

Episode #14: Interview with Bob Burg, Co-author of The Go-Giver Book Series, on How to Accelerate your Corporate Career

Welcome to THE CAREER ACCELERATOR, the podcast where corporate managers will find tips and tools to deliver results through others.

Hello. I'm your host, coach Percy Cannon. Today you will hear several insights related to the Go-Giver philosophy, which can help you accelerate your career growth within the corporate world. For this we have a very special guest, my friend and mentor Bob Burg.

Bob is an in-demand speaker at company leadership and sales conferences, sharing the platform with everyone from today's business leaders and broadcast personalities, to even a former U.S. President.

Bob is the author of a number of books on sales, marketing and influence, with total book sales of well over one million copies. His book, *The Go-Giver*, coauthored with John David Mann, itself has sold over 950,000 copies and it has been translated into 28 languages.

His and John's newest parable of the Go-Giver Series is *The Go-Giver Influencer*.

Bob is an advocate, supporter and defender of the Free Enterprise system, believing that the amount of money one makes is directly proportional to how many people they serve. He is also an unapologetic animal fanatic and is a past member of the Board of Directors of Furry Friends Adoption, Clinic & Ranch in his town of Jupiter, Florida.

Percy: Hi Bob, how are you doing today?

Bob: Hi Percy, I'm doing great. It's really fantastic to be with you.

Percy: Thank you Bob for accepting my invitation to participate in this podcast. I'd like to start by asking you to tell us, what is the premise of *The Go-Giver* book that you see applied to a corporate environment?

Bob: You know, it's a great question because it's always so important to begin with a premise, and it's really that shifting your focus. And that's really where it began, shifting your focus from getting to give and when we say giving in this context, we simply mean constantly and consistently providing immense value to others, and understanding that doing so it's not only a pleasant way of conducting business, it's actually the most financially profitable way as well, and not for some way out there woo-woo type of reasons. It actually makes very logical sense when you are that person, you are that team member who is able to move your focus off of yourself and place it on to bringing value to others, those within the organization, those you need to serve. You know, people feel good about you, they want to get to know you, they like you, they trust you, they want to be in a relationship with you and they're much more likely to be there for you as you rise along the corporate ladder and do your job on a daily basis.

Percy: Yes. And how can a corporate manager make this switch, this mindset switch from what's in it for me to what's in it for them, them being the other people they work with?

Bob: I think in terms of making the switch, it's first, understanding the importance of doing so. Because if you don't see any issue with the way you're doing something now, you're obviously not going to look to change it, right? So, it's first coming to a decision that the way I'm doing things now and, this is again assuming a person is doing it in a very "I focused", "me first" type of way, what we would call a Go-Taker, as opposed to a Go-Giver, that it begins with them realizing, hey, I may have achieved some success, I may have achieved some real legitimate success, but I know I'm not going as far as I want, or as quickly as I want, things just don't seem to be happening, and you know it's like Marshall Goldsmith talked about in his book, *What got you here won't get you there*, right? You know, I've gotten to where I am by maybe doing certain things or even in spite of certain things. So now I need to make a shift, and once someone learns about why the principles of *The Go-Giver* are so much more beneficial to them, as well as to those they work with, then they're more likely to take those actions which we enumerate through the five laws in order to make that shift.

Percy: I understand, and now that you mentioned the five laws, would you be so kind to just give us a quick review of what these five laws are?

Bob: Sure. The five laws themselves are the Law of Value, Compensation, Influence, Authenticity and Receptivity. Law number one, the Law of Value says your true worth, in the business sense of course, is determined by how much more you give in value than you take in payment. Now, if we were going to do this in terms of an entrepreneur or a salesperson, we'd say that the value of their product or service, and value simply being the relative worth, or desirability of something to the end user or beholder. In other words, what is it about this thing, this product, service, concept, idea that brings so much worth to another person that they will willingly exchange their money for. We say, you've got to provide such a value-based experience even over and above the product or service itself, that this person feels they receive much more in value than what they pay, while you of course make a profit. This is one reason why when I speak at a sales conference, I'll often begin by saying nobody's going to buy from you because you have a quota to meet, right? They're not going to buy from you because you need the money and they're not going to buy from you because you're a really nice person. They're going to buy from you only because they believe they'll be better off by doing so, than by not doing so. So how does this apply to someone in corporate management? Well, just like no one's going to buy from you because you have a quota to meet or need the money, no one's going to hire you, and keep you on because you have a mortgage payment to make. They're going to do so only because they believe they're receiving more in productivity, what have you, in value than what they're paying you in salary, okay? So, what that does is it means that just like the entrepreneur must be focused on bringing immense value to their customer, you, as that corporate manager, must be focused on bringing immense value to your employer. Now, it may not be directly to your employer, it's probably more indirect through the people you report to, the people who you lead, people in other departments who you collaborate with and/or whomever else it might be so. Instead of being entrepreneurial, you're actually intrapreneurial, right? You're entrepreneurial within another organization which is fine, but it's still a matter of constantly and consistently providing immense value to everyone you work with. That's law number one, the Law of Value.

