

Episode 29 - David Rothacker - Book Report - Maximize and Motivate [00:20:31]

Intro: Welcome to Profiles In Prosperity with your host David Heimer.

David Heimer: Hi, this is David Heimer. Welcome to Profiles In Prosperity. I invited Dave Rothacker back for another book discussion. And this time I just wanted to check in with him and find out what he's read lately that has been good, that he thinks would be useful for us. And I do this because Dave is incredibly well-read. He might read more business books than anyone I know. But in addition to reading, Dave has a great background. He is an author, a coach, a consultant, he's an advisory board mentor for Service Nation Alliance. He writes for Comanche marketing. He writes a weekly Saturday rabbit hole for Service Roundtable members. That's really fascinating to read and he blogs some great stuff that Rothacker Reviews. So Dave, welcome back. It's always great to talk with you. Tell me what have you been reading lately that we might be interested in?

Dave Rothacker: Absolutely. Thank you, David. The book that I'm reading right now, the title is "Big Potential" and I'm calling it my 2018 book of the year.

David Heimer: You're already calling it {inaudible 01:10} Wow.

Dave Rothacker: Yeah. Now that may change, I can't see it though. Matter of fact, and not only is it 2018 book of the year, but it probably is in my top 10 books of all time right now. Book is by a gentleman by the name of Sean Achor. And I should say that I was hipped onto this book by a fellow Service Nation Alliance member, Keith Hart. Keith has a connection with Sean and he graciously got me an autographed copy of the book. And I really value that and thank Keith for his gift. I think Potential is a book written about working with others to achieve success and the author, a lot of what he's written is you can find it based in the science of positive psychology. And he references a lot of

Episode 29 - David Rothacker - Book Report - Maximize and Motivate [00:20:31]

the more renowned people in that field throughout the book. But the basis of the book is that when we help others, the way we help others, the way we help others achieve success, it kind of works in a circle or a loop.

He calls it actually the virtual circle and it comes back to increasing our own potential. And it's just, you know, when you're really going through it, a lot of it's, well, I kind of knew that all along. But he's written it in such a way that it does make it fascinating. And in the future, if you really listen to what he's saying, it makes a lot of sense. So some of the highlights that he talks about is, and this is interesting, because you've always heard that you're a kind of a product or an outcome of the people that you keep company with and the books you read, that type of thing. And this is one of Sean's big things they say, you know, surround yourself with positive influencers. And he talks about not only do leaders lead, but also people in the organization that are not routinely thought of as leaders can also adapt his methodology and achieve success in their own realm.

David Heimer: You know, we've all heard you are the average of the five people you spend the most time with. Matt always says, when somebody quotes something like, you know, I need some wealthier friends, which is just a good joke about it. There's something to it. You are the average of the five people you spend the most time with. But what you're telling me, the author of this says, is a little bit more than that. If I'm understanding you, right, it's not just that you're the average of them. It is that these are the people that are sort of in your inner circle. And if you help them and you help them grow, they're going to help you grow that the very nature of helping other people be successful, focusing on them, getting them to achieve the things that they need and that they want. It's going to come back to you and you're going to succeed even more. Is that sort of what he's saying?

Episode 29 - David Rothacker - Book Report - Maximize and Motivate [00:20:31]

Dave Rothacker: Exactly. And you see it today in the consultants, within our industry, that you would deem successful. You know, the people that are out there looking like, wow, they made it. You know, these guys are doing pretty well for themselves. And I believe that they were products of the people they help as well. I mean, obviously they're doing a lot on their own. It doesn't quite work that way, but they are a product of the people that they're working with.

David Heimer: As we've discussed it so far, this isn't exactly revolutionary, right? I mean, there's the concept of karma. What you do comes back to you. There's a saying in the Bible about what you give will be given back to you many more times, I can't remember the quote. But there's something along those lines and we all fundamentally believe it. You will gain just by the act of helping others. But my guess is that he's taken it beyond that and that he has got some tangible ideas around this that are way deeper than what we've been discussing so far. Is that right?

Dave Rothacker: Exactly. You actually bring up a really fascinating point in that, his methodology as he takes it through the book. And, here's basically what I've just said, but he, you know, he goes into more detail. But everything that he's talking about is based on science. But the one thing that I found fascinating is that when you look at some of these methodologies and premises and things that are based on science, you start thinking back to people like John Maxwell. John Maxwell is a self-help author, that is what he does. But you'll start to see a lot of correlation to science, which is extremely interesting. And it actually, in my eyes, lends even more credibility to the authors like John Maxwell. It's just an interesting kind of side note too, when you're looking at the science behind it.

David Heimer: Very nice. So what would be a takeaway from this, like is a tangible

Episode 29 - David Rothacker - Book Report - Maximize and Motivate [00:20:31]

thing that you got out of this book. The concept of helping others will help you. But what's a tangible piece, like if I read this book, what would I leave with that would change something that I would do going forward?

