

Episode 86 – Dave Rothacker – Top 3 Books of 2021 [00:19:54]

Intro: Welcome to Profiles In Prosperity, the leading podcast for residential service contractors, sponsored by Service Roundtable and hosted by David Heimer.

David Heimer: Hi, this is David Heimer. Welcome to Profiles In Prosperity. I am a person who reads a fair amount. I enjoy books a lot, I'm in a book club, I ask people for recommendations. I talk to a lot of people about books, and love talking to people about books. And one of the people that I really like talking to about books is Dave Rothacker. Dave reads, I think, more than anybody else I know. And so what we've been doing on our podcast over the last several years is calling Dave up at the beginning of the year, asking him about the books that he read the previous year, and asking him for recommendations. So that's what we're going to do today. A little bit about Dave. So I mentioned, he's incredibly well-read, he is an author, a coach and a consultant. Here are the short things that I know about him, I think there's a lot more than this.

He's an advisory board mentor for the Service Nation Alliance. He writes for Comanche marketing. He works with the Go Time Success group. He writes his weekly Saturday Rabbit Hole for Service Roundtable members, it's really great. If you haven't been reading that, you ought to. It's thought-provoking stuff. He blogs some fascinating stuff and then Dave was honored as the servant leader. That is an award in our industry that is rarely awarded and only given to those with a lifetime of outstanding service to others. So Dave is an impressive guy in addition to being an amazing reader. So Dave

Episode 86 – Dave Rothacker – Top 3 Books of 2021 [00:19:54]

Rothacker, welcome back to Profiles In Prosperity. Hey, before you get into anything else, I've got a quick question for you, and you don't have to be precise about this, but approximately how many books did you read last year?

Dave Rothacker: Okay, David. Hey, thanks. Glad to be here. I'm going to tell you that, overall, I probably read somewhere between 70 and 80. But not necessarily 70 and 80 different books, because there were probably a good dozen in there that I've read twice. So all in all, 70 to 80.

David Heimer: Wow. That's amazing. So I tracked how many books I read this last year and I came in at 23. So I felt pretty good about that.

Dave Rothacker: Well, I devote a lot of time. I am not a quick reader. I just spend the time. That's my key.

David Heimer: You said you were going to give us the top three books for 2021 and some other recommendations, get this thing started for us.

Dave Rothacker: Okay, you've got it. Well, first off, I'd like to lead with a book written by Jim Collins. The title is BE 2.0 and that's spelled, B like Bob, E like Edward, 2.0. And B E stands for beyond entrepreneurship. And it was originally written by Jim Collins, author of Good Degree, and his mentor, Bill Lazier 25 years ago. And what Jim did was, he revised and updated it, and here's the really fascinating part. He weaves in all of his

Episode 86 – Dave Rothacker – Top 3 Books of 2021 [00:19:54]

work over the last 25 years. So all of his books, he weaves into this book and it's sort of a guide to Jim Collins. And so if you're a Jim Collins fan, this book is a must read.

David Heimer: Wow. Sounds good. So is that your top book of the year?

Dave Rothacker: So I've got three more books that we're going to talk about, my top three of the year. And I would say that one right there comes in number four. So the next one that I'm going to talk about here, this would be my number three book, and its title is "What Happened To You?" by Dr. Bruce Perry and Oprah Winfrey. Now, a lot of times when people hear Oprah Winfrey, they, you know, immediately go to SuperSoul Sunday and to the world of self-help. But this really isn't that kind of book. This book is based on neuroscience, psychiatry, and psychology. And basically, the book is a conversation between Oprah and Dr. Perry. The book is based on trauma, what happened to you, resilience, and healing. And because Oprah had a very trauma-filled childhood, she's able to speak from that trauma-induced life.

And then she walks us through her experience and Dr. Perry comes in and brings in the science. And he brings it in a way that's very understandable. It's not too sciencey. But probably the reason that I chose this book is because - and I really don't know anybody really good, personally, that hasn't had some sort of trauma. And this isn't just the drastic trauma of some people that suffer in childhood, like abuse or that sort of thing, but they also include marginalization. And it happens a lot to minorities, women in the

Episode 86 – Dave Rothacker – Top 3 Books of 2021 [00:19:54]

workforce, people of color, wherever you're marginalized, they include that as a trauma.

