

Dare to Be B.O.B.

By

Amydawn Wright

We've all probably seen the 1991 movie, "*What About Bob*" but just in case you were stuck in a cave when this movie came out, here's a quick synopsis of the movie. Bob, a needy, neurotic guy attaches himself to his new egotistical therapist who is obsessed with his new book and his appearance on a morning TV show. Bob spends the entire movie tracking his therapist down on his vacation, warming himself up to the therapist's family, and basically triggering his therapist's melt down. In an initial conversation at the beginning of the movie, Bob asks his therapist, "Do you know what Tourette's Syndrome is?" His reply is, "yes, of course." At this moment, Bob proceeds to spew expletives and perversities. When he finishes, he looks at his therapist and says, "If I fake it, I don't have it."

Perhaps Bob was not as psychotic as we thought. After all his conclusion of "If I fake it, I don't have it", sounds a bit like today's philosophy of "Fake it till you make it." However, I believe faking it is a waste of time and when people find out the true you, they aren't impressed. There's a better way. Instead of faking it we can be Bobs. Not the neurotic Bob from the movie but rather the acronym for B.O.B.

B.O.B. stands for best of breed. A B.O.B. is a person who stands taller than the rest, projects integrity, morals and ethics in all that he or she does in business and in personal affairs. A B.O.B. is respected by friends, peers and even among enemies. One may not agree with everything a B.O.B. does, but we certainly respect B.O.B., desire to work with or for a B.O.B., and hopefully want to be B.O.B. There are six consistent characteristics I have noticed that B.O.B. possesses.

The first trait of a B.O.B. is honesty. I don't know about you, but I'm sick and tired of liars. Aren't you? It seems everyone lies. Politicians, companies, media and schools all seem to be suffering from lying lips. When did it become acceptable to lie? I submit that it's not okay to lie. Ever. Show me a liar and I'll show you a fearful person every time. When we lie, it's because we are afraid. We are afraid of the consequences, afraid of being found out, and afraid of the truth. When you lie no matter how small you think the lie is, the truth will always come out and when it does no one will trust you again. A B.O.B. doesn't lie. In fact, a B.O.B. will put his career on the line in order to uphold the truth. Want to be B.O.B.?
Be honest.

The second trait of a B.O.B is positive. Ever worked with someone where the sky is always falling? Love working with those people, do you? I don't. I find it exhausting, and I usually avoid negative people. Why? They literally suck the life right out of me. However, lets take the positive trait a step further. How's your speech when it comes to fellow coworkers, etc.? Nothing destroys moral quicker than office gossip. We've all worked in places where office gossip seemed to be the norm. There was a story on 20/20 about a year ago about three women who were fired from their jobs. The reason: they were office gossips. The company had a no tolerance policy regarding gossiping. When you're gossiping then you're not working. Of course these women felt it was unfair that they were fired but the policy was in the handy-dandy office manual.

A B.O.B. chooses a positive attitude regardless if the sky is falling; and a chooses not to participate office gossip. Want to be a B.O.B.? **Be positive.**

The third trait of a B.O.B. is informative. Do you have an issue with the project? Do you disagree with the process of your company? Well, welcome to the rest of the company who has an opinion. However, if you think there is a better way, then share it. Be the person who has the facts and the solutions. A B.O.B. is a problem solver. Plain and simple. I've worked in some IT shops where certain people refused to share information because they thought it was a for their job security. This is so unprofessional. I've also worked in organizations as a manager. When people would come to me with their issues about someone or something, I would ask, "do you have a solution?" You see if you had a solution then I knew you had given the issue some serious thought. If not, then you were just complaining and that takes zero thought. Want to be a B.O.B.? **Be informative.**

The fourth trait of a B.O.B. is assertive. A B.O.B. is assertive without being aggressive. Being assertive means being confident and bold. I have sit in many a board meeting surrounded by executives and CEOs, yet I felt I was sitting in a kindergarten classroom. Why? These executives and CEOs knew how to be assertive, but they didn't know how not to be aggressive while being assertive. They were screaming at each and name-calling. Talk about difficult and uncomfortable. I also noticed with these raving lunatics that their assertiveness had no grounds for their confidence if you know what I mean. Want to be a B.O.B.? **Be assertive.**

The fifth trait of a B.O.B. is understanding. Another words be the expert. Being in IT as long as I have, I have noticed that a lot of people pretend they know a lot. When it gets time to put it on the line by signing a document, these so called knowledgeable people suddenly don't know anything. No one wants to take responsibility or ownership. A B.O.B. is an expert at work. He's not arrogant about it; however, a B.O.B. will take ownership in what he/she does. Isn't that refreshing?

Another approach to the word 'understanding' is that B.O.B.s are also understanding of each other's humanness. People make mistakes and that's how people learn. When I first started in IT years ago, I was on my first consulting assignment. I was told I would be mentored on the assignment, but I wasn't. One of the tasks I had to do was beyond my knowledge and I had no one to ask. An hour later as I was thinking about what I had done, a sick feeling came over me that maybe I had deleted the wrong file. I contacted a person on the team and told them my fear and sure enough I was right. I had deleted the wrong file. Not just any file but 'The File'. I was sick and felt for sure I was going to be fired. I'll never forget this but my team lead, an employee, restored the file and told me this, "you were never trained on how to do this; it's not your fault." You know what? I never forgot her act of kindness and understanding. I learned something that day and by the way, I can guarantee I never made the same mistake twice. I also learned when I led my own teams, people make mistakes often times because they weren't trained properly. Want to be a B.O.B.?

Be understanding.

Lastly, the sixth trait of a B.O.B. is courteous. How considerate are you? Are you respectful of every person you meet even the people who serve you at a restaurant, in the check-out line, etc.? How you treat others who are serving you reflects an immense amount of your character. Giving off a superior attitude to those who are serving you or those who report to you, reflects your own poor self-esteem. It's easy to be courteous and respectful to your peers, but it shows true class and true best of breed to show respect and courtesy to

those below you. Respect should be shown at any level: upward, downward and sideways. Want to be a B.O.B? **Be courteous.**

In this economy there is no room for 'faking it till you make it'. You have to distinguish yourself among the rest. You need to be the best of the breed; you need to be B.O.B.