Percy: Yes, thank you. I want to connect with your previous comment about this switch of mindset, from "what's in it for me" to "what's in it for them." Is that how it works, that this person

inside the corporate world will be able to add value to the other people inside the corporation by trying to think about what is of value to the other person?

Bob: Exactly, exactly. And that's such a perfect point and that's why you're such a great coach and we love referring you and we love learning from you during our meetings. That's exactly it and you know, value is always in the eyes of the beholder. It's not what we believe is a value or what we think they should believe is a value that counts. It's what they believe is of value. And of course, we only discover that by asking questions and then listening, and making sure we're seeing it from their viewpoint, really getting into their head, their mind, their heart, in a good way, in a positive way, in order to be able to understand what that person finds to be of value.

Percy: Great. Thank you for the clarification. Can you tell us about the second law, the Law of Compensation? Maybe you can share with us an example of how that would apply to a manager in the corporate world?

Bob: Sure, well, the law number two, the law of compensation, says your income is determined by how many people you serve, and how well you serve them. So again, in the entrepreneurial world, that would be you're simply finding more people to serve and as you serve more people with the value you provide, assuming you're making a profit with each sale, with each customer, you'll obviously make a lot more money. Now, in the corporate world it's a little bit different, because you are probably not working on commission. What it is, it's I guess you could say a larger scale. In other words, the more people within your organization, the organization with which you are employed, the more people whose lives you're touching directly or indirectly, with the immense value you provide, the more valuable you're making yourself to those in leadership, okay? And the more they're going to see you as someone who they want to advance and they want to promote.

Percy: So that's how you could actually accelerate your career growth.

Bob: Exactly. And you know, your goal is to provide immense value to everyone whose lives you touch and expand that value to more people.

Percy: Thank you, very clear. Can we go now to the next law for which I understand you have written a book called *The Go-Giver influencer*? Can you tell us a little bit more about it, please?

Bob: Yes. The law of influence, from *The Go-Giver*, says that your influence is determined by how abundantly you place other people's interests first. We also took that to the extreme level and wrote an entire parable about that as well but the basic law, it's sort of counterintuitive, right? Your influence is determined by how abundantly you place other people's interests first, you got to think about it Percy, the greatest leaders you know, the top influencers, and I would also go on to say the most successful top money earning salespeople, this is simply how they run their lives and conduct their businesses. They're always looking out for that other person's interests, for that other person's benefit. This is the level five leader that Jim Collins talks about in his book *Good to Great*. Now, when we say place the other person's interest first or place other people's interests first, we certainly don't mean you should ever be anyone's doormat or a martyr or self-sacrificial in anyway, absolutely not at all. It's simply as Joe, the protagonist in the story, learned from several of the mentors, the golden rule of business is that all things being equal, people will do business with and

refer business to, those people they know, like, and trust, and a referral doesn't just mean in terms of a sale or business, it means you've got an army of personal walking ambassadors who feel so good about you, who want to be in relationship with you, who want to, you know, to tell people about you. And again, not everybody is going to appreciate. No, of course not. This is real life and not everybody does. But enough do, and that's what you want to do, rather than be on the competitive plane, you want to kind of stay as much as you can on the creative plane. Stay on the creative plane. If you're focused on creating value for others, and for lots of others, and you're doing it through actually placing their interests first, again, not in a self-sacrificial way, simply in a way that benefits everyone concerned. But your focus is on them. And if you can move from that as Sam, one of the mentors of the story told Joe, if he can move from an "I" focus or a "me" focus, to an "other" focus, looking to make your win all about the other person's win, that's when you've got people on your side. That's when you've got people partnering with you and pulling for you and again being your personal walking ambassadors.

Percy: Thank you Bob. I want to ask you, within *The Go-Giver Influencer* book, there was one element mentioned there, which was to step into other person's shoes. Can you please elaborate on that, and how you think that could be applied to the corporate world?