So it's a pretty wide inclusive net that this book covers. And if by the grace of your

higher power, you had no trauma in your life, you're sure to know someone else that

did. And so it's just a great book to read, to help kind of navigate through the trauma,

resiliency to the trauma and then healing and what you call post-traumatic wisdom, what

you might have learned from that trauma. So that's my third best book of 2021.

David Heimer: Sounds good. I think this is the first time that Oprah's made it onto your best books list.

Dave Rothacker: It is, really, it is. And like I said, immediately, a lot of people think of Oprah and they go in a different direction. But this book is so based on science that I just had to include it.

David Heimer: I sort of made a joke because of who Oprah is and who her fans tend to be. But, you know, never forget the fact that Oprah is an amazing business woman, super smart, wildly successful, oh, by the way, a big reader of books as well, and started the Oprah Book Club. So, you know, I think anything that she does is well worth paying attention to. Alright, what's next on your list?

Dave Rothacker: Okay. Number two is The Heart of Business by Hubert Jolly. And Jolly was responsible for turning the Best Buy corporation around in the early teens.

Episode 86 – Dave Rothacker – Top 3 Books of 2021 [00:19:54]

Best Buy had done a slide close to becoming bankrupt. Jolly, an executive known as a turnaround specialist, came in and turned the company around. And the way he turned the company around was through his philosophy of people, business, and finance, in that order. So people first, business second, finance third. And the way he looks at that is profit is an outcome of a successful strategy and the quality of human relations that drive it. So profit third, strategy, and people first.

David Heimer: Yeah, pretty interesting. I mean, among companies, brick and mortar companies, that were doomed to fail, I would say that Best Buy was on that list and he turned it around. And I've got to say that I've been to Best Buy a number of times and the changes are evident in the people to help you get the quality of service. It's impressive.

Dave Rothacker: Yeah. And here's the thing about this book, and this is a term that I picked up from a journalist a long, long time ago. And it's something very simple. And it's like, I like that. I am like that. And as I read through this book, it encapsulates exactly what I feel and think about leadership. Leadership and business are built on purpose. He goes through that analogy of how important purpose is. When you get to books like this, a lot of times, the authors use sort of a framework for how they put the book together. And so, Jolly uses one where he strikes down carrots and sticks philosophy. In other words, don't try to motivate by rewards or punishment. So the rest of his

Episode 86 – Dave Rothacker – Top 3 Books of 2021 [00:19:54]

framework goes, connecting dreams, and this is where he gets into purpose. Trying to connect at a manager level, the purpose of the organization with the individual's purpose, developing human connections, basically exactly what it sounds like, developing relationships, autonomy.

And here's the part where - the last three items in this list are another thing that fascinated me and drew me into Jolly. Jolly was influenced by Dan Pink. Dan Pink's an author, he's written a lot of good books, but the book that influenced Jolly, an executive of a billion-dollar company, was influenced by the book, "Drive." And in the book Drive, it's all about motivation and what motivates us. And Dan Pink, in his book, cites a few different models of what influences {08:40 Inaudible}. But the ones that Jolly picked up here are autonomy, giving people the wherewithal to do their work and the freedom to do their work. Mastery, developing your craft as a craftsman, no matter what your position, and growth. Having a growth mindset. Those are the three items that round out Jolly's framework for developing a business.

David Heimer: I've always found Dan Pink's book to be fantastic. To Sell As Human is one of my favorite books that he wrote.

Dave Rothacker: I actually worked with Dan Pink on To Sell As Human. There was a group of people that worked on a volunteer basis to help promote that book. A pretty cool behind-the-scenes window into Dan Pink's world.

Episode 86 – Dave Rothacker – Top 3 Books of 2021 [00:19:54]

David Heimer: That is interesting. We'll have to talk about that sometime. That's a terrific book and congratulations on helping with it. I thought it was interesting. The review of *The Heart Of Business*, the Jolly book, said, this is how we can reinvent capitalism so it contributes to a sustainable future. Is that part of how you see it? The future of work is focused on humans and the nature of how you best manage them?

