

Promotion Leadership Book

Target Audience: Leaders at all Levels

Purpose

To expose Airmen to leadership concepts and principles across multiple disciplines and to energize leaders at all levels to share their experiences and knowledge to help grow the people around them.

Description

- Lt Col George C. Marshall served as the Vice Commandant for the Army Infantry School, Fort Benning, Georgia (1927-1932). During his tenure (known as the Benning Revolution), he emplaced policies and techniques for the Company Officer and Advanced Courses transforming what and how Army developed officers. His innovations, which influenced 200 future World War II Generals (150 students and 50 staff), revolutionized military professional development.
- One of Marshall's initiatives, aimed to broaden the effectiveness of his staff, encouraged the reading and discussion of topics across multiple disciplines within and outside of the military sphere. He ceremoniously assigned staff members' books to study and asked them to lead an open discussion. He encouraged the free flow of ideas as well as dissent without retribution, regardless of rank.
- An adaptation of this initiative, currently applied within the Air Force, provides an impetus for topics within professional development (PD) sessions. In the Promotion Book Program, leaders select books for subordinates to read and then selects one individual to lead a PD session.

Employ

- Present a leadership book to one of your promotion selectees. It is important to present the book in person—emphasizing the leadership responsibility they take on by accepting the book—and ask them to organize a professional development session. Not everyone will respond to this program with the same level of commitment. Knowing your people and how to motivate them as individuals is imperative to the success of this program.
 - If applying the program to Airmen or junior NCOs, you may want to assign specific chapters of a leadership book as part of a running leadership series.
 - Encourage participants to go beyond just regurgitating the messages and themes of a book, but to find something (one part or in whole) that speaks to the individual and to internalize it.
 - Emphasize that everyone has successes and failures in applying their own leadership style.
 - Remind participants that it is not a downward discussion and encourage dissenting opinions. It's about sharing, not superiority.
 - Though it may not be feasible in all situations, giving the book to the member will have a greater impact than loaning one or pointing to a specific book they would need to acquire.
 - Visit the following link to find books that may be of interest in this area:

<http://www.airman.af.mil/Products/AllProducts/BookReviewsArticles.aspx>