Bob: Yeah, you know, it has to do with what we call the clash of belief systems, which basically just means that people see the world from their own unique viewpoint. So, what is a belief? A belief is a subjective truth, right, which means it's not necessarily the truth, right? It's your truth or my truth, which sometimes is the truth but often it isn't. But it is how we see the world. Our belief system is a combination of upbringing, environment, schooling, news media, television shows, everything. But it tends to be pretty much edged in stone by the time we're little more than toddlers and of course we didn't take in this information voluntarily, it got handed to us and it formed our basic beliefs, our way of basically seeing the world, and you know Percy, most people grow up and live their entire lives unaware of this dynamic, and they're pretty much controlled by what I call your unconscious operating system, thinking you're operating out of choice but really it's within a matrix, if you will, of certain rules and laws, again, it's the belief system. A wonderful book that I think explains this better than anything, was written in 1960 by Dr. Maxwell Maltz called *Psycho Cybernetics*. Psycho Cybernetics just means mind's machine, and how the way we see the world, ultimately controls are our thoughts, our feelings, our actions. Anyway, so let's go back to stepping into that other person's shoes, in order to understand them, right? And, step in the other person's shoes, we've all heard that saying, it's an old saying but it sounds kind of easy to do until you think about it, and you realize that most of us have different size feet. So literally, we really can't step into the other person's shoes, figuratively, we can't step into their head, we can't step into their heart. Why? We're not them. We haven't been brought up with the same exact belief system, sometimes not even anything close. So the question then is, how do you do it, how do you step into their world, how do you step into their shoes? Well, you ask questions, and this is what great leaders do, okay, and great managers and great team members: They ask questions of others. And then they listen, but they also make sure that as they listen, they're not listening in order to judge, listening really putting aside any of their preconceived, already held beliefs. It's not always easy to do. This takes consciousness, this takes work, but boy, once you do it and you start asking and simply listening and listening to understand, well, a couple things happen: One is you really have stepped into their shoes you can see the world from their viewpoint. Secondly, this person feels heard. They feel listened to, and it's such a basic element of human nature to want to

feel listened to, want to feel understood by another human being and when that happens, the trust they have in you just really grows and takes hold.

Percy: Thank you, Bob, you know as I was listening to your explanation, my mind went back to the old school of influencing by mandating, by telling, the top-down approach. What you're saying here it's actually go the other way around. Right?

Bob: Yeah, and you know, it's so interesting you say that because for all the books out there, some great books by fantastic leaders, I think of Bob Chapman the CEO of Barry-Wehmiller, which is a humongous manufacturing company, and you think, you know, it's such a commodity what they produce and you think of any kind of company is going to work from a top down command and control compliance, it would be them, and yet what he has done, again, his book is *Everybody Matters*. And that's how exactly how he sees his team members. And they feel as though they matter because they do. And he's got very, very loyal company employees and his company is very very profitable, and it got more profitable once removed from that original top-down type of manager, which is what he had learned, like most other people do, to then going with an employee-first type of attitude, type of focus. So, you know, there is many books out there: David Marquet, *Turn the Ship Around*, what a great book, and there are so many other books to mention, but you would think that so many leaders and managers would understand that, and of course many do. But many don't. We still hear, and we read these reports that talk about 75% of the workforce, feeling disengaged at work, and it makes you wonder why in the world are people still operating from that 1850s, 1870s Industrial Revolution type of system.

Percy: Yes, I agree. Let's go to the next law, the fourth law, the Law of Authenticity. Can you please explain the benefits of being authentic inside a highly competitive workforce?

Bob: Yeah, well, the fourth law the Law of Authenticity says the most valuable gift you have to offer is yourself. In the story, one of the mentors, Deborah, she had shared a lesson she learned, and that was all the skills in the world, the sales skills, the technical skills, the people skills, as important as they are and they all certainly are, they are also all for not if you don't come at it from your true authentic core. But when you do, when you as we like to say Percy, when you show up as yourself, day after day, week after week, month after month, people feel very comfortable with you. People feel safe with you. They tend to really trust you, because with consistency, which is a function of authenticity, there is more trust. This need for consistency goes back to the cave-person days, when every day was a fight to get through the day, just to survive the day. So, it was so important back then that there was consistency in the world, the sounds in the distance had to mean the same thing as the bent twigs and the footprints in the mud, right? Those things had to mean the same thing. Well, we certainly don't have that survival challenge these days, but that kind of got hardwired into our DNA. So, when we see someone who is consistent and who is authentic, we have much more trust in them. Trust is a huge differentiator when it comes to getting to that next level of success. And you may say, if I'm myself, aren't people going to see me coming, and you know? Remember there's always people that do bad things, right? It's the real world and of course we have to be aware of that, but we don't change who we are, because there are some scoundrels in the world, okay? We operate from our authentic core. Now I also want to say something about this that I think is very important because I see it misunderstood a lot: being authentic doesn't mean, well, that's just who I am, take it or leave it. That's called being obnoxious. That's not really

going to get a person that far, if their goal is to advance and actually have people who like them, right? But no, it's like the person who says, well, I have anger issues and I yell a lot. If I were to do anything differently, that wouldn't be authentic. Well, that's baloney. It simply means that person has an authentic problem that they need to work on, in order to authentically grow and become a higher, more effective authentic version of themselves. So, it's very important that we never use authenticity as an excuse for staying where we are. We use it as inspiration to go higher and really fulfill our authentic potential.