Dave Rothacker: Absolutely. You hit it right to the core. The leadership principles for the next era of capitalism, the book's subtitle, it's a little wordy. He probably should have put something more humanistic to the subtitle because the way that you describe that is exactly where he's going and exactly how I feel business is changing.

David Heimer: I think I'm going to put that on my list. I like the way all this sounds. Alright. What else have you got?

Dave Rothacker: That was my number two book. My number one book is a book by the title, "*The Premonition*" by Michael Lewis.

David Heimer: I'm reading that right now as a matter of fact. Great Book.

Dave Rothacker: Yeah, man. So I think I am just entrenched by Michael Lewis's writing ability. So that's, like, the first thing that hooks me.

David Heimer: He is an amazing writer. By the way, a great podcaster too. If you ever

Episode 86 – Dave Rothacker – Top 3 Books of 2021 [00:19:54]

get a chance to listen to his podcast, that's also good.

Dave Rothacker: I plan to. As you mentioned on your list, Heart of Business, his podcasts are definitely on my list as well. So the book is about an early pandemic, COVID 19, pandemic story about a group of people that, early on, figured out really, really what the United States - because it's based in the United States, what the United States needed to do to deal with the pandemic. And ironically I don't want to be too much of a spoiler here, but there is a president that read a book on the 1918 pandemic and after reading the book, he said, do we have a plan for a pandemic? And no, the United States didn't. And so he initiated a council of people to get together and work one out. And that's part of the book. And so, what Lewis does is he tells a story of how the United States came on to battle the pandemic through five or six extremely fascinating and interesting characters.

And there's so much in this book that just opens your eyes. I could say that I will never look at the CDC the same way again. Again, don't want to be a spoiler alert, but this book has forever changed my thinking on that. And if it wasn't for Lewis, if it was just some run of the mill author, I wouldn't have thought. But this guy has established credibility for 20 or 30 years right now, and he's grounded in reality, is the way I look at him. But here's the thing about the book premonition that - an exercise that I did that was so worthwhile and I would like to plant the seed to future readers is, I went through

Episode 86 – Dave Rothacker – Top 3 Books of 2021 [00:19:54]

this book and I titled about, I don't know, 12 or 13 different experiences, this group of five or six people, that they went through to try to solve a problem.

They had to deal with bureaucracy at its absolute worst. But what I did was - and I titled them, like, for instance, one of the things is perception and reality. And what we learn in the book is that perception of institutions like the CDC is not reality. Our perception and that general perception that everyone has unless you work there or work with them, generally, that perception is not reality. And so, you know, I ask the question, when you're in business and you're dealing with people, separate perception and reality.

Here's another fascinating one. And again, I'm trying to straddle a line about being a spoiler alert or not, but forge solid partnerships. So General Omar Bradley, after World War II, developed relationships, very, very deep relationships with the VA hospitals across the United States. And these relationships were tied to medical schools in the area.

So relating that to business, I ask the businessman or woman, do you have a relationship with your local community college? As a home service contractor, do you have a relationship with your local community college? So based on General Omar Bradley and the work that he did in the 1950s, those relationships are still prevalent today. Unbelievable. Just really, really, really cool stuff. Here's another quick one that we learned. Make two visits. And this sort of information was based on anthropology.

Episode 86 – Dave Rothacker – Top 3 Books of 2021 [00:19:54]

And when an anthropologist went to study a village, they go into the village first, the people don't really trust them, the information they're getting may be a little sketchy.

Come back a second time, and they've developed more trust, they get better information. And so the doctors in the book talk about making two visits for that same reason. Whatever you're doing.

And we're talking about epidemiologists who are studying different experiences. And so if you're going into an institution on that basis, you make your first round, you go in, but when you come back, you'll find that more trust is developed and you'll get better information. So I relate that to a business person today and make two visits. If you're pursuing a relationship or pursuing a customer, make two visits. So there are so many different versions of that that run through the book, to me, it's what made it fascinating. It's a page-turner, really. I've already read the book twice.

