



Stanford eCorner

Leveraging Relationships and Scaling Yourself

Sheryl Sandberg, *Facebook*

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Your career is based on relationships with other people, says Facebook COO Sheryl Sandberg. How do you leverage them? She encourages students to separate people into two exclusive teams: Those who can hire you, and those who can help you plot your career path.



Transcript

Last point: Scale yourself. First question is like what does that mean? Read my emails quickly, or reply all, scale yourself. But you think about having impact and you think about being a student and getting a job, or being an entrepreneur and raising funding, or getting the next job or changing industries, or when you are at work actually having impact you recognize that none of these happens in your room by yourself. This is all about relationships with other people. And some of those are on the phone and some of those are via chat and some of them via Facebook and some are face to face but it doesn't matter. This is all about relationships. So when you think about scaling yourself, what you've really want to think about is how do you leverage the connections you have. How do you leverage the relationships you have to really have impact? When I was leaving Treasury a guy named Josh Steiner had been the Treasury Chief of Staff a couple of people before me and I was going to go look for a job and he gave me great career advice. It was just awesome. He was only person who said this and it was so important.

He said, "Be careful about how you figure out what you want to do and separate people into two buckets. They're are the people who can hire you, and they're the people who can help you figure out what you want to do and keep those separate. Don't go to someone who can eventually hire you and say, "I'm leaving the government. I really want to work in technology, what should I do?" That person will help you but they won't hire you, because they'll figured out what you want to do and they'll be nice and they'll help you. But I found this to be true for myself. If there are people that come see me like, "Hey, I really need advise on what to do?" and I help them figure out. But if I am hiring for a job? I know I need someone to do this, whatever it is. And the person who just so much more likely to get hired is the person who walks into my office and is like, "I want to do this. I want to tell you why I want to do this. I want to tell you why I'm going to be good at this," maybe not in such an aggressive tone of voice.

But they have figured it out. Now with person A where I could have been this person, you've gone back and forth: Here are the pros of working in technology, here are the cons. Here are the pros of doing operations, the cons. Here is why I want to do marketing. You just don't sound that dedicated. When you go meet the person and so I really did that. When I was coming in here and looking for a job and trying to convince someone they should hire me, I really was careful to separate that out and I asked my friends and peers, "Okay, what does marketing mean? Like what do you do? Tell me what you did today?" And then when I finally figure out what I wanted to do I was able to be focused.