Percy: Thank you for that clarification. Can you tell us about the fifth law, the law of receptivity? And Bob, isn't there a risk in just giving, and never receiving anything back?

Bob: Well, I think there were two questions here so let's take the first one: the Law of Receptivity simply means that the key to effective giving is to stay open to receiving. And this, really, Percy, means nothing more than the realization that you breathe out, and you also have to breathe in. It's not one or the other, right? We breathe out carbon dioxide, we breathe in oxygen, we breathe out, which is giving, we breathe in, which is receiving. Giving and receiving are not opposite concepts, despite the messages of lack and anti-prosperity that we receive from the world around us, okay? Giving and receiving are two sides of the very same coin, actually, and they work in tandem. It's not a matter of are you a giver, or a receiver. No, you are a giver and a receiver. But what you understand is that the giving comes first. That's how life is: we sow before we reap, we don't go to a fireplace and say, give me some heat, and then I'll throw some logs, a newspaper and so forth. No, of course not. We don't go to a bank teller to open an account and say, first, give me an interest payment, and then I'll make a deposit. Now of course not, life doesn't work that way. We give value first, we give value to others. We touch the lives, hopefully of a lot of people with that value. We place their interest first because that's why they're going to do business with us. We do it from an authentic place, and then we allow ourselves to receive.

Now, in terms of the question, is there a fear of giving and not receiving? Well, I mean, generally speaking, the more you give, the more you're going to receive. That doesn't mean you're going to receive from every person to whom you give, because that's also not the way life works. But to the degree that you give and you're giving value, and you're giving value to everyone whose lives you touch, well, that's the degree to which you have created the, what we call, benevolent context for success. And again, there's nothing magical or mystical about it. It just makes sense: the more you focus on bringing value to others, the more you place yourself in a position where people are going to want to bring value to you.

Percy: Thank you for the clarification. I remember reading this in one of your books. It's like another law which was the law of left field? Can you share that with us please?

Bob: Right. The Law of Left Field says: the greatest gifts will come to you at moments and from places you least expect. But what happens is, we've all had that situation where this great opportunity for something came to us, it just dropped into our lap or something valuable came our way, but not from the people or places we might have expected, and you may have said to yourself: Wow, that one came right out of left field, right? Well, you know, Percy, when operating with a giving spirit, which simply means you're focused on creating value for others, great value comes to you suddenly and unexpectedly, and often in amounts far greater than what anyone owes you. But here's the thing: there's nothing magical about it, there's nothing mystical about it. You planted

so many seeds of goodwill, of great will, so many people know you, like you, trust you, want to be a part of your life, want to be a part of your success, the world has become a benevolent context for your success. And so long as you are willing to plant those seeds and nurture them, yes, that success is going to come to you. Now, when we say Law of Left Field, we say it came out of nowhere, right? But really, it didn't. It came from everywhere. It came from everywhere, because it really came from all those wonderful seeds of great will that you've continued to plant.

Percy: So true. How can our podcast listeners learn more about available Go-Giver programs?

Bob: The best way really person is just going to www.burg.com. And they can scroll down the website. There's a lot of resources for them, including a video blog that we usually put out twice a week. They can also read chapter excerpts of the various books to see if they like any of them. They can always click through to Amazon.com.

Percy: Great. Do you have any closing remarks you would like to share with our audience?

Bob: Well, I think it really all comes back to: if you want to advance yourself, look at how you can advance others. And to the degree that you advance others, and again, not in a self-sacrificial way, that's not what I'm talking about at all, but to the degree that you can add value, bring value to other people, and do this constantly and consistently, that's the degree that you are going to advance yourself.

Percy: Great, thank you. The one key message that I am taking away from you is that, in order to become a Go-Giver, a corporate manager has to move away from looking for "What's in it for me", and adopt the Go-Giver mindset of "What's in it for them", them being every other person they work with. Did I get it right?

Bob: It's perfect Percy. Well, Percy you are the ultimate embodiment of the Go-Giver. So, it makes total sense that you would get it right.

Percy: Thank you Bob for accepting my invitation to participate in this podcast.

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

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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.

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