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Where you end up depends on knowing where to begin

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“Start with the Answer” by Bob Seelert, John Wiley & Sons, \$24.95.

Bob Seelert, chairman of Saatchi & Saatchi, a global ideas and advertising firm, draws on his 40-plus years of business experience to focus new recruits and seasoned executives on “what really matters.” Eight sections (Preparation, Career Management, Business Strategy, Business Operations, Finance and Economics, Leadership Lessons, Culture and Communication, and Personal Style and Spirit) emphasize three messages: 1. Know where you’re going. 2. Have the courage to take the first step. 3. Constantly tweak your plan and hone your skills to stay on course.

Read Section Eight, Personal Style and Spirit, first because you have to know who you are and what you value before you can decide where you’re going.

Here are a few snippets from it:

- To improve your work performance, go home. You need balance between home and work because troubles on either front bleed into the other.
- You can be a top performer without being a workaholic. At Seelert’s 60th birthday party, one of his sons remarked that his most cherished memory was that “Dad rarely missed family dinner.” Seelert took work home with him and did his homework while his sons were doing theirs.
- Stay calm, cool and collected: “Develop a bulletproof vest and a waterproof back and don’t overreact to criticism or stress.” Both help keep your emotions in check and allow you to focus on “what really matters.”

It’s sound advice that provides a template for building.

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