in my life, and up until that point, I had mostly worked as a corporate executive. I wasn't sure if I should continue in that vein or try something different. To decide which path to take, I went through another deep soul-searching process, from which I want to share three defining questions that I kept asking to myself:

- What were my strengths?
- What was I passionate about?
- How could I better serve people?

The outcome of this process, which took a couple of years and several starts and stops, helped me make the necessary adjustments to my Personal Mission Statement, my "Why", and its related professional and personal implications. I decided to start a second career as a coach.

However, there was an element that was missing: a sense of urgency. I was too comfortable inside the corporate world to make such an important career change... until two of my kids announced, within a few days apart, that they were each expecting their first child. I asked myself what kind of a grandfather I wanted to be. The short answer was to be a present and engaged "papapa", as my grandkids affectionately call me now. This was the missing element to trigger the execution of my updated Personal Mission Statement.

As a result of this process, a decade ago I quit my corporate job to do, among other things, what I am trying to do today: HELP corporate managers like you, to accelerate your career growth by learning how to deliver results through others. You don't need to wait until you turn 50 or any age to develop or adjust your Personal Mission Statement. You are never too young or too old to define or redefine what you want to do with your life.

If you are interested in learning more about developing or adjusting your Mission in Life, please follow the links at the bottom of this episode to contact me or read my book *The Business Apostolate, Insights to Define and Achieve Your Mission in Life*.

They say hindsight is 20/20. In my case, capitalizing on my background of almost four decades in the corporate world, I strongly suggest that, if you want to accelerate your career growth by delivering results through others, a key pre-requisite is to make WHAT'S IN IT FOR THEM a key part of your corporate DNA. WHAT'S IN IT FOR THEM is not a slogan, an idea heard in a podcast, or a tip or tool read in a blog. WHAT'S IN IT FOR THEM should become a permanent choice for how you work with others. And as you heard today, one way to make it permanent is to embed this service orientation as part of your WHY.

I hope you enjoyed today's episode. In the next one, I will share tips on how you can deliver results through your peers in other areas within your organization. If you like what you heard today, please rate this podcast and share it with your coworkers and friends. Also, please use any of the links shared in the Episode Notes at the bottom of this podcast to download the transcript of today's episode, ask questions, suggest topics of interest, order my book, request a free consultation call with me, or connect on LinkedIn.

This is coach Percy Cannon, working to **help you make the rest of your life...the best of your life®**.

Thank you for listening to THE CAREER ACCELERATOR, the podcast where you will find tips and tools to deliver results through others. Stay tuned for our next episode!

Percy's BIO:

Percy provides corporate managers and leadership teams with customized coaching programs that help them develop the skills and capabilities needed to significantly increase their business results through others and accelerate their career growth.

Percy is an "alumnus" from three multinational corporations, Procter & Gamble, IBM & Microsoft, with whom he spent close to three decades.

Since 2011 he has been helping corporate executives, managers and employees **make the rest of their life...the best of their life®**.

Percy has worked in the United States and across several countries in Latin America as an Executive Coach, Leadership Team Consultant and Keynote Speaker, serving companies such as Microsoft, Procter & Gamble, Citibank, Tiffany & Avianca.

Percy is a Certified Professional Coach from Wainwright Global, Authorized Partner for "The Five Behaviors of a Cohesive Team" and "Everything DiSC" and certified as a "Go-Giver" speaker & coach.

He published his first book in 2012-13 in English (*The Business Apostolate: Insights to Define and Achieve Your Mission in Life*) and in Spanish (*El Negocio Más Grande de su Vida*).

Percy is a Consulting Partner with Grupo Azimuth and the Chapter Director for the COO Forum in Southeast Florida.

He has lived in 9 different cities and 5 countries, and speaks English, Spanish and Portuguese fluently.

Percy is married, has 3 children and 6 grandchildren, and is a passionate runner & reader.

He can be reached at percy@cannon.consulting.