David Heimer: Yeah. I mean, I haven't finished it yet, but it is a great book and I find it incredibly hopeful. You know, we always hear terrible things about the bureaucracies of our institutions and they are annoying, but I think it's always important to remember that usually in any bureaucracy, in any institution, there are some really amazing people in there that really care deeply about the mission. And that's what we found in this case. I mean, there were just some amazing people that did amazing work, that many times it was not in their own personal best interests, it wasn't the thing that was going to

Episode 86 – Dave Rothacker – Top 3 Books of 2021 [00:19:54]

promote their career necessarily, but they cared a lot about it. They thought it was really important, they cared about the American people, and so they did the right thing. It's an amazing story. It's very impressive.

Dave Rothacker: I describe the book in short as a lack of leadership book. And the lack of leadership, in my opinion, meaning that the people that you just described, David, did not have the proper leadership to extract their talent and skills. And so their talent and skills were so many layers very deep in the different bureaus and nooks and crannies of our government, that they were not led properly. And so that's the other thing, another major takeaway that I think of when I think about that scenario, it's, do you know in your company, really, what your people are about? I mean, what if you have some really, really smart people, but you don't know them, you don't see them, you're not challenging them. And so, the takeaway on that is to really, really know your people well.

David Heimer: Yeah. Find out what hidden talents you have in your organization. It kind of fits in with the Hubert Jolly book as well.

Dave Rothacker: Exactly. Matter of fact, I made those little notes in the margins, I think, I did reference something in the premonition about something I was reading simultaneously in Jolly's book, ironically, that you mentioned that, so.

Episode 86 – Dave Rothacker – Top 3 Books of 2021 [00:19:54]

David Heimer: Okay. So what I've got from you is, you started off with B E 2.0, for people that are Jim Collins fans, What Happened to You by Oprah Winfrey and Bruce Perry, The Heart of Business, and then your number one book was Premonition. Is that right?

Dave Rothacker: That's right. And I have two more quick little recommends, just really quick. But wait, there's more. So I study purpose. Simon Sinek, Why Purpose, that sort of thing. And my number one go-to author on purpose is Richard Leider. And he just published a book last year called, "Who Do You Want To Be When You Grow Old?" And it's by Richard Leider and David Shapiro. And it's an excellent book for people making transitions, and I can't help but think of all the people that are going through selling their businesses, you know? With the private equity firms just throwing money out there, gobbling everybody up. What does that owner really want to do when they make that next move? So that's a great, great book. Small, short book. I highly recommend it to people in transition.

David Heimer: "Who Do You Want To Be When You Grow Old" by Richard Leider?

Dave Rothacker: Richard Leider. Right. And finally, I'm going to leave you with a book by Tom Peters, In Search Of Excellence author, and it's called, "Excellence Now: Extreme Humanism." And it parallels everything Jolly talks about in his book, but this is Tom Peters. Tom Peters is probably one of the top two or three most famous business

Episode 86 – Dave Rothacker – Top 3 Books of 2021 [00:19:54]

experts in the last 30, 40 years. And this is his last book. He's pretty emphatic about that. Here's the thing about Tom Peters that is fascinating to me. He has a Ph.D., and the dissertation he did from his Ph.D. was implementation. The most surely sought after verb in the home service industry, implementation. And he's driven by the concept of excellence. And he has been. I've read most of his books and it really has, all throughout his life, he's chased that excellence kind of landmark. So it's the culmination, but it's not retread. He talks about leadership related to COVID 19. So if you're a Tom Peters fan, it's just a must-have book.

David Heimer: That is a great list, Dave, and I appreciate you taking the time to go over it with us. I'm going to read a few of these myself this year. So thanks for the previews. Thanks for doing this. Great talking to you. Look forward to talking with you next year and hearing what you recommend from 2022.

Dave Rothacker: Sounds good, David. Thanks for having me.

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Episode 86 – Dave Rothacker – Top 3 Books of 2021 [00:19:54]