Dave Rothacker: Well, this is another interesting thought and it's more of a, maybe not something that you can take right away and just go right to work with. But it might influence the way you approach working with people. The author says that in the first 22 years of our life, we're judged and we're praised for our individual attributes and what we achieve. So, you know, basically he's talking about going to school and the grades that we get. I mean, they're based on our own effort and we're scored or graded individually and that's our output. The minute we hit the world of work and where we are at the rest of our lives, we're almost entirely connected, independent upon other people. And that part of it is really not taught in schools that collaborative effort and working with other people. And the more that you get your mind around the concept that your success really is achieved with other people, the further ahead you'll be.

David Heimer: So if I'm changing the way I think about this, is there anything, a practice, a best practice or anything like that, that he recommends?

Dave Rothacker: Well, you know, each chapter is devoted to different aspects of building what I've basically talked about already. And maybe it's just a little bit more complex than anything I can just at this point kind of contribute. But it's a very easy to read book, although it's based in science, it's not sciency, it's not academic language, you know, that type of thing. So it really is an easy-to-read book. Well, the bottom line is why this is so simple and you even mentioned it that he says, surround yourself with positive people and people of high potential and people that are successful. And, really that is a key to success.

Episode 29 - David Rothacker - Book Report - Maximize and Motivate [00:20:31]

David Heimer: Surround yourself with high potential positive people and that's the key to success. Actually. It makes a lot of sense, doesn't it?

Dave Rothacker: Yeah. Yeah.

David Heimer: I think part of it is just being a high potential positive person yourself probably, and you attract that somewhat.

Dave Rothacker: Yeah, and when you're in a position to hire people or build teams, you're looking for people who do fit that role of that growth mindset role, where they are after ways to develop themselves. And you're either going to meet people on the beginning end of that spectrum where they're starting out or in the middle or where they're more accomplished. And I think any of those three positions would be valuable to a team. What's not a value is people that are just in there to how I basically look at it as taking oxygen from others. And they're not contributing to the overall growth and health of the organization.

David Heimer: Yeah. You sometimes have that sense from people that they're not concerned about others. Their whole attitude is 'what's in it for me'. And I've noticed that when you're in a group setting and the team feels that somebody is of that mindset, that they kind of turn on that person, if you will. It's hard to be that kind of person in a group. The group starts to dismiss them, starts to reject their ideas, their thoughts and their inputs are subjugated to all other opinions. So yeah, it makes a whole lot of sense. So the book Big Potential by Sean, how do you pronounce his last name?

Dave Rothacker: Achor, A C H O R.

David Heimer: Okay, and I am amazed that it is one of the best books you've ever read

Episode 29 - David Rothacker - Book Report - Maximize and Motivate [00:20:31]

and already the best book of 2018. And you're having a hard time believing that anything will come along to usurp this position. That's pretty impressive, well I am adding it to my list of stuff to read for sure.

Dave Rothacker: That's the way I'm looking at this book for sure.

David Heimer: So what else have you read lately that you find particularly compelling?

Dave Rothacker: Well, a book that, you know, at this time of the year, as we start to enter the dark days of summer, I hear a lot of feedback. How do I motivate our people? And there's a couple of different sides of this argument. I am not of the belief that it's a little bit of a semantic thing, but I am not of the belief that you can actually motivate people. I believe that people have to want to improve themselves. My beliefs are that, you know, you can remove obstacles and assist them in their own growth and development. And that will, you know, kind of air quotes around it motivate someone. But this book was written a few years back and the title is Drive by Daniel Pink.

David Heimer: I have never read a book by Daniel Pink that wasn't anything but excellent. I haven't read this one, however.

Dave Rothacker: Oh yeah, it is typical Daniel Pink writing. So if you've read and enjoyed his work in the past, this is right in the ballpark with most of the stuff that you know that he's done. So it's really good. The interesting thing about Drive is that Dan also draws on science, it's evidence based and is based on science of the things that he's putting together. And the way he's looking at it is that there are three structures that leaders need to provide, in order to have that environment where people have a desire to move ahead, help the company grow, find meaning in their work and that type of thing. One of the subjects is autonomy, and that's where people have control over their

Episode 29 - David Rothacker - Book Report - Maximize and Motivate [00:20:31]

tasks, the time that they work, the people they work with, and how they do their work.

And if you stop and think about it as an individual worker, when you think to yourself that you're able to control more of the work that you're putting out and how you're doing it, you enjoy a little bit more freedom, you get a little bit more breathing room, you do feel better. Yeah. I mean, have you ever felt that way yourself, David, by any chance?

David Heimer: Oh yeah, absolutely. I mean, I think autonomy is a huge motivator for people and it's what you look at when they talk about jobs and what jobs people are happy with, they tend to have a great deal of autonomy. Deadlines tend not to bother people if they have control over how they meet the deadlines. And so that's also a great reducer of stress. If you can manage your own time, you find that people's stress drops as well.

Dave Rothacker: Exactly.

