



## ***Business Science Virtual Film Series***

### **REFLECTION QUESTIONS**

*Respond to the following questions in a 2- to 3-page essay format and submit to your professor for grading.*

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1. What is your impression of fifties' corporate America, as depicted in the film? How does "The Greatest Generation," or men who fought in World War II who returned to a corporate life, differ from your impression of today's business people?
2. When approached with a PR job opportunity, Tom Rath says: "I don't know anything about public relations." Bill Hawthorne replies: "Who does? You've got a clean shirt and you bathe every day. That's all there is to it." Of course, there is more to any career. But could there be some truth in Hawthorne's reply? Explain.
3. Consider the ethical statement made in this quote from Tom Rath: "When a man's got plenty of security, money in the bank, other jobs waiting for him, it's a cinch to be fearless and full of integrity. But when he's got a wife and three children to support and his job's all he's got, what do you think he ought to do about it then?" What are his options? Share an example of a celebrity or famous business person who made a choice in life that compromised his/her integrity.
4. Toward the end of the film, Ralph Hopkins shares an epiphany with Tom after learning of his daughter's elopement: "Somebody's got to do it. Somebody's got to dedicate himself to it. Big successful businesses just aren't built by men like you - 9:00 to 5:00 and home and family. You live on them, but you never build one. Big successful businesses are built by men like me, who give everything they've got to it, who live it, body and soul. Lift it up regardless of anybody or anything else. Without men like me, there wouldn't be any big successful businesses. My mistake was being one of those men." Considering this film was made in 1956, does his statement remain true today? Do the most successful executives have to choose between family and professional success, or can one have it all? Explain.

### **Personal Reflections** *(not to answer, just to think about):*

- "For a decent man, there's never any peace of mind without honesty."
- Consider Tom and Betsy's marriage. Is she a supportive wife? Is she ambitious? Too ambitious? Is she wrong to criticize what she sees as Tom's lack of purpose or drive? Is Tom a responsible provider? Is he too careful? Too self-involved? How are times different or the same in today's balance of marriage roles?