David Heimer: People want the creativity that comes with autonomy as well I think.

Dave Rothacker: Exactly, exactly. The second category he looks at is mastery, and so when people have achieved a mastery of their position, again, like you had mentioned, they're eliminating frustration, they're developing a sense of a wellbeing, and you can see that from a person in a maintenance technician position up to your top service technicians. If they have mastery over what they're doing, then that's another thing that contributes to that overall sense of wellbeing. And you know, the motivation behind it.

And as a contractor, you know, you can help your people by providing educational courses and also by providing sources and resources of where they can pursue additional education on their own, and that sort of thing. So you can assist them in mastering their craft. So that would be the second one. And the third, which is probably

Episode 29 - David Rothacker - Book Report - Maximize and Motivate [00:20:31]

my most favorite, is purpose. And the way that Dan Pink looks at that is when you're working for a cause which is greater than yourself, and I translate this into the owners, why? And why are you in business and how that translates to getting people to work with you and customers to buy from you when people have a purpose and that doesn't necessarily limit this discussion just to the owner's purpose, but as an individual with their own individual purpose.

I mean, just to kind of use my own self as an example, I was driven to self-develop as I worked my way through the different management levels and in a contracting firm. I would say that my purpose was to continuously develop myself so that I could be more valuable to the people that I was working with. And I was always really driven by that. So it doesn't just necessarily mean a business owner's sense of purpose, but it translates to everyone in the organization.

David Heimer: So if I understand this, what he's saying is there's basically three categories of motivations. One is autonomy to desire that people have to be in a place where they have control over what they do, how they do it, how they complete their work, the creativity that goes along with figuring that stuff out. The second one is mastery. That is that people want to feel some sense of mastery of their craft. So we're motivated to improve, to get better at what we do, to have a sense of accomplishment that we have learned, grown and mastered what we're doing. And then the third one is sort of a higher calling if you will, that we have to have a purpose, a calling, the 'why' that we're there. If I got that right, then those are the three categories of motivation that we have and if you are trying to help people, and if you are, thinking about what motivates people, what's going to help them be successful, you have to think about the motivation in these three terms. Is that right?

Episode 29 - David Rothacker - Book Report - Maximize and Motivate [00:20:31]

Dave Rothacker: Exactly. And he sort of encapsulated it, you know, in a very simplistic way you know, he, we have the ability to direct our own lives if we can extend and expand on how our abilities and continued to develop and, and live a life of purpose is basically the way he sort of sums it up.

David Heimer: Great stuff. I think one of the great things about Daniel Pink is he can take complex concepts and distill them down into something that is easy to understand, easy to digest, fun, to read and gives you actual, tangible actions that you can implement. Does that seem to be the case in this book?

Dave Rothacker: Exactly, and at the back of the book there is a section devoted to real-world application. This book is based on the work of a psychologist by the name of Edward Deci, D E C I, and he wrote a book, just kind of my bonus recommendation, but he wrote a book called *Why We Do What We Do: Understanding Self-Motivation*. Now this guy is a hardcore psychologist. He does draw heavily on science and it is written in a very readable manner. And he has his own three criteria and I'm not going to get any of that right now. But this is what actually Dan Pink drew on to formulate the book "Drive".

David Heimer: So we've got *The Big Potential* by Shawn Achor and *The Drive* by Daniel Pink. That's our book report for this time.

Dave Rothacker: I do have one other thing that I like to offer here as well quickly. And that is both Sean Achor and Dan Pink draw upon many, many different psychologists for their work. And I've been reading these authors for their psychology work in either research papers or books for like 20 years right now. And I've only over the last year or so have I been a little bit more tuned into kind of a collective field of psychology that was

Episode 29 - David Rothacker - Book Report - Maximize and Motivate [00:20:31]

just formed in 1998 and that's called positive psychology. And all of the people in both of these books have touched, you know some portion of the field of positive psychology. And I am starting to devote more of my time to this specific discipline in psychology.

I highly recommend looking into the field of positive psychology and the best way to do that right now is a book written by the gentlemen who is known as basically the founder of the field of positive psychology Martin Seligman, and he wrote a book called "Flourish", F L O U R I S H. And it's a great introduction into the field. And then you can take it and go from there. But in my opinion, it's one of the most powerful tools a business owner can take into business. And that is just understanding the real-world applications of positive psychology.

David Heimer: Very nice. Well, Dave, I always appreciate having this opportunity to talk with you. It's nice to know someone that reads as much as you do. And I know that you've read a lot more books than these two. So being able to talk to you and find out which ones you liked the best is always useful. I read one of the books you recommended last year, it was awesome. And I'm going to read both of these. So thanks very much, great talking to you. And we will check in with you again in a few months.

Dave Rothacker: Thanks for letting me do this. Thank you very much.

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**Episode 29 - David Rothacker - Book Report - Maximize and Motivate
[00:20:31]**

your support. Hope to see you again soon. Bye.